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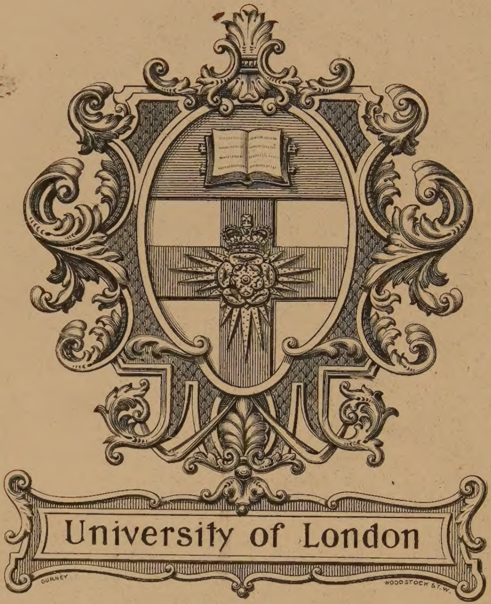

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THE

PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES

AUTHORISED EDITION.

FOURTH SERIES,

Commencing with the Third Session of the Twenty-sixth Parliament
of the
UNITED KINGDOM OF GREAT BRITAIN AND IRELAND

60 VICTORIÆ.

VOLUME XLVI.

COMPRISING THE PERIOD FROM
THE NINTH DAY OF FEBRUARY
TO
THE FOURTH DAY OF MARCH
1897.

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(2.) "That a sum, not exceeding £5,937,800, be granted to Her Majesty, to defray the Charge for the Pay, Allowances, and other Charges of Her Majesty's Army at Home and Abroad (exclusive of India) General Staff, Regiments, Reserve, and Departments), which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1898."

Resolution Read a Second time, and agreed to 495

(3.) "That a sum, not exceeding £295,800, be granted to Her Majesty, to defray the Charge for the Pay, &c., of the Medical Establishment, and the Cost of Medicines, &c., which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1898."

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Shops Bill :—Second Reading deferred 662

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Military Works (Money) Bill:—

Motion made, and Question proposed—

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SUPPLY (SUPPLEMENTARY NAVY ESTIMATES)—Question, Mr. Dalziel; Answer, First Lord of the Admiralty 791

NEW MEMBER SWORN:—Sir Charles Cameron, baronet, for the Burgh of Glasgow (Bridgeton Division) 792

SELECTION (STANDING COMMITTEES) (CHAIRMEN'S PANEL) 792

MOTION.

Church Patronage Transfer Bill:—To regulate the Transfer of Church Patronage; presented, and Read the First time—(140) 792

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ORDERS OF THE DAY.

SUPPLY—Considered in Committee:—

ARMY ESTIMATES, 1897–8.

1. £553,000, Militia, Pay, Extra Pay, Bounty, Etc. 792

Vote agreed to 803

2. £76,000, Pay and Miscellaneous Charges of the Yeomanry Cavalry... 803

Amendment proposed, to reduce Vote by £7,000—(*Mr. Knox*)... ... 804

Question put, "That a sum, not exceeding £69,000, be granted for the said Service."—The Committee divided:—Ayes, 46; Noes, 182.—(Division List, No. 35.) 811

Original Question put. The Committee divided:—Ayes, 180; Noes 38. —(Division List, No. 36.) 812

3. £627,200, Capitation Grants and Miscellaneous Charges of Volunteer Corps, including Pay, Etc., of the Permanent Staff... 812

Amendment proposed, to reduce the Vote by £57,000—(*Mr. Knox*) ... 822

Question put, "That a sum, not exceeding £570,200, be granted for the said Service. The Committee divided:—Ayes, 9; Noes, 131.—(Division List, No. 37.) 823

Vote agreed to 828

5. £2,553,400, Provisions, Forage, and other Supplies 828

Amendment proposed, to reduce the Vote by £1,000.—(*Mr. Dalziel*) ... 828

Question put, "That item A (Cost of Provisions), be reduced by £1,000." The Committee divided:—Ayes, 18; Noes, 131.—(Division List, No. 38.)—Original Question put, and agreed to 840

£894,000, Clothing Establishments and Services... 840

Motion withdrawn 841

£2,069,200, Supply and Repair of Warlike and other Stores 841

Motion withdrawn 841

6. £1,016,400, Works, Buildings, and Repairs: Cost, including Superintending Staff... 841

Vote agreed to 846

7. £118,600, Establishments for Military Education—Agreed to ... 846

8. £54,800, Sundry Miscellaneous Effective Services 846

Question put. The Committee divided:—Ayes, 120; Noes, 8.—(Division List, No. 39) 847

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Trusts (Scotland) Bill:—Committee deferred 847

WAYS AND MEANS:—Committee deferred 847

Leaseholders (Purchase of Fee Simple) (No. 2) Bill:—Second Reading deferred 847

Local Government Act (1894) Amendment Bill:—Second Reading deferred ... 847

Shop Assistants (Half Holiday) Bill:—Second Reading deferred 847

Licensing Exemption (Houses of Parliament) Bill:—After brief Debate, Second Reading deferred till Monday next 848

LORDS: MONDAY, 22ND FEBRUARY 1897.

SINCLAIR'S DIVORCE:—Petition of Alfred Law Sinclair, of Holyhill, Strabane, County Tyrone 849

Marine Insurance Bill:—Considered in Committee; reported without Amendment; and re-committed to the Standing Committee 849

COMMONS: MONDAY, 22ND FEBRUARY 1897.

PRIVATE BUSINESS.

Great Eastern Railway (General Powers) Bill:—After short Debate, Bill Read a Second time, and committed 849

North British Railway Bill:—After short Debate, Bill Read a Second time, and committed 852

Coventry Electric Tramways Bill:—Read a Second time 854

QUESTIONS.

FOREIGN PRISON-MADE GOODS—Questions, Sir Howard Vincent; Answer, President of the Board of Trade 855

MAIL PACKET SERVICE (SCOTLAND)—Question, Mr. Nicol; Answer, Lord Advocate 855

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HARBOUR ACCOMMODATION (DEVON AND CORNWALL)—Question, Sir C. Gull; Answer, President of the Board of Trade 856

WELSH LAND COMMISSION (REPORT)—Question, Mr. H. Roberts; Answer, Home Secretary 856

HALF SOVEREIGNS AND FARTHINGS—Questions, Mr. Schwann; Answers, Chancellor of the Exchequer 857

INFECTIOUS DISEASES (METROPOLIS)—Question, Dr. Farquharson; Answer, Secretary to the Local Government Board 858

EMPLOYMENT OF DEAF MUTE (BELFAST)—Question, Colonel McCalmont; Answer, Home Secretary 858

HORSE BREEDING COMMISSION (DUBLIN)—Questions, Colonel McCalmont, Mr. Flynn, Mr. Patrick O'Brien, and Captain Donelan; Answers, Chief Secretary for Ireland [Mr. Speaker] 859

LOAN FUND SOCIETIES (IRELAND)—Questions, Mr. A. O'Connor, Mr. MacNeill, Mr. Dillon, and Captain Donelan; Answers, Chief Secretary for Ireland 860

CIVIL SERVICE (TEMPORARY EMPLOYMENT)—Question, Mr. Kimber; Answer, Secretary to the Treasury 862

HYDE PARK (CYCLISTS)—Question, Mr. McLaren; Answer, First Commissioner of Works 863

WESTMINSTER HALL—Question, Mr. McLaren; Answer, First Commissioner of Works 864

IRISH MAILS—Questions, Mr. Roche, Captain Donelan, and Mr. T. B. Curran; Answers, Secretary to the Treasury [Mr. Speaker] 864

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ROYAL MARINE ARTILLERY OFFICERS—Question, Sir J. Colomb; Answer, First Lord of the Admiralty 868

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AMERICAN PASSENGER TRAFFIC (POLICE AT QUEENSTOWN)—Question, Mr. Patrick O'Brien; Answer, Chief Secretary for Ireland 869

FISHERY PIER (BALTIMORE)—Question, Mr. Gilhooly; Answer, Chief Secretary for Ireland 870

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UNIVERSITY COLLEGES (GOVERNMENT GRANT)—Question, Sir William Houldsworth; Answer, Chancellor of the Exchequer 871

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NAVAL PENSIONER (JOHN DEVINE)—Question, Mr. Flynn; Answer, Secretary to the Admiralty 874

NAVAL COLLEGE (DARTMOUTH)—Question, Sir B. Simeon; Answer, Civil Lord of the Admiralty 875

JAMESON RAID (PRESIDENT KRUGER'S CLAIM)—Questions, Sir E. Ashmead-Bartlett and Mr. J. Roche; Answer, Secretary of State for the Colonies 875

MARYBOROUGH GAOL (JAMES FITZHARRIS)—Questions, Mr. Carew, Mr. William Johnston, and Mr. Patrick O'Brien; Answers, Chief Secretary for Ireland 875

RAILWAY LEVEL CROSSING (TOTTENHAM)—Question, Mr. Howard; Answer, President of the Board of Trade 877

BALLYSHANNON UNION (CLERK'S SALARY)—Question, Mr. Knox; Answer, Chief Secretary for Ireland 877

SCHOOLS OF SCIENCE AND ART (IRELAND)—Question, Mr. Knox; Answer, Secretary to the Treasury 878

EDUCATION FEE GRANT (IRELAND)—Questions, Mr. Knox; Answers, Secretary to the Treasury 878

CABLE (CANADA TO AUSTRALIA)—Question, Mr. Hogan; Answer, Secretary of State for the Colonies 878

NATIONAL SCHOOLS (IRELAND)—Question, Captain Donelan; Answer, Chief Secretary for Ireland 879

MURDER ON L. & S.W. RAILWAY—Question, Mr. Bailey; Answer, Home Secretary 879

MILITARY WORKS BILL—Question, Mr. Buchanan; Answer, Under Secretary for War 879

POST OFFICE (KIRKCALDY)—Question, Mr. Dalziel; Answer, Secretary to the Treasury 880

SUPPLY (NAVY ESTIMATES)—Questions, Mr. Dalziel; Answers, Secretary to the Admiralty 880

POST OFFICE SORTERS—Question, Sir Albert Rollit; Answer, Secretary to the Treasury 881

BARRACKS ACT, 1890—Question, Mr. Buchanan; Answer, Financial Secretary to the War Office 881

VOLUNTARY SCHOOL RATES (PUBLIC COMPANIES)—Question, Sir J. Fergusson, Answer, Attorney General... 881

AGRICULTURAL RATES ACT 1896—Questions, Mr. Pickersgill, Sir C. Dilke, Sir W. Harcourt, and Mr. Gibson Bowles; Answers, Attorney General, and Secretary to the Local Government Board [Mr. Speaker] 882

FINANCIAL RELATIONS (GREAT BRITAIN AND IRELAND)—Questions, Mr. J. Redmond, Mr. Dillon, Mr. A. O'Connor, and Mr. J. Morley; Answers, First Lord of the Treasury... 884

SUPPLY (SUPPLEMENTARY CIVIL SERVICE ESTIMATES)—Questions, Mr. Channing; Answers, First Lord of the Treasury 886

DISTRESS (BELMULLET UNION)—Question, Mr. Crilly; Answer, Chief Secretary for Ireland 886

CRETE—Questions, Sir E. Ashmead-Bartlett, Mr. Stevenson, Sir J. Colomb, Mr. Dillon, Mr. Bryce, and Mr. Labouchere; Answers, Under Secretary for Foreign Affairs [Mr. Speaker] 887

NEW MEMBER SWORN:—Henry Currie Leigh-Bennett, esquire, for the County of Surrey (North Western or Chertsey Division) 890

NEW WRIT:—For the Borough of Halifax, *v.* William Rawson Shaw, esquire, Manor of Northstead 890

CRETE (ACTION OF BRITISH SHIPS)—MOTION FOR ADJOURNMENT:—Mr. Labouchere obtained leave to move the Adjournment of the House on a matter of urgent public importance—namely, the firing on Greek forces in Crete by Her Majesty's ships 890

First Lord of the Treasury... ...	890–896	*Sir E. Ashmead-Bartlett* ...	915
Mr. Dillon	892	*Mr. Channing*...	917
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Mr. Knox	913	*Mr. Darling*	923
		Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman ...	925
		[*Mr. Speaker* ...	890, 892, 894, 895, 915, 916]

Motion made, and Question put, "That this House do now Adjourn." The House divided:—Ayes, 125; Noes, 243.—(Division List—No. 40—appended) 928

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

Military Works (Money) Bill:—Considered in Committee 931

Clause 1,—(Issue of Money for the Works mentioned in the Schedule) ... 931

Amendment proposed, in Sub-section (1), to leave out the words "five million four hundred and fifty-eight thousand" and to insert the words "three million."—*(Mr. Lough)* 932

Question put, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Clause."—The Committee divided:—Ayes, 147; Noes, 47.—(Division List, No. 41) 938

Amendment proposed, in Sub-section (1), to leave out the words "at any time," and to insert the words "within seven years."—*(Mr. Lough)* 938

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Question put, "That the words 'at any time' stand part of the Clause." The Committee divided:—Ayes, 178; Noes, 68.—(Division List, No. 42) 948

Amendment proposed, in Sub-section (1), to leave out the words "ninety-six," and to insert the words "ninety-seven."—*(Mr. Lough)* ... 948

Question put, "That the words 'ninety-six' stand part of the clause." The Committee divided:—Ayes, 191; Noes, 75.—(Division List, No. 43) 954

Amendment proposed, in Sub-section (2) to leave out the word "Treasury," and to insert the words "House of Commons."—*(Mr. Kearley)* 954

Question put, "That the word 'Treasury' stand part of the Clause." The Committee divided:—Ayes, 181; Noes, 65.—(Division List, No. 44) 957

Amendment proposed, to omit Sub-section (3).—*(Mr. Lough)* 957

Amendment negatived 958

Question put, "That Clause 1 stand part of the Bill." The Committee divided:—Ayes, 173; Noes, 55.—(Division List, No. 45) ... 958

Clause 2,—(Borrowing for Purposes of Act, and Accounts and Audit) ... 958

Amendment proposed, in Sub-section (1) to leave out the words "may, if they think fit, at any time," and to insert instead thereof the word "shall."—*(Mr. Lough)*... 959

Committee report Progress; to sit again upon Thursday 960

Public Health (Scotland) Bill:—Adjourned Debate on Second Reading (5th February) further adjourned 960

Law of Evidence (Criminal Cases) Bill:—Second Reading deferred 960

SUPPLY [19TH FEBRUARY]:—Army Estimates, 1897-8 960

Resolutions (No. 1 to No. 8) reported, and agreed to 960

Local Government (Aldershot and Farnborough) Bill:—Second Reading deferred 963

Berriew School Bill:—Second Reading deferred 963

SUPPLY:—Committee deferred 963

Military Lands Act (1892) Amendment Bill:—Committee deferred ... 963

Trusts (Scotland) Bill:—Committee deferred 963

WAYS AND MEANS:—Committee deferred 963

Land Law (Ireland) (No. 2) Bill:—Second Reading deferred 963

Coroners' Inquests (Railway Fatalities) Bill:—Second Reading deferred ... 963

Steam Engines and Boilers (Persons in Charge) Bill:—Adjourned Debate on Motion for committal to Standing Committee on Trade, Etc. [17th February] further adjourned 964

Shop Assistants (Half-Holiday) Bill:—Second Reading deferred 964

Licensing Exemption (Houses of Parliament) Bill:—Second Reading deferred 964

Benin Expedition:—On the Motion "That this House do now adjourn." Question, Sir J. Colomb; Answer, First Lord of the Admiralty ... 964

LORDS: TUESDAY, 23RD FEBRUARY 1897.

Lord Farnham.—Petition of Somerset Henry Maxwell Lord Farnham, claiming a right to vote at the elections of Representative Peers for Ireland 965

New Peer.—Sir Joseph Lister, Baronet, President of the Royal Society, having been created Baron Lister of Lyme Regis in the County of Dorset, introduced 965

COMMONS: TUESDAY, 23RD FEBRUARY 1897.

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Clerical Incomes (Taxation)—(*Mr. Round*) 965

Shops (Hours of Labour)—(*Sir John Lubbock*) 965

Taxation (London) (Grants in Aid)—(*Mr. Lough*) 965

QUESTIONS.

Post Office Money Orders—Questions, Mr. Rankin, Mr. Strachey, and Mr. McLeod; Answers, Secretary to the Treasury 966

National School Teachers (Ireland)—Question, Sir T. Lea; Answer, Chief Secretary for Ireland 967

Bann Drainage—Question, Sir T. Lea; Answer, Chief Secretary for Ireland 968

Pilot Service, Falkland Islands—Question, Mr. Sidebotham; Answer, Secretary of State for the Colonies 968

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POLICE PATROL, SKIBBEREEN—Question, Mr. Gilhooly; Answer, Chief Secretary for Ireland 968

LAND COMMISSION (IRELAND)—Questions, Sir T. Lea and Captain Donelan; Answers, Chief Secretary for Ireland 969

POSTAL ACCOMMODATION (CO. LEITRIM)—Question, Mr. P. M'Hugh; Answer, Secretary to the Treasury 970

FOREIGN VESSELS IN BRITISH PORTS—Questions, Mr. Lawrence and Mr. Warr; Answers, President of the Board of Trade 970

INDIAN MAIL SERVICE—Question, Sir J. Leng; Answer, Secretary to the Treasury 972

TRUCK ACT (RAILWAY COMPANIES)—Questions, Mr. Woods, Mr. J. Wilson, (Durham, Mid), Sir Howard Vincent, Mr. J. Samuel, and Mr. Lough; Answers, Home Secretary [Mr. Speaker] 972

PERTH AND DUNDEE PRISONS—Questions, Mr. Orr-Ewing; Answers, Lord Advocate 974

LOAN FUND SOCIETIES (IRELAND)—Question, Captain Donelan; Answer, Chief Secretary for Ireland 975

CONVICTION FOR PERJURY (POLICE CONSTABLE MURRAY)—Question, Mr. Pickersgill; Answer, Home Secretary 976

VOLUNTEER DRILL HALLS, ABERDEEN—Question, Capt. Pirie; Answer, Secretary to the Treasury 976

EVICTION (CO. MONAGHAN)—Question, Mr. Macaleese; Answer, Chief Secretary for Ireland 977

COLONIAL PREMIERS (VISIT TO LONDON)—Questions, Mr. Hogan and Sir G. Baden-Powell; Answer, Secretary of State for the Colonies 977

IRISH MAIL SERVICE—Question, Mr. Molloy; Answer, Secretary to the Treasury 978

INDIAN FAMINE—Questions, Mr. Bhownaggree and Mr. S. Smith; Answers, Secretary of State for India and First Lord of the Treasury 979

VOLUNTARY SCHOOLS BILL—Questions, Major Rasch and Mr. Dillon; Answers, First Lord of the Treasury 980

EGLOSKERRY PARISH (CORNWALL)—Question, Mr. Owen; Answer, Attorney General 981

FINANCIAL RELATIONS (GREAT BRITAIN AND IRELAND)—Question, Mr. Clancy; Answer, First Lord of the Treasury 981

CRETE—Questions, Mr. Gibson Bowles, Mr. Stevenson, Mr. Channing, Sir Wm. Harcourt, Mr. Bayley, Sir E. Ashmead-Bartlett, and Mr. Darling; Answers, Under Secretary for Foreign Affairs [Mr. Speaker] 982

MOTIONS FOR THE ADJOURNMENT OF THE HOUSE—Question, Sir C. Dilke; Answer, Mr. Speaker 986

MOTIONS.

Warehousemen's Certificates Bill:—To define the position and obligations of a Warehouseman who issues a Certificate of the deposit of a Warrant for the delivery of goods, and to render the title of the holder on such a document more complete; presented, and Read a First time—(141)... 987

Juries Detention Bill:—To permit Juries to separate in cases of felony; presented, and Read the First time—(142) 987

Prison-made Goods (Importation) Bill:—To restrict the Importation of Goods made by Foreign Convicts and Felons under duress, and unfairly competing with free labour in Great Britain and Ireland; presented, and Read the First time—(143) ... 987

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

JUDICATURE ACTS:—Motion made—

"That an humble Address be presented to Her Majesty praying her to appoint a Royal Commission to inquire into the administration of justice under the Judicature Acts, with a view to secure greater efficiency and economy"—*(Mr. Atherley-Jones)* 987

Mr. Warr 996
Attorney General ... 999
Sir F. Lockwood... ... 1007
Mr. W. F. Lawrence ... 1009
Sir H. Fowler... 1011
Mr. Monk 1013
Mr. Atherley-Jones 1013

Motion withdrawn 1013

PEASANT FREEHOLDERS (WALES):—Motion made—

"That this House is of opinion that the distressed condition of the peasant and small occupying freeholders in Wales is such as to call for the earliest attention of the Government, and that it is desirable that state loans, subject to a low rate of interest, should be granted to such of the said freeholders as purchased their own holdings with money borrowed on the security of their land to enable them to redeem existing mortgages in respect of which a higher rate of interest is payable than such freeholders are able to pay in the present state of agriculture"—*(Mr. Lloyd Morgan)* 1014

Mr. Rees Davies... ... 1020
Mr. Milbank 1023
Mr. Vaughan-Davies ... 1024
President of the Board of Agriculture... ... 1025
Mr. Bryn Roberts ... 1029
General Laurie 1030
Mr. Thomas Ellis 1031
Mr. W. T. Howell 1033
Mr. E. Griffith 1035
Major Wyndham-Quin ... 1035
Mr. Herbert Roberts 1036
Mr. Stanley Leighton... ... 1037
Chancellor of the Exchequer ... 1038

The House divided:—Ayes, 43; Noes, 102.—(Division List—No. 46—appended) 1042

STATUTE LAW REVISION BILLS:—Lords' Message [2nd February], considered; Select Committee of Seven Members appointed to join with the Committee appointed by the Lords to consider all Statute Law Revision Bills and Consolidation Bills of the present Session 1043

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PETROLEUM.—Select Committee appointed 1043

Industrial and Provident Incorporated Building Societies (Purchase of Fee Simple) Bill:—

Motion made—

"That this Bill be now Read a Second time"—*(Mr. H. J. Wilson)* 1044

House counted out 1044

COMMONS: WEDNESDAY, 24TH FEBRUARY 1897.

Statute Law Revision Bills, &c.:—Quorum of Committee ordered 1045

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

Burials Bill:—

Motion made,—

"That this Bill be now Read a Second time."—*(Mr. R. Cameron)* 1045

Mr. Carvell Williams 1050

Amendment proposed, to leave out the word "now," and at the end of the Question to add the words "upon this day six months."—*(Mr. Griffith-Boscawen)* 1056

Mr. J. G. Talbot ... 1060

Mr. Perks 1062

Sir F. Powell 1065

Mr. Brigg 1069

Mr. Sidebotham 1071

Mr. Purvis 1073

Mr. Woodall 1074

Viscount Cranborne ... 1076

Mr. Lloyd-George 1080

Mr. Tomlinson 1083

Sir H. Fowler 1084

Home Secretary 1090

Mr. Johnson-Ferguson ... 1094

Mr. Herbert Lewis 1096

Mr. H. Roberts 1097

Question put, "That the word 'now stand part of the Question." The House divided:—Ayes, 150; Noes, 194.—(Division List—No. 47—appended) 1098

Words added; Main Question, as amended, put and agreed to. Second Reading put off for six months 1101

Archdeaconry of London (Additional Endowments) Bill:—

Motion made,—

"That this Bill be now read a Second time."—*(Mr. A. Gibbs)* 1101

Debate adjourned; to be resumed To-morrow 1102

Elementary Education (Permissive Rates Aid) Bill:—Second Reading deferred 1102

Labourers' Cottages (Ireland) Bill:—Second Reading deferred 1102

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Local Authorities Officers' Superannuation Bill :—Second Reading deferred ... 1102

Locomotives on Highways Bill :—Second Reading deferred 1102

Licences (Ireland) Bill :—Second Reading deferred 1102

County Councillors (Qualification of Women) (Scotland) Bill :—Second Reading deferred 1102

Rating of Machinery Suspensory Bill :—Second Reading deferred 1103

Assistant County Surveyors (Ireland) Bill :—Second Reading deferred ... 1103

Cemeteries Rating Bill :—Second Reading deferred 1103

Aliens Bill :—Second Reading deferred 1103

Shops (Early Closing) Bill :—Second Reading deferred 1103

Shops Bill :—Second Reading deferred 1103

Working Men's Dwellings Bill :—Second Reading deferred 1103

Justices of the Peace Bill :—Second Reading deferred 1103

Local Government (County Council Clerks) Bill :—Second Reading deferred ... 1103

SUPPLY :—Committee deferred 1103

WAYS AND MEANS :—Committee deferred 1103

Coroners' Inquests (Railway Fatalities) Bill :—Second Reading deferred ... 1104

Prison Made Goods (Importation) Bill :—Second Reading deferred 1104

Occupying Tenants' Enfranchisement (Purchase of Fee Simple) Bill :—Second Reading deferred 1104

Metropolitan and other Police Courts Bill :—Second Reading deferred ... 1104

Employers' Liability (Foreign Shipowners) Amendment Bill :—Second Reading deferred 1104

Estates Tail Bill :—Second Reading deferred 1104

Licensing Exemption (Houses of Parliament) Bill :—Second Reading deferred 1104

MOTION.

Land Tenure Bill :—To amend the Law relating to the Tenure of Land; presented, and read the First time.—(144) 1104

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LORDS: THURSDAY, 25th FEBRUARY 1897.

Statute Law Revision Bills and Consolidation Bills:—Message from the Commons 1105

CRETE (MINISTERIAL STATEMENT):—

Earl of Dunraven ... 1105 *Earl of Kimberley* 1107
Prime Minister 1105

COMMONS: THURSDAY, 25th FEBRUARY 1897.

PRIVATE BUSINESS.

Great Northern Railway Bill:—On Motion that this Bill be Read a Second time. *(Sir C. Dilke)* 1107

Mr. John Ellis ... ... 1108 *Mr. Murdoch* 1114
Mr. Fison ... ... 1109 *Mr. Bartley* 1114
Mr. A. O'Connor... ... 1111 *Mr. Lloyd-George* 1115

Bill read a Second time, and Committed 1115

Midland and Great Northern Railways Joint Committee Bill:—

Motion made,—

"That the Report of the Examiners, that the Standing Orders in relation to the said Bill had been complied with, be referred back to the Examiners, with instructions to report whether Standing Orders 4, 30, and 33 have been complied with so far as the common lands known as Gunton Denes and Lowestoft Denes are affected by the Bill."—*(Mr. Harry Foster)* 1116

Sir J. Stone ... ... 1119 *Mr. J. W. Lowther* 1119
Sir F. Mappin ... ... 1119 *Mr. Mellor* 1121
Mr. Lough 1119

Motion withdrawn 1122

QUESTIONS.

RICHMOND PARK—Question, Mr. Boulnois; Answer, First Commissioner of Works 1122

TRUSTEES SAVINGS BANKS (SCOTLAND)—Question, Sir J. Leng; Answer, Chancellor of the Exchequer 1122

TELEGRAPH FACILITIES (DRINAGH, CO. CORK)—Question, Mr. Gilhooly; Answer, Secretary to the Treasury 1123

PRISON VISITING COMMITTEES—Question, Mr. Pickersgill; Answer, Lord Advocate 1123

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STATUTES (QUEEN'S PRINTERS)—Question, Sir Stafford Northcote; Answer, Secretary to the Treasury 1125

TRUNK TELEPHONE LINE—Question, Mr. Crombie; Answer, Secretary to the Treasury 1126

BANKRUPTCY COURT (IRELAND)—Question, Mr. Patrick O'Brien; Answer, Chief Secretary for Ireland 1126

INDUSTRIAL SCHOOL CONTRACTS (IRELAND)—Question, Mr. Patrick O'Brien; Answer, Chief Secretary for Ireland 1127

HORSE BREEDING (IRELAND)—Question, Colonel McCalmont; Answer, Chief Secretary for Ireland 1128

LIBERIA (BRITISH TRADE)—Question, Sir G. Baden-Powell; Answer, Under Secretary for Foreign Affairs 1128

SOLENT (ARTILLERY FIRING)—Question, Sir G. Baden-Powell; Answer, President of the Board of Trade 1129

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JURYMEN'S EXPENSES (IRELAND)—Question, Mr. Macaleese; Answer, Attorney General for Ireland 1129

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SLAVERY IN ZANZIBAR—Question, Mr. T. Bayley; Answer, Under Secretary for Foreign Affairs 1131

OYSTER CULTURE—Question, Mr. Henniker Heaton; Answer, President of the Board of Trade 1132

AGRICULTURAL IMPROVEMENTS (IRELAND)—Questions, Mr. Gilhooly; Answer, Secretary to the Treasury 1133

METROPOLITAN POLICE CLOTHING—Question, Sir Lewis McIver; Answer, Home Secretary 1134

LICENSING SESSIONS (BALLYBOT)—Question, Mr. Patrick O'Brien; Answer, Chief Secretary for Ireland 1134

ORDNANCE SUPPLY DEPARTMENT—Question, Sir C. Dilke; Answer, Under Secrerary for War 1135

MARINE INSURANCE POLICIES (STAMP DUTY)—Question, Sir G. Baden-Powell; Answer, Chancellor of the Exchequer 1135

LEE-METFORD RIFLE (MANCHESTER VOLUNTEERS)—Question, Sir William Houldsworth; Answer, Under Secretary for War 1135

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VACCINATION ACT (IRELAND)—Question, Mr. Flynn; Answer, Chief Secretary for Ireland 1136

IRISH MAILS—Question, Mr. Patrick O'Brien; Answer, Secretary to the Treasury 1136

VOLUNTARY SCHOOL BILLS—Question, Mr. Brigg; Answer, Vice President of the Council 1136

LETTERS FOR SIBERIA—Question, Mr. Colville; Answer, Secretary to the Treasury 1137

HIGH SHERIFF (CARRICKFERGUS)—Question, Mr. Kilbride; Answer, Chief Secretary for Ireland 1137

LAND COMMISSION (IRELAND)—Question, Mr. Kilbride; Answer, Chief Secretary for Ireland 1138

TREASON FELONY PRISONERS—Question, Mr. Davitt; Answer, Home Secretary 1138

INDIAN MINTS—Question, Sir H. Meysey-Thompson; Answer, Secretary of State for India 1138

BRISLEY (NORFOLK) PARISH COUNCIL—Question, Mr. F. Wilson; Answer, President of the Local Government Board 1139

LOAN FUND SOCIETIES (IRELAND)—Question, Mr. Dillon; Answer, Chief Secretary for Ireland 1139

TRUCK ACT (FINES)—Question, Mr. Woods; Answer, Home Secretary ... 1140

BRITISH TROOPS IN INDIA (HEALTH)—Question, Mr. Cameron; Answer, Secretary of State for India 1141

BRITISH UITLANDER POPULATION TRANSVAAL—Question, Sir E. Ashmead-Bartlett; Answer, Secretary of State for the Colonies 1142

ARMENIA—Question, Mr. Bryce; Answer, Under Secretary for Foreign Affairs 1142

HOLLOWAY PRISON (SELINA, LADY SCOTT)—Question, Mr. Pickersgill; Answer, Home Secretary 1143

MISSION TO KING MENELIK—Questions, Mr. Dillon and Mr. Maclean; Answers, Under Secretary for Foreign Affairs 1143

SALISBURY PLAIN—Question, Mr. Colston; Answer, First Lord of the Treasury 1144

AGRICULTURAL HOLDINGS—Question, Mr. Lambert; Answer, First Lord of the Treasury... 1144

CRETE—Questions, Mr. Channing, Mr. Stevenson, General Sir H. Havelock-Allan, Mr. Roberts, Mr. H. J. Wilson, Mr. Dillon, Mr. Goddard, Sir E. Ashmead-Bartlett, Mr. Labouchere, Mr. Bryce, Mr. Flynn, Dr. Tanner, and Mr. Bayley; Answers, Under Secretary for Foreign Affairs and First Lord of the Treasury [Mr. Speaker] 1144

CRETE: MINISTERIAL STATEMENT:—

First Lord of the Treasury 1150 *Mr. P. O'Brien* 1153
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ORDERS OF THE DAY.

Voluntary Schools Bill :—Order for Committee Read. Notices of Motion ... 1153

[*Mr. Speaker* ... ... 1154]

Motion made,—

"That it be an Instruction to the Committee that they have power to insert Clauses in the Bill with a view to making provision for insuring adequate representation of local authorities or parents on the management of the schools in receipt of the aid grant."—(*Mr. Lloyd-George*) 1156

Mr. Warner 1160
First Lord of the Treasury 1160
Mr. Acland 1164
Mr. Seely 1168
Mr. Spicer 1170
Mr. Hopkinson 1173
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Sir E. Clarke... 1204
Mr. Courtney 1208
Sir H. Fowler 1214
Solicitor General 1223
Mr. Brigg 1226
Mr. H. J. Wilson 1226
Mr. J. Ellis 1229
Mr. Scott 1230

The First Lord of the Treasury claimed to move, "That the Question be now put" 1230

Question put, "That the Question be now put." The House divided :—Ayes, 284 ; Noes, 133.—(Division List—No. 48—appended) ... 1230

Question put accordingly, "That the Debate be now adjourned." The House divided :—Ayes, 133 ; Noes, 283.—(Division List—No. 49—appended) 1233

The First Lord of the Treasury claimed, "That the original Question be now put" 1237

Original Question put accordingly. The House divided :—Ayes, 134 ; Noes, 270.—(Division List—No. 50—appended) 1238

Bill considered in Committee :—Clause 1—Committee report Progress ; to sit again upon Monday next 1243

Military Works (Money) Bill :—Committee deferred 1243

Public Health (Scotland) Bill :—Adjourned Debate on Second Reading [5th February] further adjourned 1243

Law of Evidence (Criminal Cases) Bill :—Second Reading deferred 1243

Local Government (Aldershot and Farnborough) Bill :—Second Reading deferred 1243

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Berriew School Bill :—Second Reading deferred 1243

Military Lands Act (1892) Amendment Bill :—Committee deferred 1243

Trusts (Scotland) Bill :—Committee deferred 1243

Old Age Provident Pensions Bill :—Second Reading deferred 1243

Outdoor Provident Relief Bill :—Second Reading deferred 1243

Truck Acts Amendment Bill :—Second Reading deferred 1243

Steam Engines and Boilers (Persons in Charge) Bill :—Adjourned Debate on Motion for Committal to Standing Committee on Trade, Etc. [17th February] further adjourned 1244

Archdeaconry of London (Additional Endowments) Bill :—Adjourned Debate on Second Reading [24th February] further adjourned 1244

Labourers' Cottages (Ireland) Bill :—Second Reading deferred 1244

Estates Tail Bill :—Second Reading deferred 1244

Licensing Exemption (Houses of Parliament) Bill :—Second Reading deferred 1244

GOVERNMENT CONTRACTS (FAIR WAGES RESOLUTION) :—Select Committee appointed to consider the working of the Fair Wages Resolution of February 1891, and its administration by the various Government Departments 1244

LORDS : FRIDAY, 26TH FEBRUARY 1897.

Sinclair's Divorce Bill :—Bill to dissolve the marriage of Alfred Law Sinclair, of Holyhill, Strabane, County Tyrone, a Lieutenant-Colonel in the Indian Staff Corps, with Isabella Sinclair, his wife, and to enable him to marry again, and for other purposes ; presented, and Read 1ª 1245

EARL OF KINGSTON :—Petition of Henry Edwyn Earl of Kingston, in the Peerage of Ireland, claiming a right to vote at the election of Representative Peers for Ireland, Read 1245

Post Office Consolidation Bill [H.L.] :—Referred to the Joint Committee on Statute Law Revision and Consolidation Bills 1245

COMMONS : FRIDAY, 26TH FEBRUARY 1897.

PRIVATE BUSINESS.

East London Water Bill :—Read a Second time 1246

Resolved :—

"That it be an Instruction to the Committee to whom the East London Water Bill is referred, that, having regard to the Resolution of this House of March 12

1896, they do insert such provisions in the Bill as will insure the acquisition by the local authority of such a suitable area of open space as, in the judgment of the Committee ought fairly to be substituted for common rights proposed to be extinguished under the Bill."—*(Mr. Paulton)* 1246

QUESTIONS.

LEWES ASSIZES (CONVICTION FOR FRAUD)—Questions, Mr. Pickersgill; Answers, Home Secretary 1249

LAND COMMISSION (IRELAND)—Questions, Mr. Macaleese, Mr. Sullivan, Mr. Engledow, and Mr. Dillon; Answers, Chief Secretary for Ireland and Secretary to the Treasury 1250

WATER TRUSTEES—Question, Mr. Macaleese; Answer, Home Secretary ... 1251

VOLUNTEER CADET CORPS—Question, General Laurie; Answer, Under Secretary for War 1252

"ALABAMA" CLAIMS—Questions, Mr. Gibson Bowles; Answers, Under Secretary for Foreign Affairs 1253

PRISON OFFICERS—Question, Lord Balcarres; Answer, Home Secretary ... 1253

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SOLENT AND CLYDE (ARTILLERY FIRING)—Question, Mr. Nicol; Answer, Under Secretary for War 1255

BISHOP OF PETERBOROUGH (CONFIRMATION OF ELECTION)—Question, Mr. Bryn Roberts; Answer, Home Secretary... 1256

RURAL POSTMEN (IRELAND)—Question, Captain Donelan; Answer, Secretary to the Treasury 1256

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BOGUS TELEGRAMS (IRELAND)—Question, Mr. Knox; Answer, Secretary to the Treasury 1258

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CONVENT AND MONASTERY SCHOOLS (IRELAND)—Question, Mr. Knox; Answer, Chief Secretary for Ireland 1259

BRENNAN, JOHN (LATE 41st REGIMENT)—Question, Mr. O'Kelly; Answer, Under Secretary for War 1259

CULLENAGH MOUNTAIN, Co. TIPPERARY—Questions, Mr. Condon and Captain Donelan; Answers, Chief Secretary for Ireland 1260

DARDANELLES—Questions, Mr. Roberts and Mr. Bryce; Answers, Under Secretary for Foreign Affairs 1260

LIGHTHOUSES (RED SEA)—Question, Mr. Henniker Heaton; Answer, Under Secretary for Foreign Affairs 1261

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REFORM PRISONERS (PRETORIA)—Questions, Mr. Maclean; Answers, Secretary of State for the Colonies 1262

FOREIGN PATENTS—Question, Mr. Schwann; Answer, President of the Board of Trade 1262

FISHING PIERS (IRELAND)—Questions, Major Jameson; Answers, Chief Secretary for Ireland 1263

LIGHTHOUSE KEEPERS (IRELAND)—Questions, Major Jameson; Answer, President of the Board of Trade 1263

JAMESON RAID (CAPE INQUIRY)—Question, Mr. Bryn Roberts; Answer, Secretary of State for the Colonies 1264

CRETE—Questions, Mr. Channing, Mr. Flynn, and Sir E. Ashmead-Bartlett; Answers, Under Secretary for Foreign Affairs 1264

SUPPLY (NAVAL ESTIMATES)—Questions, Mr. Gibson Bowles and Mr. J. Morley; Answers, First Lord of the Treasury 1266

POLICE AND SANITARY REGULATIONS:—Ordered, That the Committee of Selection do appoint a Committee, not exceeding Nine Members, to whom shall be committed all Private Bills promoted by municipal and other local authorities, by which it is proposed to create powers relating to Police and Sanitary Regulations which deviate from, or are in extension of, or are repugnant to, the general law 1266

London Water Companies' Amalgamation Bill:—Second Reading deferred from Wednesday next 1267

MOTIONS.

Solicitors (Ireland) Bill:—To amend and consolidate the Laws relating to Solicitors and to the service of independent apprentices in Ireland; presented, and Read the First time.—(145) 1267

Appointment of High Sheriffs (Ireland) Bill:—To relieve persons required to serve in the office of High Sheriff in Ireland; presented and Read the First time.—(146) 1267

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

SUPPLY—Considered in Committee:—

NAVY (SUPPLEMENTARY) ESTIMATES, 1896-7.

1. £507,000, Navy (Supplementary) 1268

Vote agreed to 1272

2. £5,775 13s., Naval Defence Act, 1889 (Excess Expenditure), 1896-7 1272

Vote agreed to... 1274

CIVIL SERVICES AND REVENUE DEPARTMENTS (SUPPLEMENTARY) ESTIMATES 1896-7 :—

Class I :—

3. £7,000, Supplementary, Public Buildings, Great Britain—Agreed to 1274

Class II :—

4. £1,000, Supplementary, Colonial Office.—Agreed to... 1274

5. £40, Supplementary, the Mint, including Coinage—Agreed to ... 1274

6. £25,000, Supplementary, Stationery and Printing 1274

Vote agreed to 1275

7. £80, Supplementary, Lunacy Commission, Scotland—Agreed to ... 1275

Class III :—

8. £17,500, Supplementary, Law Charges—Agreed to 1275

9. £2,000, Supplementary, Supreme Court of Judicature—Agreed to... 1275

10. £10, Supplementary, County Courts—Agreed to 1275

11. £2,030, Supplementary, Register House, Edinburgh 1275

Vote agreed to 1276

12. £12,938, Salaries and Expenses of the Office of the Irish Land Commission 1276

Amendment proposed, to reduce the Vote by £5,000—*(Mr. Kilbride)*... 1276

Question put, "That a sum not exceeding £7,938 be granted for the said Service." The Committee divided :—Ayes, 91 ; Noes, 188.—(Division List, No. 51).—Original Question put, and agreed to ... 1283

Class IV :—

13. £153,044, Public Education in England and Wales 1283

Amendment proposed, to reduce the Vote by £10—*(Mr. Channing)* ... 1283

Question put, "That a sum, not exceeding £153,034, be granted for the said Service."—The Committee divided :—Ayes, 42 ; Noes, 140.—(Division List, No. 52.)—Original Question put, and agreed to ... 1294

14. £10,000, Supplementary, Science and Art Department for the United Kingdom.—Agreed to... 1294

15. £650, Supplementary, British Museum.—Agreed to... 1294

16. £327, Supplementary, National Portrait Gallery.—Agreed to ... 1294

17. £20,110, Supplementary, Public Education, Ireland.—Agreed to ... 1294

Vote agreed to 1295

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Class V :—

18. £23,670, Supplementary, Diplomatic and Consular Services .. 1295

Vote agreed to 1297

19. £36,700, Supplementary, British Protectorate in Uganda and Central East Africa 1297

Vote agreed to 1298

20. £14,980, Supplementary, Colonial Services, including South Africa 1298

Vote agreed to 1299

21. £1,200, Supplementary, Slave Trade Services—Agreed to 1299

22. £16,304, Treasury Chest Fund.—Agreed to... 1299

Class VI :—

23. £30,151, Supplementary, Trustee Savings Bank and Friendly Societies Deficiency 1299

Vote agreed to 1302

24. £95,434, Teachers' Pension Fund, Ireland 1302

Vote agreed to 1304

Class VII :—

25. £4,500, Supplementary, Temporary Commissions—Agreed to ... 1305

26. £16,617, Repayment to the Local Loans Fund 1305

Vote agreed to 1306

27. £20,500, International Exhibitions.—Agreed to 1306

Revenue Departments :—

28. £6,800, Supplementary, Inland Revenue 1306

Vote agreed to 1307

29. £10, Supplementary, Post Office.—Agreed to 1307

Resolutions to be reported upon Monday next 1308

Ways and Means :—Committee deferred 1308

Local Government Act (1894) Amendment Bill :—Second Reading deferred ... 1308

Shop Assistants (Half-Holiday) Bill :—Second Reading deferred 1308

Licensing Exemption (Houses of Parliament Bill) :—Second Reading deferred... 1308

Museums of Science and Art Department :—Ordered that a Select Committee be appointed to inquire into and report upon the administration and cost of the Museums of the Science and Art Department ... 1308

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LORDS: MONDAY, 1st MARCH 1897.

REPRESENTATIVE PEER FOR IRELAND (LORD FARNHAM):—Report from Lord Chancellor 1309

PRIVATE BUSINESS.

Christchurch Inclosure Allotments Bill:—

Motion made, "That this Bill be now Read a Second time"—*(Lord Chancellor)* 1309

Amendment proposed, to leave out all the words after "That," and to insert—

"having regard to the policy of Parliament as declared by the Commons Act, 1876, especially with respect to fuel allotments, this House is not prepared to pass a Private Bill in order to enable the sale and inclosure of fuel allotments contrary to such policy"—*(Lord Hobhouse)* 1309

Lord Chancellor... ... 1314 *Earl of Morley* 1317
Lord Herschell ... ... 1315 *Lord Thring* 1318

On Question that the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Motion. The House divided:—Contents, 58; Not-Contents, 24. Resolved in the affirmative; Bill accordingly Read a Second time 1320

Retirement of Vestrymen and Auditors (London) Bill [H.L.]:—Bill to amend the Law relating to the retirement of Vestrymen and Auditors in London; presented by Lord Monkswell, and Read 1a—[No. 17] 1320

Church Patronage Transfers Bill [H.L.]:—Bill to regulate the transfer of Church Patronage; presented by the Lord Archbishop of York, and Read 1a—[No. 18] ... 1321

Parliamentary Franchise (Women) Bill [H.L.]:—Second Reading (which stands appointed for this day) put off 1321

COMMONS: MONDAY, 1st MARCH 1897.

STANDING COMMITTEES (CHAIRMEN'S PANEL):—Report that Sir James Fergusson appointed as Chairman of the Standing Committee for the consideration of Bills relating to Law, Courts of Justice, and Legal Procedure 1321

QUESTIONS.

CASUAL WARDS (METROPOLIS)—Question, Mr. Pickersgill; Answer, President of the Local Government Board 1321

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MAGISTRACY (IRELAND) —Question, Mr. Macaleese; Answer, Chief Secretary for Ireland 1322

WRECK (INDIAN TROOPSHIP "WARREN HASTINGS")—Questions, Mr. Thornton; Answers, Secretary of State for India 1323

CARETAKERS (IRELAND)—Questions, Mr. Dillon and Mr. Kilbride; Answers, Chief Secretary for Ireland 1323

ADMIRALTY CONTRACTS—Questions, Sir Howard Vincent; Answer, Secretary to the Admiralty 1324

TRAMORE FISHERY PIER—Question, Mr. Power; Answer, Chief Secretary for Ireland 1325

IRISH MAILS — Question, Mr. W. Johnston; Answer, Secretary to the Treasury 1325

MONEY ORDERS (COMMISSION)—Question, Mr. Holland; Answer, Secretary to the Treasury 1326

KOREA—Questions, Sir C. Dilke and Mr. McKenna; Answers, Under Secretary for Foreign Affairs 1326

BARROW DRAINAGE—Question, Mr. Sullivan; Answer, Chief Secretary for Ireland 1327

KING'S ROYAL RIFLE CORPS (8TH BATTALION)—Question, Mr. Sullivan; Answer, Under Secretary for War 1328

SUTTON-IN-ASHFIELD SCHOOL BOARD—Questions, Mr. Channing and Mr. H. J. Wilson; Answers, Vice President of the Council 1328

NORTH ATLANTIC LOAD LINE—Question, Mr. Baird; Answer, President of the Board of Trade... 1329

COLLISIONS AT SEA (FISHING BOATS)—Questions, Mr. Crombie and Mr. Gibson Bowles; Answers, President of the Board of Trade 1330

QUEEN'S REIGN (COLONIAL TROOPS)—Question, Mr. Hogan; Answer, Under Secretary of State for War 1331

AMERICAN MAIL SERVICE—Question, Mr. Hogan; Answer, Secretary to the Treasury 1331

EVICTED TENANTS (IRELAND)—Questions, Mr. Abraham (Cork, N.E.); Answers, Chief Secretary for Ireland 1332

JUDICIAL RENTS (IRELAND)—Questions, Sir T. Lea and Mr. J. Morley; Answers, Chief Secretary for Ireland 1333

INDIAN FAMINE (GODAVERY CANAL)—Question, Mr. Price; Answer, Secretary of State for India 1334

NATIONAL SCHOOL TEACHERS' PENSIONS (IRELAND)—Question, Mr. Flynn; Answer, Chief Secretary for Ireland 1335

SCOTTISH FISHERY CRUISERS—Questions, Captain Pirie and Mr. Bryce; Answer, Lord Advocate 1335

HAMPTON COURT GREEN—Questions, Sir F. Dixon-Hartland; Answers, First Commissioner of Works 1336

HORSE BREEDING (IRELAND)—Questions, Colonel McCalmont; Answer, Chief Secretary for Ireland 1336

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MALL (CYCLISTS)—Question, Mr. Wootton Isaacson; Answer, First Commissioner of Works 1337

NAVAL MANŒUVRES (REPORT)—Question, Sir C. Dilke; Answer, First Lord of the Admiralty 1338

CRETE—Questions, Mr. Bryce, Mr. Labouchere, and Sir E. Ashmead Bartlett; Answers, Under Secretary for Foreign Affairs 1338

BRITISH TROOPS IN INDIA (HEALTH)—Question, Captain Pirie; Answer, Secretary of State for India 1340

ADULTERATION OF FOOD—Question, Mr. Kilbride; Answer, President of the Local Government Board 1340

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RAILWAY TRAFFIC (ENGLAND AND IRELAND)—Question, Mr. Patrick O'Brien; Answer, Secretary to the Treasury 1343

NORTH-EASTERN RAILWAY DISPUTE—Question, Sir E. Gourley; Answer, President of the Board of Trade 1344

CLONGOREY ESTATE (CO. KILDARE)—Questions, Mr. Carew; Answers, Chief Secretary for Ireland 1344

TELEPHONE SERVICE (SCOTLAND)—Question, Sir Wm. Wedderburn; Answer, Secretary to the Treasury 1345

CAHIR ESTATE (IRELAND)—Question, Major Jameson; Answer, Chief Secretary for Ireland 1345

RABIES—Questions, Mr. Bigwood; Answers, President of the Board of Agriculture 1346

BEQUEST TO NATION BY LADY WALLACE—Question, Mr. Massey-Mainwaring; Answer, First Lord of the Treasury 1346

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BUCKIE—CONNECTION WITH TRUNK TELEPHONE LINES—Question, Sir Wm. Wedderburn; Answer, Secretary to the Treasury 1347

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BRITISH TROOPS IN INDIA (HEALTH)—*(Major Rasch)*... 1352

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ORDERS OF THE DAY.

Voluntary Schools Bill :—Considered in Committee [FIRST DAY]

Clause 1,—(Aid Grant to Voluntary Elementary Schools) 1352

Amendment proposed, "That Clause 1 be postponed"—*(Mr. Herbert Lewis)* 1353

Sir W. Hart Dyke claimed to move "That the Question be now put," but the Chairman withheld his assent, and declined then to put the Question 1354

Question put:—The Committee divided:—Ayes, 94; Noes, 244.—(Division List, No. 53) 1355

Amendment, (Mr. Pickersgill) ruled out of order 1355

Amendment proposed, after the word "aiding" to insert the word "necessitous"—*(Mr. Lambert)* 1357

Question put, "That the word 'necessitous' be there inserted."—The Committee divided:—Ayes, 104; Noes, 276.—(Division List, No. 54)... 1367

Amendment proposed, to leave out the word "voluntary," in order to insert the words "sectarian and British"—*(Mr. Evans)* 1367

Question put, "That the word 'voluntary' stand part of the Clause.—The Committee divided:—Ayes, 275; Noes, 102.—(Division List, No. 55)... 1372

Amendment proposed, after the word "schools" to insert the words "in existence at the passing of this Act"—*(Mr. Griffith)* 1372

Question put, "That the words 'in existence at the passing of this Act' be there inserted."—The Committee divided:—Ayes, 88; Noes, 127.—(Division List, No. 56) 1385

Amendment proposed, after the word "schools" to insert the words "situate in School Board districts"—*(Mr. Griffith)* 1385

Question put, "That those words be there inserted."—The Committee divided:—Ayes, 82; Noes, 237.—(Division List, No. 57.) ... 1393

Amendment proposed, after the word "schools," to insert the words "in which no charge for school fees is made."—*(Mr. Perks)* 1393

First Lord of the Treasury claimed to move, "That the Question be now put" 1404

Question put, "That the Question be now put."—The Committee divided:—Ayes, 273; Noes, 105.—(Division List, No. 58.) ... 1404

Question put accordingly, "That those words be there inserted."—The Committee divided:—Ayes, 102; Noes, 276.—(Division List, No. 59.) 1405

Amendment proposed, to leave out the words, "not exceeding."—*(Viscount Cranborne)* 1405

Question, "That the words 'not exceeding' stand part of the Clause," put and agreed to.; Committee report Progress 1410

Military Works (Money) Bill:—Committee deferred 1410

SUPPLY [26TH FEBRUARY]:—Resolutions reported—

Navy (Supplementary) Estimates, 1896-7:—Votes 1 and 2; Civil Service and Revenue Departments (Supplementary) Estimates, 1896-7. Classes 1, 2 and 3—Resolutions 3 to 12—Agreed to ... 1410

Class 4—Resolution 13—Agreed to 1412

Classes 4, 5, 6, 7 (Revenue Departments)—Resolutions 14 to 29—agreed to 1413

Local Government (Aldershot and Farnborough) Bill:—Second Reading deferred 1415

Berriew School Bill:—Second Reading deferred 1415

Military Lands Act (1892) Amendment Bill:—Committee deferred 1415

SUPPLY:—Committee deferred 1415

WAYS AND MEANS:—Committee deferred 1416

Steam Engines and Boilers (Persons in Charge) Bill:—Adjourned Debate on Motion for Committal to Standing Committee on Trade, Etc. [17th February] further adjourned 1416

Estates Tail Bill:—Second Reading deferred 1416

Licensing Exemption (Houses of Parliament) Bill:—Second Reading deferred 1416

MOTION.

Verminous Persons Bill:—To permit Local Authorities to provide cleansing and disinfection for persons infested with Vermin; presented, and Read the First time.—(147) 1416

PUBLIC ACCOUNTS:—Committee nominated 1416

LORDS: TUESDAY, 2ND MARCH 1897.

Thompson's Divorce Bill [H.L.]:—Read 2ª, and committed to a Committee of the whole House 1417

STANDING COMMITTEE:—Report from the Committee of Chairmen of the Standing Committee, That they have appointed the Lord Herschell Chairman of the Standing Committee, read 1417

CRETE:—*Earl of Kimberley* 1417

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COMMONS: TUESDAY, 2ND MARCH 1897.

Gold and Silver Plate Licences Bill:—Order for Second Reading To-morrow read, and discharged; Bill withdrawn 1429

NOTICES OF MOTION.

EAST INDIA (OFFICERS OF GENERAL LIST)—*(Mr. Heywood Johnstone)* ... 1429

LABOUR LAW—*(Mr. Edmund Robertson)* 1429

AGRICULTURAL POPULATION—*(Mr. Atherley-Jones)* 1429

FOOD SUPPLIES (UNITED KINGDOM)—*(Mr. Seton-Karr)* 1429

QUESTIONS.

NAVAL ESTABLISHMENT (PAY)—Questions, Mr. Kearley and Sir C. Dilke; Answers, Secretary to the Admiralty 1430

INFANTRY RECRUITS (CHEST MEASUREMENT)—Question, Major Rasch; Answer, Under Secretary for War 1430

PENAL SERVITUDE—Question, Mr. Kearley; Answer, Home Secretary ... 1431

IMPORTATION OF CATTLE (IRELAND)—Question, Sir J. Leng; Answer, Chief Secretary for Ireland 1431

TOLLS (NEWPORT, CO. MAYO)—Question, Dr. Ambrose; Answer, Chief Secretary for Ireland 1432

COPYHOLDERS (GROUND GAME)—Questions, Mr. Channing; Answers, Home Secretary 1433

SLAVERY (NEW HEBRIDES)—Questions, Mr. S. Smith; Answers, Secretary of State for the Colonies 1433

RE-ARREST OF DISCHARGED PRISONERS—Question, Mr. S. Smith; Answer, Home Secretary 1434

GIBRALTAR (DRAINAGE WORKS)—Question, Mr. Robertson; Answer, Secretary of State for the Colonies 1435

VOLUNTARY SCHOOLS BILL—Question, Mr. Rankin; Answer, Vice President of the Council 1435

QUEEN'S REIGN (COINAGE)—Question, Mr. W. F. Lawrence; Answer, Chancellor of the Exchequer 1436

RAILWAY RATES (LONDON AND TILBURY COMPANY)—Question, Major Rasch: Answer, President of the Board of Trade... 1436

NAVAL SHIPWRIGHTS—Questions, Captain Pirie and Mr. Kearley; Answers, Secretary to the Admiralty [Mr. Speaker] 1437

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LAND TAX—Question, Mr. Morrell; Answer, Chancellor of the Exchequer... 1438

INDO-CHINA AND AUSTRALIAN MAIL CONTRACTS—Question, Sir J. Leng; Answer, Secretary to the Treasury 1438

CASH BALANCES (INDIA)—Question, Mr. J. H. Roberts; Answer, Secretary of State for India 1439

NATIONAL SOCIETY FOR THE PREVENTION OF CRUELTY TO CHILDREN—Question, Mr. Pickersgill; Answer, Home Secretary 1440

UNIVERSITY COLLEGES—Questions, Sir J. Leng and Mr. Carvell Williams; Answers, Secretary to the Treasury 1440

PRIVATE LUNATIC ASYLUMS (IRELAND)—Question, Mr. Field; Answer, Chief Secretary for Ireland 1440

ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS, HEYWOOD—Question, Mr. Carvell Williams; Answer, Vice President of the Council 1441

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TOWN COURTS—Question, Mr. Macaleese; Answer, Attorney General for Ireland 1442

MUZZLING DOGS—Questions, Mr. Stephens; Answers, President of the Board of Agriculture 1442

DISCHARGE OF SEAMEN (FOREIGN PORTS)—Question, Sir E. Gourley; Answer, President of the Board of Trade... 1443

TRANSVAAL—Question, Sir E. Ashmead-Bartlett; Answer, Secretary of State for the Colonies 1444

EXPLOSION (H.M.S. "HOWE")—Questions, Captain Donelan; Answers, Secretary to the Admiralty 1444

POOR LAW RELIEF (IRELAND) BILL—Question, Mr. James O'Connor; Answer, Chief Secretary for Ireland 1445

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SUPPLY (NAVY ESTIMATES)—Question, Sir C. Dilke; Answer, First Lord of the Admiralty 1449

CRETAN QUESTION (DECLARATION OF POLICY)—Motion for Adjournment:—

Sir William Harcourt obtained leave to move the Adjournment of the House for the purpose of discussing a definite matter of urgent public importance, viz, "the declaration made by Her Majesty's Government to this House on Thursday last of their policy on the Cretan question" 1450

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Motion withdrawn 1533

SITTINGS OF THE HOUSE (ASH WEDNESDAY):—Motion made, "That this House do meet To-morrow at Two of the clock."—*(First Lord of the Treasury)* 1533

The House divided:—Ayes, 246; Noes, 81.—(Division List, No. 60) ... 1533

MOTION.

Prisoners' Personal Correction Prohibition Bill:—To prohibit the Personal Correction of Prisoners; presented, and Read the First time.—(148) 1534

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

Voluntary Schools Bill:—Considered in Committee. Progress 1st March—[SECOND DAY]—

Clause 1,—(Aid Grant to Voluntary Elementary Schools)... 1534

Motion made, "That the Chairman do report Progress, and ask leave to sit again."—*(Mr. Clough)* 1535

Question put. The Committee divided:—Ayes, 57; Noes, 189.—(Division List, No. 61) 1535

Amendment proposed, in Sub-section (1) to leave out the words "in the aggregate."—*(Mr. Lloyd-George)* 1535

Committee report Progress; to sit again To-morrow 1535

Salmon Fisheries (Ireland) Acts Amendment Bill:—Second Reading deferred 1535

Land Law (Ireland) (No. 2) Bill:—Second Reading deferred 1535

Juries Definition Bill:—Second Reading deferred 1536

Law of Evidence (Criminal Cases) Bill:—Second Reading deferred 1536

Trusts (Scotland) Bill:—Committee deferred 1536

Military Works (Money) Bill:—Committee deferred 1536

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Local Government (Aldershot and Farnborough) Bill:—Second Reading deferred 1536

Berriew School Bill:—Second Reading deferred 1536

Military Lands Act (1892) Amendment Bill:—Committee deferred 1536

Steam Engines and Boilers (Persons in Charge) Bill:—Adjourned Debate on Motion for Committal to Standing Committee on Trade, Etc. [17th February], further adjourned 1536

Licensing Exemption (Houses of Parliament) Bill:—Second Reading deferred 1536

COMMONS: WEDNESDAY, 3RD MARCH 1897.

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

Voluntary Schools Bill:—Considered in Committee—Progress 2nd March [THIRD DAY]—

Clause 1— (Aid Grant for Voluntary Elementary Schools) 1537

Amendment proposed [3rd March] to leave out from Sub-section (1) the words "in the aggregate"—*(Mr. Lloyd-George.)*—Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the clause." Debate resumed 1538

Question put, "That the words 'in the aggregate' stand part of the clause."—The Committee divided:—Ayes, 157; Noes, 79.—(Division List, No. 62) 1541

Amendment proposed, after the word "aggregate," to insert the words—

"the sum per scholar contributed by voluntary subscriptions for each such school in each year and in any event not exceeding."—*(Mr. Evans)* 1541

First Lord of the Treasury claimed to move, "That the Question be now put" 1551

Chairman of Ways and Means withheld his assent 1551

Mr. Carson claimed to move, "That the Question be now put" ... 1552

Question put, "That the Question be now put."—The Committee divided:—Ayes, 266; Noes, 109.—(Division List, No. 63) 1552

Question put accordingly, "That those words be there inserted."—The Committee divided:— Ayes, 96; Noes, 296.—(Division List, No. 64)... 1552

Amendment proposed, to leave out the word "*five*," in order to insert instead thereof the word "*four*."—*(Mr. Evans)* 1552

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First Lord of the Treasury claimed to move, "That the Question be now put" 1562

Question put, "That the Question be now put."—The Committee divided:—Ayes, 291; Noes, 124.—(Division List, No. 65) ... 1562

Question put accordingly, "That the word '*five*' stand part of the Clause."—The Committee divided:—Ayes, 320; Noes, 94.—(Division List, No. 66) 1563

First Lord of the Treasury claimed to move, "That the Question 'That the words of the clause down to the word "to," in line 10—("The Aid Grant shall be distributed by the Education Department to")—stand part of the clause,' be now put" 1563

Question put, "That the Question 'That the words of the clause down to the word "to," in line 10, stand part of the clause,' be now put."—The Committee divided:—Ayes, 280; Noes, 111.—(Division List, No. 67) 1564

Question put accordingly, "That the words of the clause down to the word 'to,' in line 10, stand part of the clause." The Committee divided:—Ayes, 282; Noes, 105.—(Division List, No. 68) ... 1564

Committee report Progress; to sit again To-morrow 1564

LORDS: THURSDAY, 4TH MARCH 1897.

LORD FARNHAM (CLAIM TO VOTE FOR REPRESENTATIVE PEERS FOR IRELAND):—Report from Lord Chancellor 1565

SAT FIRST:—The Viscount Gough sat first in Parliament after the death of his father 1565

Thompson's Divorce Bill [H.L.]:—Considered in Committee; reported without Amendment; Standing Committee negatived 1565

Retirement of Vestrymen and Auditors (London) Bill [H.L.]:—After brief Debate, Bill Read a Second time, and committed to a Committee of the Whole House To-morrow 1565

Land Transfer Bill [H.L.]:—After short Debate, Read 2a, and committed to a Committee of the Whole House 1566

IRISH MAILS:—Questions, Earl of Belmore; Answers, Postmaster General... 1568

Working Men's Dwellings Bill [H.L.]:—Bill to provide facilities for the acquisition by working men of their own dwellings; presented by Lord Norton, and Read 1a—[No. 24] 1570

COMMONS: THURSDAY, 4TH MARCH 1897.

PRIVATE BUSINESS.

Dublin Port and Docks Board Bill:—Read a Second time, and committed ... 1571

Local Government (Ireland) Provisional Orders (No. 1) Bill:—Instruction ruled out of order.—*(Mr. Patrick O'Brien)* 1571

QUESTIONS.

INCOME TAX FORMS—Question, Mr. Kearley; Answer, Chancellor of the Exchequer 1573

VOLUNTEER BATTALIONS (ALDERSHOT)—Question, Sir H. Vincent; Answer, Under Secretary for War 1574

PIERS (IRELAND)—Questions, Captain Donelan; Answers, Chief Secretary for Ireland 1574

VOLUNTEER OFFICERS (EXAMINATIONS)—Question, Mr. J. H. Roberts; Answer, Under Secretary for War 1575

ROYAL IRISH CONSTABULARY (PENSIONS)—Question, Mr. Patrick O'Brien; Answer, Chief Secretary for Ireland 1576

NATIONAL SCHOOL TEACHERS' PENSION (IRELAND)—Question, Mr. Patrick O'Brien; Answer, Chief Secretary for Ireland 1576

LIGHTSHIPS (IRELAND)—Questions, Mr. Carew and Mr. Patrick O'Brien; Answers, President of the Board of Trade 1577

SUCK DRAINAGE SCHEME—Question, Mr. O'Kelly; Answer, Chief Secretary for Ireland 1578

RECRUITING AREAS (COLONIES)—Question, Captain Pirie; Answer, Under Secretary for War 1579

CORDITE (H.M.'s SHIPS)—Question, Mr. Gedge; Answer, Financial Secretary to the War Office 1579

BANDSMEN ASSAULTED (SCOTLAND)—Questions, Mr. Johnston; Answer, Lord Advocate 1580

UNIVERSITY EXTENSION (ANNUAL GRANT)—Question, Sir J. Mowbray; Answer, Chancellor of the Exchequer 1581

TRAMPS (IRELAND)—Question, Mr. Johnston; Answer, Chief Secretary for Ireland 1582

IMPERIAL MUSEUM, CALCUTTA—Question, Mr. Bhownaggree; Answer, Secretary of State for India 1582

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VOLUNTARY SCHOOLS BILL (EVENING CONTINUATION SCHOOLS)—Question, Mr. Hobhouse; Answer, Vice President of the Council... 1583

NORTH EASTERN RAILWAY (ADDITIONAL POWERS) BILL—Question, Mr. Tomlinson; Answer, President of the Board of Trade 1584

LAND COURTS (IRELAND)—Questions, Mr. Macaleese, Mr. Daly, and Mr. M. Austin; Answers, Chief Secretary for Ireland 1584

JAMESON RAID (PRESIDENT KRUGER'S CLAIM)—Question, General Russell; Answer, Secretary of State for the Colonies 1585

ENTERIC FEVER (INDIA)—Question, General Russell; Answer, Secretary of State for India 1586

SALISBURY PLAIN (TENANT FARMERS)—Question, Mr. Goulding; Answer, Financial Secretary to the War Office 1586

STEAMSHIP "UTOPIA" (CLAIM AGAINST OWNERS)—Question, Mr. Baird; Answer, Under Secretary for Foreign Affairs 1587

CERTIFICATED TEACHER'S DISMISSAL (GAWBER, NEAR BARNSLEY)—Question, Mr. Yoxall; Answer, Vice President of the Council 1587

CHILDREN'S METROPOLITAN ASYLUMS BOARD—Questions, Mr. Cohen and Mr. Lough; Answers, President of the Local Government Board 1588

CHELSEA HOSPITAL—Questions, Captain Donelan; Answers, Under Secrefor War 1589

COLCHESTER BARRACKS—Question, Mr. Round; Answer, Under Secretary for War 1590

TRUNK TELEPHONE SYSTEM (SCOTLAND)—Question, Mr. Crombie; Answer, Secretary to the Treasury 1590

EVICTED TENANTS (IRELAND)—Question, Mr. Dillon; Answer, Chief Secretary for Ireland 1590

GREAT NORTHERN RAILWAY COMPANY OF IRELAND—Question, Mr. Carew; Answer, Chief Secretary for Ireland 1591

TILLETT MR. BEN (IMPRISONMENT IN BELGIUM)—Question, Mr. Broadhurst; Answer, Under Secretary for Foreign Affairs 1592

INDIAN FAMINE—Questions, Sir William Wedderburn and Mr. MacNeill; Answers, Secretary of State for India [Mr. Speaker] 1592

INDIAN COUNCIL—Question, Sir William Wedderburn; Answer, Secretary of State for India 1593

LIMERICK (NIGHT WATCH)—Question, Mr. M. Austin; Answer, Chief Secretary for Ireland 1593

LIMERICK CANAL AND SHANNON SERVICE—Question, Mr. M. Austin; Answer, Secretary to the Treasury 1594

TRUCK ACT (METROPOLITAN DISTRICT RAILWAY COMPANY)—Question, Mr. Lough; Answer, Home Secretary... 1595

SCOTTISH RIFLES (5TH VOLUNTEER BATTALION)—Questions, Mr. J. Wilson (Falkirk Burghs); Answers, Under Secretary for War 1595

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ARMY HORSES—Questions, Mr. Flynn, Captain Nolan, and Mr. Patrick O'Brien; Answers, Financial Secretary to the War Office 1597

WEST HAM (ELECTRIC LIGHT)—Question, Mr. Duncombe; Answer, President of the Local Government Board 1597

"COSTA RICA" PACKET CASE—Question, Mr. Hogan; Answer, Under Secretary for Foreign Affairs 1598

SICKNESS AMONG SCHOOL CHILDREN (CO. DONEGAL)—Question, Mr. Macaleese; Answer, Chief Secretary for Ireland 1598

MUNICIPAL VOTERS ACT (AUGHNACLOY)—Questions, Mr. Macaleese; Answers, Attorney General 1599

SERVANTS' HOMES AND AGENCIES—Question, Mr. Woods; Answer, Home Secretary 1600

PRISON CLERKS (PARLIAMENTARY ELECTIONS)—Question, Mr. Woods; Answer, Home Secretary 1600

COURT OF BANKRUPTCY (IRELAND)—Question, Mr. Patrick O'Brien; Answer, Chief Secretary for Ireland 1601

MARYBOROUGH GAOL (PRISONER FITZHARRIS)—Question, Mr. Patrick O'Brien; Answer, Chief Secretary for Ireland 1601

QUEEN'S REIGN (VISIT OF COLONIAL PREMIERS)—Question, Mr. Cavendish; Answer, Secretary of State for the Colonies 1602

BURIAL GROUNDS—Questions, Mr. Stephens and Mr. F. Wilson; Answers, President of the Local Government Board 1602

MUZZLING DOGS—Questions, Mr. Stephens; Answers, President of the Board of Agriculture 1603

CRETE—Questions, Mr. Flynn, Captain Donelan, Mr. J. Lowther, Sir E. Ashmead-Bartlett, Sir William Harcourt, and Sir C. Dilke; Answers, Under Secretary for Foreign Affairs and First Lord of the Treasury [Mr. Speaker] 1604

CLARE ASSIZES (DIMINUTION OF CRIME)—Question, Mr. Patrick O'Brien; Answer, Chief Secretary for Ireland 1608

COUNTY COURT JUDGE (CO. DOWN)—Question, Mr. Patrick O'Brien; Answer, Chief Secretary for Ireland 1608

WEST INDIA AND CAPE MAILS—Question, Sir Edward Clarke; Answer, Secretary to the Treasury 1609

JUDGES (TRANSVAAL)—Questions, Sir E. Ashmead-Bartlett; Answers, Secretary of State for the Colonies 1610

ONE-MAN COMPANIES—Questions, Mr. Lewis and Sir W. Hart-Dyke; Answers, Attorney General 1610

CORNISH MINING INDUSTRY—Question, Mr. Strauss; Answer, First Lord of the Treasury 1611

IMPERIAL TAXES (IRELAND)—Questions, Mr. Lough; Answers, First Lord of the Treasury 1612

EMPLOYERS' LIABILITY BILL—Question, Mr. Woods; Answer, First Lord of the Treasury 1613

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ORDERS OF THE DAY.

Voluntary Schools Bill :—Considered in Committee; Progress 3rd March—[FOURTH DAY]—

Clause 1,—(Aid grant to Voluntary Elementary Schools) 1613

Amendment proposed, in Sub-section (2) to leave out from the word "to" to the end of the sub-section, in order to insert the words "all Voluntary Schools at the rate of five shillings per scholar in average attendance"—*(Mr. Griffith)* 1614

First Lord of the Treasury claimed to move, "That the Question be now put" 1646

Question put, "That the Question be now put."—The Committee divided :—Ayes, 224; Noes, 90.—(Division List, No. 69) ... 1646

Question put accordingly, "That the words 'to such Voluntary Schools' stand part of the Clause."—The Committee divided :—Ayes, 228; Noes, 88.—(Division List, No. 70) 1647

Amendment proposed, in Sub-section (2), to leave out all the words after "schools," to the end of the sub-section, and to insert—

"in accordance with regulations which will insure that it shall be applied—

(*a*) in improving the teaching staff as regards number, qualification, or salary; and so far as it is not in the opinion of the Education Department required for that purpose—

(*b*) in the payment of the teaching staff, the provision of special teachers whether on the permanent staff or not, and in the improvement of the education of pupil teachers and

(*c*) in the improvement of the educational fittings and apparatus of the school, and in otherwise increasing its efficiency."—*(Sir J. Woodhouse.)* 1647

Question put, "That the words 'and in such manner' stand part of the Clause."—The Committee divided :—Ayes, 259; Noes, 119.—(Division List, No. 71) 1667

Amendment proposed, in Sub-section (2) to leave out the words "and amounts."—*(Mr. Evans)* 1668

Question put, "That the words 'and amounts' stand part of the clause." The Committee divided :—Ayes, 260; Noes, 100.—(Division List, No. 72) 1670

Committee report Progress; to sit again on Monday next 1672

Military Works (Money) Bill :—Committee deferred 1672

Public Health (Scotland) Bill :—Adjourned Debate on Second Reading (5th February) further adjourned 1672

Law of Evidence (Criminal Cases) Bill :—Second Reading deferred 1672

Trusts (Scotland) Bill :—Committee deferred 1672

Local Government (Aldershot and Farnborough) Bill :—Second Reading deferred 1672

Berriew School Bill:—Second Reading deferred 1673

Military Lands Act (1892) Amendment Bill:—Committee deferred 1673

Metropolitan and other Police Courts Bill:—Second Reading deferred ... 1673

SUPPLY:—Committee deferred 1673

WAYS AND MEANS:—Committee deferred 1673

Registration of Parliamentary Voters Bill:—Second Reading deferred ... 1673

Steam Engines and Boilers (Persons in Charge) Bill:—Adjourned Debate on Motion for Committal to Standing Committee on Trade, Etc., [17th February] further adjourned 1673

Plumbers' Registration Bill:—Second Reading deferred 1673

Rating of Machinery Bill:—Second Reading deferred 1673

Succession (Scotland) Bill:—Second Reading deferred 1673

Marriage with a Deceased Wife's Sister Bill:—Second Reading deferred ... 1673

Rivers Pollution Prevention Bill:—Second Reading deferred 1674

Poor Law Officers' Superannuation Act (1896) Amendment Bill:—Second Reading deferred 1674

Licences (Ireland) Bill:—Second Reading deferred 1674

Cemeteries Rating Bill:—Second Reading deferred 1674

Aliens Bill:—Second Reading deferred 1674

Shops (Early Closing) Bill:—Second Reading deferred 1674

Shops Bill:—Second Reading deferred 1674

Working Men's Dwellings Bill:—Second Reading deferred 1674

Justices of the Peace Bill:—Second Reading deferred 1674

Local Government (County Council Clerks) Bill:—Second Reading deferred ... 1674

Prison Made Goods (Importation) Bill:—Second Reading deferred 1674

Archdeaconry of London (Additional Endowments) Bill:—Adjourned Debate on Second Reading [24th February] further adjourned 1675

Labourers' Cottages (Ireland) Bill:—Second Reading deferred 1675

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Solicitors' (Ireland) Bill:—Second Reading deferred 1675

Appointment of High Sheriffs Bill:—Second Reading deferred... 1675

Local Government Act (1894) Amendment Bill:—Second Reading deferred 1675

Estates Tail Bill:—Second Reading deferred 1675

Juries Detention Bill:—Read a Second time, and Committed 1675

Licensing Exemption (Houses of Parliament) Bill:—Second Reading deferred 1675

MOTIONS.

Merchant Shipping (Undermanning) Bill:—To amend the Merchant Shipping Act 1894, with respect to the power of detention for undermanning; presented and Read the First time—(149) 1675

Foreign Prison Made Goods Bill:—To prohibit the importation of Foreign Prison Made Goods; presented and Read the First time—(150) 1676

Solicitors' (Magistracy) Bill:—To enable Solicitors of the High Court to act as County Justices; presented and Read the First time—(151) 1676

GOVERNMENT CONTRACTS (FAIR WAGES RESOLUTION):—Ordered that Mr. Jackson and Mr. Parker Smith be discharged from the Select Committee on Government Contracts (Fair Wages Resolution.) Ordered, that Mr. Aird and Sir William Arrol be added to the Committee—*(Sir William Walrond)* 1676

MERCHANDISE MARKS ACTS:—Return ordered—*(Sir Albert Rollit)* ... 1676

END OF VOL. XLVI.

BILLS DEALT WITH IN VOL. XLVI.

Title of Bill.	*Progress.*
Appointment of High Sheriffs (Ireland)... ...	Read 1°, Feb. 26.
Archdeaconry of London (Additional Endowments)	Debate on Second Reading, Feb. 24.
Borough Justices' Clerks	Read 1°, Feb. 17.
Burials	Second Reading Negatived, Feb. 24.
Chelsea Water Purchase	Read 1°, Feb. 10.
Christchurch Inclosure Allotments	Read 2ª, Mar. 1.
Church Patronage Transfer	Read 1°, Feb. 19.
Church Patronage Transfer [H.L.]	Read 1ª, Mar. 1.
City of London Sewers	Read 2°, Feb. 11.
Companies	Read 2ª, and Referred to Committee, Feb. 11
Congested Districts Board (Ireland) (Compulsory Purchase Powers)	Read 1°, Feb. 9.
County Councils (Qualification of Women) ...	Read 1°, Feb. 17.
County Courts (Right of Audience)	Read 1ª, Feb. 18.
County Surveyors (Ireland) Amendment ...	Withdrawn, Feb. 12.
Coventry Electric Tramways	Read 2°, Feb. 22.
Dublin Corporation	Debate on Second Reading, Feb. 17
Dublin Port and Docks Board	Read 2°, and Committed, Mar. 4.
East London Water (Purchase)	Read 2°, Feb. 26.
Estates Tail	Read 1°, Feb. 17.
Foreign Prison-made Goods	Read 1°, Mar. 4.
Gold and Silver Plate Licenses	Withdrawn, Mar. 2.
Grand Junction Water (Purchase)	Read 1°, Feb. 10.
Great Eastern Railway (General Powers) ...	Read 2°, Feb. 22.
Great Northern Railway	Read 2°, Feb. 25.
Highways	Read 1°, Feb. 9.
Juries' Detention	Read 2°, Mar. 4.
Justices of the Peace	Read 1°, Feb. 12.

Title of Bill.	*Progress.*
Kent Water (Purchase)	Read 1^{o}, Feb. 10.
Lambeth Water (Purchase)	Read 1^{o}, Feb. 10.
Land Tenure	Read 1^{o}, Feb. 24.
Land Transfer	Read 2^{a}, and Committed, Mar. 4.
Licensing Exemption (Houses of Parliament)	Debate on Second Reading, Feb. 19.
Local Government (County Council Clerks)	Read 1^{o}, Feb. 12.
Local Government Elections	Royal Assent, Feb. 16.
Locomotives on Highways	Read 1^{o}, Feb. 9.
London (Borough Road, Southwark) Provisional Order	Read 2^{o}, and Committed, Feb. 9.
London (Churchway, St. Pancras) Provisional Order	Read 2^{o}, and Committed, Feb. 9.
London (Clare Market, Strand) Provisional Order	Read 2^{o}, and Committed, Feb. 16.
London County Buildings	Second Reading Negatived, Feb. 18.
London County Council (General Powers)	Read 2^{o}, and Committed, Feb. 11.
London Water (Purchase)	Read 1^{o}, Feb. 10.
Marine Insurance	Re-committed to Standing Committee, Feb. 22.
Merchant Shipping	Read 1^{o}, Feb. 16.
Merchant Shipping (Undermanning)	Read 1^{o}, Mar. 4.
Metropolitan and other Police Courts	Read 1^{o}, Feb. 15.
Metropolitan Police Provisional Order	Read 2^{o}, and Committed, Feb. 16.
Midwives' Registration	Read 1^{o}, Feb. 9.
Military Lands Act (1892) Amendment	In Committee, Feb. 15.
Military Works	In Committee, Feb. 22.
New River Water (Purchase)	Read 1^{o}, Feb. 10.
North British Railway	Read 2^{o}, Feb. 22.
Post Office Consolidation	Referred to Joint Committee, Feb. 26.
Preferential Payments in Bankruptcy Act (1888) Amendment	Read 2^{o}, and Committed, Feb. 10.
Prisoners' Personal Correction Prohibition	Read 1^{o}, Mar. 2.
Prison-made Goods (Importation)	Read 1^{o}, Feb. 23.
Retirement of Vestrymen and Auditors (London)	Read 2^{a}, and Committed. Mar. 4.
Sale of Intoxicating Liquor on Sunday	Second Reading Negatived, Feb. 10.

Title of Bill.	*Progress.*
Sinclair's Divorce	Read 1ª, Feb. 26.
Solicitors (Ireland)	Read 1º, Feb. 26.
Solicitors (Magistracy)	Read 1º, Mar. 4.
Southwark and Vauxhall Water (Purchase)	Read 1º, Feb. 10.
Steam Engines and Boilers (Persons in Charge)	Read 2º, Feb. 17.
Thompson's Divorce	Reported without Amendment, Mar. 4.
Trusts (Scotland)	In Committee, Feb. 18.
Verminous Persons	Read 1º, Mar. 1.
Voluntary Schools	In Committee, Mar. 4.
Warehousemen's Certificates	Read 1º, Feb. 23.
West Middlesex Water (Purchase)	Read 1º, Feb. 10.
Working Men's Dwellings	Read 1ª, Mar. 4.

ERRATA.

Page 823.—After line 26, *insert*—

"Original Question put, and agreed to.

"4. £639,000, Transport and Remounts."

Page 1350.—Line 46, for "I think there is the Standing Orders" *read* "It certainly is not in the Standing Orders."

Page 1357.—In line 41, for "constituted" *read* "contributed."

THE

PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES

(Authorised Edition)

IN THE

THIRD SESSION OF THE *TWENTY-SIXTH PARLIAMENT* OF
THE UNITED KINGDOM OF *GREAT BRITAIN* AND *IRELAND*
APPOINTED TO MEET JANUARY 19, 1897, IN THE SIXTIETH YEAR OF
THE REIGN OF

HER MAJESTY QUEEN VICTORIA.

SECOND VOLUME OF SESSION 1897.

HOUSE OF LORDS.

Tuesday, 9th February 1897.

EARL OF LIMERICK.

Report made from the Lord Chancellor, that the right of Henry Edmond de Vere Sheaffe Earl of Limerick to vote at the elections of Representative Peers for Ireland has been established to the satisfaction of the Lord Chancellor; read, and ordered to lie on the Table.

MR. CHAMBERLAIN AND PRESIDENT KRUGER.

LORD LOCH: I wish to ask the noble Earl, the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies, a question of which I have given him private notice—namely, whether he has observed in the *Daily Telegraph* of February 1 a telegram from Pretoria stating that President Kruger had wished the correspondent of that paper to cable his views to the effect that—

> "it was quite time Mr. Chamberlain qualified his personal accusation against him, which was the non-fulfilment of the promises made to the Uitlanders. Let the undertakings which had not been carried out be named;"

and whether any notice has been taken of this singular message?

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES (The EARL of SELBORNE): In reply to the question of the noble Lord, I have to say that the telegram mentioned by the noble Lord did not escape the notice of Mr. Chamberlain, and he inquired of the President, through Lord Rosmead, asking whether he had really expressed this wish. I am able to take this opportunity of saying that President Kruger has replied:—

> "There must be a mistake. I can say that I am not in the habit of making observations on subjects of the nature of those treated of in your telegram through such a channel as that mentioned, and that I have not done so in this instance."

[*Cheers.*]

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ELECTIONS) BILL.

LORD HERSCHELL moved the Second Reading of this Bill, which, he said, had the approval of the Local Government

Board and had passed the other House by common consent. A Bill dealing with the same subject was passed last year, but it was made only a temporary Bill to last for a year. The object of the Bill was to insure that where the date of election was fixed before March 25—and it was this year fixed for March 18—the qualification of those who entered into residence the previous March 25, which was the ordinary time for changing residence in many parts of the country, should be a good one. The second clause gave a margin of a month for holding the annual assembly of the parish meeting, instead of a fortnight as at present. It was thought this would be more convenient in some places.

LORD HARRIS said the Local Government Board had no objection to the Bill, and was very anxious that the Bill should pass as quickly as possible in order that those persons nominated this year might be eligible.

Read 2ª (according to Order), and committed to a Committee of the Whole House on Thursday next.

House Adjourned at Twenty-five Minutes before Five o'clock, to Thursday next, a Quarter-past Four o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

Tuesday, 9th February 1897.

PRIVATE BILLS.

LONDON (BOROUGH ROAD, SOUTHWARK) PROVISIONAL ORDER BILL.

Read a Second time, and committed.

LONDON (CHURCHWAY, ST. PANCRAS) PROVISIONAL ORDER BILL.

Read a Second time, and committed.

SURVEYORS (COUNTY DUBLIN) BILL.

Second Reading deferred from Thursday till Thursday, 18th February.

Lord Herschell.

NOTICES OF MOTION.

METROPOLITAN POOR LAW SCHOOLS (REPORT, ETC.).

MR. E. H. PICKERSGILL (Bethnal Green, S.W.): To call attention to the Report of the recent Committee on Metropolitan Poor Law Schools, and to the draft Order of the President of the Local Government Board relating to such Schools; and to move a Resolution. —[*Tuesday, 9th March.*]

LAND TENURE (GREAT BRITAIN).

MR. J. W. LOGAN (Leicester, Harborough): To call attention to the Land Question in Great Britain; and to move a Resolution.—[*Tuesday, 9th March.*]

RAILWAY RATES.

MR. HERBERT ROBERTS (Derbyshire, W.): To call attention to the question of Railway Rates; and to move a Resolution.—[*Tuesday, 9th March.*]

SMALL FREEHOLDERS (WALES).

MR. REES DAVIES (Pembrokeshire): To call attention to the hardships of the Small Occupying Freeholders in Wales; and to move a Resolution.—[*Tuesday, 9th March.*]

FINANCIAL RELATIONS BETWEEN GREAT BRITAIN AND IRELAND.

MR. J. J. CLANCY (Dublin Co., N.): That, in the opinion of this House, the Report of the Royal Commission appointed to inquire into the Financial Relations between Great Britain and Ireland discloses a serious grievance which affects all classes of the people of that country, and demands the immediate attention of Her Majesty's Government with a view to meeting the just claims of Ireland in respect thereof.—[*An early day.*]

QUESTIONS.

ILLEGAL TRAWLING (SCOTLAND).

MR. J. G. WEIR (Ross and Cromarty): I beg to ask the Lord Advocate if he will state in how many instances during the year 1896 the Fishery Board for Scotland received complaints of trawlers working at night without lights, or on other occasions with their names and numbers concealed; and, if he can state in how many such cases prosecutions have been instituted, and in how many cases convictions have been obtained?

*THE LORD ADVOCATE (MR. GRAHAM MURRAY, Buteshire): I am informed by the Fishery Board that the number of complaints received in 1896 of trawlers working at night without lights was 14, while six were complained of for concealment of letters and numbers. Eight prosecutions were instituted, and convictions were obtained in seven cases. Two of the latter were for concealing letters and numbers.

MR. WEIR: I beg to ask the Lord Advocate whether, having regard to the fact that the Secretary for Scotland intimated on the 23rd November last that a policy was being arranged for the better policing of the seas on the coast of Scotland, he will state whether any difficulty has arisen with either the Admiralty or the Treasury in the negotiations, and how soon he expects to be in a position to announce the nature of the projected provision for the better protection of the interests of the line fishermen?

*THE LORD ADVOCATE: As the hon. Member is aware, I promised him last Thursday to announce the arrangements for sea policing at the earliest possible opportunity. I do not think that the lapse of five days warrants the apprehension of a difficulty which does not exist.

ARMY SPECIAL CAMPAIGN PENSIONS.

SIR JOHN LENG (Dundee): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for War what number of compassionate pensions have been granted during the last three years to men who served in the Crimean and Indian Mutiny campaigns; how many men in receipt of such pensions have died during the same period; and what changes, if any, have been made during the last 12 months in the regulations under which these compassionate pensions are granted?

*THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY TO THE WAR OFFICE (MR. POWELL-WILLIAMS, Birmingham, S.): During the last three years 1,539 special campaign pensions have been granted, and 279 have lapsed by death. The conditions of grant have been altered during the last year, by including in the minimum of qualifying service a portion of that given under age and of that forfeited.

PATENT OFFICE.

SIR JOHN LENG: I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade whether he can arrange that in the published accounts of the Controller of the Patent Office a fair proportion of the charges for salaries, printing, stationery, and buildings, should be apportioned under the three separate headings for patents, trade marks, and designs, so that the surplus under each heading may be clearly seen?

THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF TRADE (Mr. C. T. RITCHIE, Croydon): I am afraid I cannot comply with the request of the hon. Member. In an endeavour to make "a fair proportion" the Controller could not be even approximately accurate, and it would be a misfortune to prepare accounts for publication on a basis which might lay them open to adverse criticism.

INDIAN STAFF CORPS.

SIR SEYMOUR KING (Hull, Central): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for India whether he has been informed that more than 200 memorials from officers of the Indian Staff Corps have been forwarded in the regular way to the Commander-in-Chief in India, praying for a reopening and reconsideration of the question of supersession of Staff Corps Officers by juniors in the British Army in India; whether the Commander-in-Chief has forwarded their memorials to the Government of India; and, whether the Viceregal authorities have made any representations on the subject to the Secretary of State?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR INDIA (LORD GEORGE HAMILTON, Middlesex, Ealing): I have no information as to the submission of any memorials by officers of the Indian Staff Corps regarding their supersession by officers of the British Army in India, nor have I received any representation on the subject from the Government of India.

TRUCK ACT (FINES AT BELFAST).

*Sir CHARLES DILKE (Gloucester, Forest of Dean): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether it is possible to inform the House as to the nature of the instructions given to Her Majesty's inspectors with regard to the new Truck Act, and arising out of the recent publication of lists of fines at Belfast; and whether test cases are to be taken into court?

The SECRETARY of STATE for the HOME DEPARTMENT (Sir Matthew White Ridley, Lancashire, Blackpool): The instructions referred to are of general application and were issued before the Act came into operation, and, therefore, before the dispute at Belfast arose; I shall be glad to lay them on the Table for the information of the House. I am watching closely the course of events at Belfast, and do not propose at present to take any test cases into court. Some of the items in the original list against which the workers struck are, I think, inconsistent with the Act; but most, if not all of these, have now been withdrawn. The points which remain in dispute are for the most part outside the operation of the Act, but I trust that a satisfactory settlement will be arrived at.

POST OFFICE ESTABLISHMENTS.

Mr. VICARY GIBBS (Herts, St. Albans): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury, as representing the Postmaster General, whether he will give an assurance that, in any steps which may be taken consequent on the Report of the Tweedmouth Commission on Post Office Establishments, nothing shall be done to in any way prejudice the prospects of the clerical staff, who were expressly debarred from giving evidence before the Commission?

The SECRETARY to the TREASURY (Mr. R. W. Hanbury, Preston): No class of Post Office servants will suffer for want of any evidence which they might have desired to lay before Lord Tweedmouth's Committee, but it is obviously impossible to say that the clerical staff, or indeed any other section of the Post Office staff, may not regard as a grievance any changes which may be made in the organisation of the service.

RAILWAY CLEARING HOUSE INCORPORATION BILL.

Mr. W. E. M. TOMLINSON (Preston): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade whether the Board of Trade intend to make a special Report with reference to the Railway Clearing House Incorporation Bill?

Mr. RITCHIE: If the Committee on the Bill desire any information from the Board of Trade with regard to any of its proposals, such information as far as the Board possess will be available, but it does not devolve upon the Department to make any Report on the Bill.

Mr. TOMLINSON asked whether that referred to the Committee of the House of Lords or to the Committee of the House of Commons?

Mr. RITCHIE said it referred to either Committee.

RAILWAY COMPANIES AND COMPLAINANT TRADERS.

Mr. HUDSON KEARLEY (Devonport): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade why his Department, which between 1888 and 1894 made four Reports to Parliament as to its proceedings under Section 31 of the Railway and Canal Traffic Act, 1888, has allowed nearly three years to elapse since the last Report as to the success attending the Board's efforts at conciliation between the Railway Companies and complainant traders was published; and, when the next Report on this subject may be expected?

Mr. RITCHIE: A very large number of complaints were made to the Board under the Railway and Canal Traffic Act, 1894, and the Department had hoped to include them all in one Report. The fate of a large number of these cases, however, has depended on the result of litigation before the Railway and Canal Commissioners, which is not even yet at an end, and the Board have, therefore, come to the conclusion that it would be inexpedient to longer defer making a Report. A draft has been prepared and is in type.

ICELANDIC FISHERIES.

Mr. CHARLES WILSON (Hull, W.): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade what action the Government propose to take on the resolutions passed at a conference between the Hull and Grimsby Fishing Vessels Owners Association, held at Hull on the 6th January, at which a representative of the Board of Trade was present, in reference to the right of navigation of British fishing vessels in Icelandic waters, and the request for a British squadron to protect their rights?

Mr. RITCHIE said he thought that was a question that ought to be addressed to the First Lord of the Admiralty.

Mr. C. H. WILSON asked whether the Board of Trade would receive a deputation on this subject, as this fishing was about to commence?

Mr. RITCHIE said he knew the matter was largely one for the Board of Trade, but the particular question which the hon. Gentleman desired to put was one in regard to which the Board of Trade had no jurisdiction. If the hon. Gentleman addressed the Question to the First Lord of the Admiralty he had no doubt his right hon. Friend would be able to give an answer.

Mr. GEORGE DOUGHTY (Great Grimsby): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether, seeing the great services rendered to the British fisheries by Commodore Atkinson of the training squadron in Icelandic waters during the summer of 1896, the Government will consider the request of the fishing trade to send a similar squadron into these seas for the protection of English fishermen during the coming season?

***Mr. CURZON**: A ship will be sent into Icelandic waters in the forthcoming summer if circumstances at the time admit.

Mr. WEIR asked whether the Government would consider the advisability of sending ships to protect the line fishermen on the coasts of Scotland instead of sending them to these isolated waters?

***Mr. CURZON**: I think that question is hardly supplemental to the one I have answered.

GREENWICH AGE PENSION.

General LAURIE (Pembroke and Haverfordwest): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Admiralty how many naval pensioners are now receiving the Greenwich Age Pension; how many naval pensioners have been placed on the list as eligible or are otherwise entitled in accordance with the regulations but are not in receipt of this pension on account of insufficiency of funds; and whether it is the intention of the Government to ask for a grant sufficient to meet the claims of all who are by regulations entitled to this addition to their pension?

Mr. KEARLEY: I beg to ask the First Lord of the Admiralty whether, in view of the fact that a large number of seamen and marines are qualified to receive the Greenwich Age Pension, but nevertheless are not receiving it for want of funds assigned for that purpose, the Government will carry out the recommendation of the Report from the Select Committee on Greenwich Hospital Age Pensions, that an additional sum of £3,200 at present appropriated for pensions of officers and the education of their children, be transferred to the fund out of which the Greenwich Age Pensions are paid?

The CIVIL LORD of the ADMIRALTY (Mr. Austen Chamberlain, Worcestershire, E.): The number of naval pensioners receiving Greenwich Age Pensions on January 1 last was 9,904. This number will be increased by the end of the financial year to the full number, 10,010, provided for in the Greenwich Hospital Estimates for the current year. There are 1,100 candidates on the list of applicants to whom it has not yet been possible to award a Greenwich Pension. The Admiralty have recently obtained the sanction of the Treasury to the payment of an increased rent for the use of part of Greenwich Hospital as a Naval College, which will enable more pensions to be granted. The Admiralty are not prepared to give effect to the suggestion that an additional sum of £3,200 a year at present appropriated for pensions of officers and educational grants to their children should be transferred to the fund out of which Greenwich Age Pensions are paid. I should add that the Select Committee made no recommendation on the subject.

CHILDREN'S METROPOLITAN ASYLUMS BOARD.

Mr. J. G. TALBOT (Oxford University): I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board whether he can inform the House what expressions of opinion he has received from the various Boards of Guardians in the Metropolis as to the proposed new Board for the care of various classes of children chargeable to the rates?

*THE PRESIDENT OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (MR. HENRY CHAPLIN, Lincolnshire, Seaford): The number of definite answers received is very few. Some are in favour, some disapprove of the proposed new Board, and in several cases they have asked for further time to consider the proposals before definite action is taken. But so far as I can judge at present the proposals of the Board would be preferred to those of the Poor Law Schools Committee by a large majority of the authorities.

MR. B. L. COHEN (Islington, E.) asked the right hon. Gentleman whether he would have any objection to lay any of the answers of the Guardians on the Table?

PARISH RECORDS (IRELAND).

MR. J. C. FLYNN (Cork, N.): I beg to ask the Attorney General for Ireland whether it is the case that, under the Parochial Records Act, 1876, an order was made that every parish in Ireland which was not provided with a suitable safe should send up its register of baptisms, marriages, and burials to the Record Office in Dublin; and whether, in the case of an incumbent of a parish who is willing to provide safe and suitable accommodation for the parish records, these will be returned by the Record Office to the parish, if application is made to the Master of the Rolls?

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. JOHN ATKINSON, Londonderry): Under the Parochial Records Act, 1876, every parish in Ireland which was not provided with a suitable safe, sent its register of baptisms, marriages, and burials to the Record Office in Dublin. The Master of the Rolls had no power to order them to be returned, and I am not aware that there are any means of securing their return.

Mr. J. G. Talbot.

GIANT'S CAUSEWAY AND PORTRUSH TRAMWAY.

MR. J. PINKERTON (Galway): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade whether the Board of Trade have taken any steps to compel the proper working of the electric motor power of the Giant's Causeway, Portrush, and Bush Valley Railway and Tramway, in accordance with the Report and recommendations of Major P. Cardew, the Board of Trade inspector, dated the 3rd October 1895, and made by him after holding an exhaustive inquiry into the working of the Tramway; and if the Board of Trade have not taken any such steps, whether they intend to do so; whether it has come to the knowledge of the Board of Trade that the Giant's Causeway Tramway Company are working the line in a similar way to what they had been doing when it was so severely condemned by the Board of Trade's Inspector, and which was characterised in the Report as a danger to the public and an annoyance to ordinary traffic, and that although almost a year and a-half have now elapsed since the issue of the said Report they, the Company, have made no effort whatever to carry out any of the Board's inspector's recommendations; and whether it has come to the knowledge of the Board of Trade that no car of any description whatever was run on the 19th of January, and for some day's previous to that date, and that the public were greatly inconvenienced thereby?

MR. RITCHIE: The Board of Trade are not in a position to compel the tramways company to adopt the recommendations of Major Cardew. They understand, however, that the Company are prepared to do so as soon as they are able to raise the necessary capital. The Board have repeatedly urged upon the Company the importance of ceasing to work the line by electricity until the alterations have been carried out. The Company have not, however, complied with this suggestion, but they have stated that during the winter the electric working would be restricted to two runs of one electric car each way and at a reduced pressure. I have received no information as to a recent stoppage of the traffic on this tramway.

MR. T. LOUGH (Islington, W.) asked if the right hon. Gentleman could say why the Board of Trade were not in a position to compel?

MR. RITCHIE: I cannot say why Parliament has not intrusted the Board with that power; but, as a matter of fact, they are not so intrusted.

MUSGRAVE STREET POLICE BARRACKS, BELFAST.

MR. D. MACALEESE (Monaghan, N.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland how long the Royal Irish Constabulary have been in occupation of the new barracks in Musgrave Street, Belfast; how many cases of fever have occurred since the Constabulary entered into occupation of the place, and how many of the men have died from fever therein; and what steps have been taken by the authorities to check or prevent the spread of fever since the first case occurred in the barracks in question?

THE CHIEF SECRETARY FOR IRELAND (MR. GERALD BALFOUR, Leeds, Central): Eight cases of fever have occurred in this barrack since its occupation on the 12th December 1893. Four men, two of whom were in delicate health, have died from fever since that date. On the occasion of each outbreak of this disease (typhoid fever) the Public Health Department was informed, and the Medical Officer of Health and his assistants accompanied by the Medical Attendant to the Royal Irish Constabulary and the Officer of the Board of Works, by whom the barrack was built, made a careful examination of the barrack premises, drains, and sewers, with the result that they could not find that the disease had originated from any defect in the sanitary arrangements. As I have already informed my hon. Friend the hon. Member for East Belfast, the Officers of the Public Health Department, the Constabulary Medical Officer, and the Board of Works are at present making further investigations into the matter.

STREET ORGAN GRINDERS.

MR. J. A. JACOBY (Derbyshire, Mid): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether his attention has been directed to the case of Mr. William Bird, who prosecuted an organ grinder at Westminster Police Court on the 2nd instant, in which case it transpired that, on the prosecutor requiring the man to remove and giving his reasons for so doing, he was met in the first place with gross insult, and secondly had his life threatened by the offender; and, whether, as the case was dismissed, he will consider of strengthening the law in these cases?

MR. PICKERSGILL asked the right hon. Gentleman whether he had seen the report of this case in *The Times*, and that there was not a word about "insult," gross or otherwise, or of the utterance of threats?

SIR MATTHEW WHITE RIDLEY: I don't think I have seen the report in *The Times*. In answer to the Question on the Paper, my attention has been called to this case. The summons, which was for playing an organ to the annoyance of the prosecutor, was dismissed, so I understand, by the magistrate, on the ground that, in his opinion, the prosecutor had failed to prove that any of the conditions existed which are required by the Statute before a musician can be ordered to depart. I cannot interfere with this decision, nor do I think that it affords a sufficient ground for amending the law. The use of threatening, abusive or insulting language is a different matter entirely, for which provision is also made by the Police Acts; but I do not gather that any charge was made by the prosecutor in regard to this.

MR. R. PIERPOINT (Warrington) asked the right hon. Gentleman whether, in view of the decisions which had been given recently, he was aware that the majority of the people who grind these organs in the streets were foreigners, and—

*MR. SPEAKER: Order, order! That does not arise out of this Question.

ORDNANCE STORE DEPARTMENT.

MR. H. C. F. LUTTRELL (Devon, Tavistock): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Admiralty whether he is aware that five conductors of the Ordnance Store Department, who were selected and transferred from Army to Naval Service, and by Order in Council, had their rights and privileges guaranteed, complain that the conditions have not been fulfilled; and, whether he will take steps to have their claims considered?

THE FIRST LORD OF THE ADMIRALTY (Mr. GOSCHEN, St. George's, Hanover Square): In reply to the hon. Member, I have to say that the question is still under consideration.

DAUNT'S ROCK LIGHTSHIP.

MR. W. FIELD (Dublin, St. Patrick): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade whether he can state when the inquiry regarding the loss of the *Puffin* will be held; whether it will be public, and will the evidence be taken on oath; and whether a guarantee will be given that employees giving evidence shall be protected from any unpleasant consequences?

MR. RITCHIE: Instructions have been given to hold the inquiry regarding the loss of the *Puffin* forthwith, but no date has yet been fixed. The inquiry will be public, and the evidence will be taken on oath. The hon. Member may rest assured that every possible protection will be afforded to employees giving evidence.

MR. J. C. FLYNN (Cork, N.) asked the right hon. Gentleman if he was aware that the ship was lost so long ago as October, and what was the cause of the delay?

MR. RITCHIE: I am quite aware of the fact mentioned by the hon. Member, but difficulties arose as to our holding an inquiry. Those difficulties, in consequence of representations that were made to me, I felt bound to endeavour to overcome. I have overcome them, and the inquiry will be held.

BRAY HARBOUR (FOG BELL).

MR. FIELD: I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade whether the Commissioners of Irish Lights have refused to sanction the use of a fog bell at the new harbour of Bray; whether he is aware that the Commissioners were willing to arrange that it should have a sound perfectly different to that of any fog bell on the coast; and, whether he can state the reasons for refusal?

MR. RITCHIE: I am informed by the Commissioners of Irish Lights that the close proximity of the bell at Kingstown on one side, and of another bell at Wicklow on the other side, precluded the Commissioners from entertaining the application of the Bray Harbour Board for a similar fog signal. The Commissioners, however, inform me that they are quite prepared to consider any alternative proposal.

DISTRESS (WEST OF IRELAND).

MR. D. CRILLY (Mayo, N.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland if he has yet to hand the Report of the Commissioner of the Local Government Board who has been making a special inquiry into the nature and extent of the distress at present existing in the west of Ireland; if he has so received the Report, can he state the conclusion arrived at by this Commissioner as to the condition of the people living in the unions of Belmullet, Killala, and Ballina?

MR. GERALD BALFOUR: The Report of the Commissioner of the Local Government Board has been received, and I have also had the advantage of a personal interview with him on the subject. The result is to confirm the conclusion already arrived at, that there is no reason, at present, to anticipate that the opening of relief works will become necessary in any of these Unions.

MUNICIPAL FRANCHISE (IRELAND).

MR. WILLIAM JOHNSTON (Belfast, S.): I beg to ask the Attorney General for Ireland whether, in Sections 23, 24, 25 and 26 of the Dublin Corporation Bill, the word "occupier" includes persons of both sexes, and whether women will thereby be entitled to exercise the municipal franchise in Dublin.

*THE ATTORNEY GENERAL FOR IRELAND: I regret that I am unable to answer the hon. Member's question, as to do so would violate the practice that the Law Officers should not answer abstract questions of this kind.

PAWNBROKERS (IRELAND).

MR. CRILLY: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland if he will agree to the Return relating to Pawnbrokers in Ireland, which stands on this day's Paper?

MR. GERALD BALFOUR: It is necessary to make local inquiries as to the practicability of furnishing the Return referred to, and as there has not been sufficient time to complete those inquiries since the Notice appeared on the Paper this morning, I must ask the hon. Member to repeat the Question on Thursday next.

CONSECRATION OF BISHOP OF KILLALOE.

MR. WILLIAM JOHNSTON (Belfast, S.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland (1) is he aware that the Mayor of Cork was denounced on Sunday from the altars of the Roman Catholic churches in Cork, in consequence of his having attended officially at the consecration of the Bishop of Killaloe on the previous Tuesday; and (2) that, in St. Fin Barr's Chapel, the Right Rev. Monsignor Maguire, the Mayor's parish priest, declared that the Mayor would hand down the chain of office stained with the memory of the outrage committed; and (3) whether, considering the effects previously produced in Ireland by altar denunciations, the Government propose to take any action in these cases?

MR. J. C. FLYNN (Cork, N.) asked Mr. Speaker's ruling upon this question. As it contained an innuendo against the characters of two distinguished priests, was it not a form that transgressed the rules of order?

*MR. SPEAKER: I understand this to be a case in which the hon. Member states certain facts upon his own authority, and he must take the responsibility of doing so. ["Hear, hear!"]

MR. FLYNN: It is the second paragraph of the question to which I specially call attention. ["Hear, hear!"]

*MR. SPEAKER: I do not see anything contrary to order.

MR. GERALD BALFOUR: I have seen a newspaper report of the addresses alleged to have been delivered on the occasion in question, but I have no other information as to the nature of the language used. The Government have no intention of taking any action in the matter.

MR. W. JOHNSTON: Is the right hon. Gentleman aware that the Cork Corporation—two-thirds of whom are Roman Catholics—authorised the Mayor to attend officially at the consecration of the Bishop of Killaloe? [*Cries of* "Why not" *and* "What has that to do with it?"]

MR. GERALD BALFOUR: I do not see that that makes any difference or affects the question so far as the Government are concerned. ["Hear, hear!"]

BARRY ISLAND FORT.

MAJOR WYNDHAM-QUIN (Glamorgan, S.): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for War if he can state when the work of constructing the promised fort on Barry Island is to be commenced?

*THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR WAR (Mr. BRODRICK, Surrey, Guildford): Delay has arisen pending a satisfactory settlement with the District Council as to firing rights over a road in front of the intended battery, but as soon as this can be overcome it will be proceeded with.

CONVEYANCE OF TROOPS (SCOTLAND AND LONDON).

MR. J. McKILLOP (Stirlingshire): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for War whether he will state how many soldiers have been conveyed between Scotland and London, and *vice versâ*, annually since 1890; how many were conveyed by rail, and how many by steamer; and, if he will state the cost of conveying each soldier by rail and by steamer respectively?

MR. POWELL-WILLIAMS: A Return giving the particulars stated in the question can be compiled if my hon. Friend moves for it; but its preparation will give considerable trouble, and I am not aware that it will answer any useful purpose.

CAVAN, LEITRIM, AND ROSCOMMON LIGHT RAILWAY.

MR. PATRICK M'HUGH (Leitrim, N.): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury what is the amount of money levied up to the present time on cesspayers in the county of Leitrim who gave a guarantee in connection with the Cavan, Leitrim, and Roscommon Light Railway; can he state the yearly poundage in Leitrim since the cesspayers were called on to pay the guarantee; and can he hold out any hope of an early release of the cesspayers from the present tax?

Mr. HANBURY: The answer to this Question is too full of figures to be conveniently given across the floor, but I will send the hon. Member a written statement on the subject. As he will have gathered from my previous answers on the subject, the matter is not one with which the Treasury has anything to do beyond paying to the Grand Jury their share of the guarantee as fixed by law, and fixing the amount to be paid in commuting that share.

CRUELTY TO A SEAMAN (ss. "HORNBY CASTLE").

Mr. HAVELOCK WILSON (Middlesbrough): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade whether his attention has been directed to a case tried before the Borough Magistrates at the Falmouth Police Court on the 4th instant, when the captain of the sailing ship *Hornby Castle* was convicted for having, in August 1896, committed certain acts of gross cruelty upon a seaman named John Smith whilst serving on board the said ship, which acts covered and included placing the seaman in irons with his hands behind his back, striking and kicking the helpless seaman, unchaining a ferocious dog and setting it on to worry the seaman, and belabouring him with a loaded stick; and that the only penalty inflicted was a fine of £5; and whether it is his intention to order an official inquiry into this case with a view of dealing with the captain's certificate.

Mr. RITCHIE: My attention has been called to the case to which the hon. Member refers. Full inquiries are being made, with a view to enable the Board of Trade to decide whether the certificate of the Master should be dealt with under the Merchant Shipping Act.

INDIAN FAMINE (SILVER HOARDS).

Mr. M. M. BHOWNAGGREE (Bethnal Green, N.E.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for India whether the estimate which has been published of 1,312,500,000 ounces, as the silver savings of the inhabitants of India, is approximately correct; whether he is aware that in former famines such savings were usually exchangeable into rupees weight for weight, but now they have been depreciated about 700,000,000 rupees, or equal to £44,000,000 sterling, owing to the mints being no longer open for the coinage of silver, apart from any further deduction by the native dealers to cover their risk of the market; and whether the Government have any scheme in view to remedy the loss to the people in their distress?

Lord GEORGE HAMILTON: I cannot undertake to give any opinion as to the value of the estimate to which the hon. Member refers, or as to the total amount of the depreciation in relation to rupees of the uncoined silver held by natives of India. But, as I have already pointed out in reply to a question in this House, although there is now a greater divergence than formerly between the gold value of coined and uncoined silver in India, it does not follow that the purchasing power of silver bullion in that country has correspondingly fallen. The Government of India are sparing neither effort nor expenditure to assist the people in their distress, but such assistance will not be based upon the considerations mentioned in the hon. Member's Question.

CROFTERS' COMMISSION.

Mr. WEIR: I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury whether, having regard to the fact that he has recently promised a Return showing the cost of the Crofters' Commission up to the present time, he will also arrange to grant a Return showing the number of holdings the Crofters' Commission have visited in the counties of Argyll, Inverness, Ross and Cromarty, Caithness, and Orkney and Shetland respectively, the number of cases upon which they have adjudicated, the total amount of reductions they have made, and the total amount of arrears they have cancelled?

*The LORD ADVOCATE: As the hon. Member only put down this Question last night, I must ask him to postpone it till Friday next.

JAMESON RAID (PRISONERS AT HOLLOWAY).

Mr. PATRICK M'HUGH: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether Mr. Cecil Rhodes had on Saturday afternoon a long private interview with two convicts, Sir John Willoughby and Major White, now undergoing a term of imprisonment in Holloway Prison; and whether, seeing that private interviews are not allowed under the prison rules to Irish treason-felony prisoners now confined in English gaols and their friends, will he explain why this privilege was granted to the prisoners in Holloway?

Sir MATTHEW WHITE RIDLEY: It is the case that Mr. Rhodes had an interview with the two prisoners named. The visit lasted an hour, but was not, as suggested in the Question, of a private nature, being both in the sight and in the hearing of a prison officer. Permission for the visit was given by the Visiting Committee of the prison, who have, under the prison rules, in the case of first-class misdemeanants, the power of prolonging the period of a visit or allowing additional visits as they may deem advisable.

VOLUNTARY SCHOOLS BILL.

*Mr. J. A. CAMPBELL (Glasgow and Aberdeen Universities): I beg to ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer whether, in view of the provisions of the Voluntary Schools Bill, in the event of its becoming law, the claims of Scotland in the matter of further assistance to education from Imperial taxation will be considered, and adequate provision made to meet them?

The CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER (Sir Michael Hicks Beach, Bristol, W.): I stated some days ago, in answer to a question on this subject, that if the Voluntary Schools Bill became law no doubt fair aid would be given to education in Scotland, in such manner as may be suitable to the educational requirements of that country. That is, I think, an answer in the affirmative to my hon. Friend's Question.

Mr. J. W. MELLOR (York, W.R., Sowerby): I beg to ask the Attorney General whether Clause 3 of the Education Bill, which exempts Voluntary Schools from the payment of any local rate in respect of any land or buildings used exclusively or mainly for the purposes of the schoolrooms, offices, or playground of a Voluntary School, will also exempt such schools from the payment of the charges for the paving and sewering of public streets which surround such school premises?

The ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir Richard Webster, Isle of Wight): A reference to the definition of "local rates" in the definition clause of the Bill will show that the exemption would not extend to such charges as are mentioned in the Question.

STORNOWAY MAILS.

Mr. WEIR: I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury, as representing the Postmaster General, whether he is aware that an acceleration of the Stornoway mail between Dingwall and Strome Ferry would not only benefit the important fishing community of Stornoway, but would also expedite the delivery of letters to the people of Strome Ferry and places served from that office, the Islands of Skye, the Uists, Benbecula, and Harris, as well as districts on the western mainland of Ross-shire, where the Stornoway steamer calls; and whether, in these circumstances, he will reconsider the advisability of incurring the expenditure necessary for improving the service?

Mr. HANBURY: An earlier arrival of the mail at Strome Ferry would not benefit the Uists, Benbecula and Harris, but it would afford a slightly earlier arrival of mails at places served from Strome Ferry as well as at some parts of Skye. This had not been overlooked by the Postmaster General in considering the matter, but he is still unable to incur the heavy cost of a special train from Dingwall to Strome Ferry which, in his judgment, would be quite unjustifiable.

CRETE.

Sir ELLIS ASHMEAD-BARTLETT (Sheffield, Ecclesall): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether, in view of the fact that the Turkish Government has granted to Crete all the concessions asked by the Powers, Great Britain and the other Powers will take efficient steps to protect the Mussulman inhabitants, especially in the interior, from pillage and massacre?

*Mr. CURZON: Her Majesty's Government, in concert with the other Powers, are using their best efforts through their Consuls to re-establish public order and tranquility in Crete, without reference to party or creed. The migration of Mussulmans from the villages in the interior is due to the alarm arising from their being in a minority there. There is a corresponding movement of Christians from the towns, where the Mussulmans are in a majority. There is nothing, however, to show that the Mussulmans have so far been the chief sufferers.

Mr. J. LOWTHER (Kent, Thanet): May I ask if the right hon. Gentleman has any official information from the naval authorities to the effect that the attack was begun by the Christians upon the Mussulman population?

*Mr. CURZON: No; I have no information as to that.

Mr. F. S. STEVENSON (Suffolk, Eye): Is it a fact, as the Question seems to imply, that the Turkish Government have carried into execution all the reforms demanded by the Powers?

*Mr. CURZON: Obviously that is not so, there has not been time. As I have said, and the hon. Gentleman knows perfectly well, two Commissions, the Gendarmerie Commission and the Judicial Commission, are continuing their labours to carry out the reforms, and we hope later on all will be executed.

Sir E. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT: Do I understand the right hon. Gentleman to say that the telegram published in the newspapers, and purporting to come from the naval Commander-in-Chief is not correct—that the attack was begun by Christians?

*Mr. CURZON: I do not know what telegram the hon. Member refers to. These attacks take place every day. On one day the attack will, perhaps, be commenced by Christians, and on another day by Mahomedans.

Sir E. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT: When the right hon. Gentleman states the Powers are taking steps to protect the inhabitants, can he inform the House whether any arrangements have been made for the provision of a sufficient force to maintain order in Crete by the Great Powers?

*Mr. CURZON: That is the exact object of the Gendarmerie Commission which has been sitting in the island, and it is with pleasure I inform the House that the Gendarmerie have been constituted, and that Colonel Bor, the temporary commander, took up his functions yesterday. ["Hear, hear!"]

Mr. STEVENSON: I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether the Foreign Office has received any confirmation of the statement that a provisional government has been formed at or near Halepa, and that its members have proclaimed a union with Greece and have hoisted the Greek flag. ["Hear, hear!"]

Mr. CURZON: No, Sir, we have heard nothing of such a provisional government. The only information bearing upon the point that has been received is to the effect that the Greek flag was said three days ago to have been hoisted by a party of the insurgents at Akrotiri, who were also reported to have proclaimed the annexation of the island to Greece. This remains unconfirmed. The latest news from Canea is that order is being rapidly re-established, and that business has recommenced.

VENEZUELAN ARBITRATION (SIR RICHARD HENN COLLINS).

Mr. E. H. PICKERSGILL (Bethnal Green, S.W.): I beg to ask the Attorney General how it is proposed to make good to the Queen's Bench Division the loss occasioned by the withdrawal of Sir Richard Henn Collins from his ordinary duties in consequence of his membership of the Venezuelan Arbitration Tribunal?

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: It is wholly premature to consider at present the question of supplying the place of Sir Richard Collins. The sittings of the arbitrators will not, I believe, take place before the middle of 1898, and I have no doubt that the Lord Chancellor and the Lord Chief Justice will, when the time comes, consider whether any arrangement is to be made in consequence of the learned Judge being a member of the Arbitration Tribunal.

BRITISH TRADE AND FOREIGN COMPETITION.

Sir HOWARD VINCENT (Sheffield, Central): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury if, having regard to the tenfold increase in the importation of foreign manufactures in recent years, and the necessity for retaining the supremacy of British manufactures, he will afford facility for the consideration of the recent Report by the Board of Trade on Foreign Competition.

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR, Manchester, E.): I agree with my hon. and gallant Friend that the Report raises matters of great interest, but I think he will concur that the Government are hardly in a position at the present moment to promise any facilities for Debate on these or any other questions outside the important subjects brought before the House.

SIR HOWARD VINCENT: I beg to give notice that I shall raise the question on every opportunity. [*Laughter.*]

EMPLOYERS' LIABILITY BILL.

MR. F. A. CHANNING (Northampton): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury when the Bill to amend the Law with respect to compensation to workmen for accidents in the course of their employment will be introduced?

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY: I cannot give the hon. Gentleman any pledge in regard to date. We must finish the Bills now under discussion before that Bill is seriously proceeded with. ["Hear, hear!"]

MR. CHANNING: Do I understand that this Bill must be postponed in favour of the Military Works Bill and other military proposals?

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY: I said nothing about other military proposals. It cannot be brought in at present while the Education Bill and the Works Bill are on hand.

ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS (RATING).

MR. LOUGH: On behalf of the hon. Member for Anglesey (Mr. ELLIS GRIFFITH), I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury what is the sum total of rates paid in respect of elementary schools other than Board Schools, distinguishing counties and boroughs, in the last year for which such Returns are available?

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY: I am afraid I cannot give the hon. Gentleman the facts that he asks for, because the Question having been passed over, and thinking it was not going to be put, I have torn up the answer. [*Laughter.*] If he will kindly put down the Question again I can give him the precise figures with regard to London, but as to the country, I can do no more than give him the result of the reports of inspectors who have gone into the question, taking at random, as it were, a great number of specimen schools with which I shall be glad to furnish the hon. Member.

Replying to Mr. J. G. TALBOT, who asked what day it was proposed to take the Second Reading of the Education Bill,

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY said that Thursday was the day that had been fixed. He thought he had once or twice made that statement, but he was, of course, glad to make it again, so that there should be no mistake about it. [*Laughter.*]

IMPORTED WOOLLEN GOODS FROM INDIA.

MR. A. F. GODSON (Kidderminster): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether Her Majesty's Government is aware that woollen manufactured articles are being imported into this country from the plague-stricken districts of India; and whether, looking to the general consensus of opinion that the great plague of London derived its origin from woollen manufactures brought into this country from infected countries in Asia Minor and the East, Her Majesty's Government will take immediate steps to compel all wools and woollen manufactures coming from India to be thoroughly disinfected before they are allowed to be landed?

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY: In answer to my hon. Friend, all I have to state is that my noble Friend the Secretary of State for India is in communication with the Indian Government on this subject, and the Indian Government are thoroughly alive to the responsibility which rests upon them. I am sure that every precaution will be taken, and I trust that nothing will be either said or done in this country which may unnecessarily hamper the course of trade.

MOTIONS.

LOCOMOTIVES ON HIGHWAYS.

Bill to amend the Law with respect to the use of Locomotives on Highways, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Griffith-Boscawen, Sir John Dorington, Sir William Houldsworth, Mr. Seale-Hayne, Mr. Hobhouse, Captain Bagot, Colonel Warde, Mr. Luttrell, Mr. Tully, and Mr. Hermon-Hodge; presented, and Read the First time; to be Read a Second time upon Wednesday, 24th February, and to be printed. —[Bill 128.]

HIGHWAYS.

Bill to amend the Law for the administration of Highways, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Bill, Sir John Dorington, Mr. Channing, Mr. Hobhouse, and Mr. Mount; presented, and Read the First time; to be Read a Second time upon Tuesday, 9th March, and to be printed.—[Bill 129.]

CONGESTED DISTRICTS BOARD (IRELAND) (COMPULSORY PURCHASE POWERS).

Bill to extend the powers of the Congested Districts Board for Ireland to enable them to acquire by compulsory purchase land in the vicinity of Congested Districts in Ireland, ordered to be brought in by Dr. Robert Ambrose, Mr. Rentoul, Mr. Dillon, Mr. O'Keeffe, and Mr. William Abraham; presented, and Read the First time; to be Read a Second time upon Tuesday, 30th March, and to be printed. —[Bill 130.]

MIDWIVES' REGISTRATION.

Bill for the Registration of Midwives, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Tatton Egerton, Mr. Schwann, Sir Frederick Fitz Wygram, Mr. Skewes-Cox, Mr. Bonsor, Mr. Fenwick, Sir James Woodhouse, Mr. Harrison, Mr. John Wilson, Mr. Graham, Mr. Bill, and Mr. Heywood Johnstone; presented, and Read the First time; to be Read a Second time upon Friday, and to be printed.—[Bill 131.]

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

ESTABLISHED CHURCH (ENGLAND AND WALES).

*Mr. SAMUEL SMITH (Flintshire) rose to call attention to the evils resulting from the union of Church and State, and to move:

> "That it is expedient to Disestablish and Disendow the Church of England both in England and Wales."

The hon. Member said he had undertaken a difficult task, for which he asked the indulgence of the House. He had ventured to call in question the usefulness of one of their oldest institutions, one deeply rooted in the habits, traditions, and affections of the English people, nor was it possible to do justice to this theme without touching on some of their most sensitive nerves. The House would, he was sure, extend to him fair play and patient attention whilst he laid before it the reasons which had led many of them to the conclusion that the cause of religion stood best upon its own merits, unaided alike by State patronage and unhampered by State control. The Motion he had drawn covered the whole ground of the union of Church and State, and the Resolution he begged to move was at least free from ambiguity. They had in recent years debated both the Welsh and the Scottish Disestablishment questions. The previous Parliament affirmed both those principles, but the question of English Disestablishment had not been submitted to the judgment of Parliament for many years—not since 1873 by the late Mr. Miall; yet the questions it raised were of far greater importance, for they went to the very root of the subject, and demanded the most drastic treatment. The union of Church and State was a survival of mediæval times. It arose in ages when absolutism was the rule both in Church and State; it arose before the growth of human liberty, before the individual man was conceived of as having rights of his own, and when he was merged in the society or state to which he belonged. The perfection of the system was reached when autocratic Popes dominated Western Christendom, and when the State was regarded rather as the appendage of the Church than the Church of the State. Exactly as human freedom extended, so the alliance between the Church and State weakened, and to-day, at the close of the nineteenth century, it had become an anachronism and was as certain to pass away in Western Europe as it had passed away in the United States and the British Colonies. He submitted that the evils of the State Establishment in England were more keenly felt now than in former ages, when the abuses were really much greater. For nearly 300 years the National Church was buttressed by cruel and unjust disabilities imposed both on Roman Catholics and Protestant Dissenters. These had been removed, litle by little, always against the strongest opposition by the Anglican Bishops; yet to-day there was more dissatisfaction with the abuses of the Established Church than ever before. A large section within the Church was now calling out for Disestablishment, that it might carry sacerdotal doctrines still further; and a much larger section outside the Church demanded Disestablishment that it might free the nation from complicity with these doctrines. The fact was, the national conscience was more sensitive than it formerly was, and was becoming more and more alive to the moral blemishes of the present system. He would summarise the chief objections which Protestant Nonconformists, and many Churchmen as well, had to the present system. They held that the Christian Church was a spiritual body, responsible only to its Divine Head, that it should be free and self-governing in all spiritual things, that religion lay between the individual soul and God alone, and that no secular authority was entitled to intrude into this sacred domain. Now what was the actual relation between Church and State in this country? The Sovereign was by law the Head of the Church; the Bishops were appointed by the Prime Minister of the day; the formularies and ritual of the Church have all been settled by Act of Parliament; the appointment of the clergy was in the hands of patrons, some private, some public; the right of advowson was a valuable pecuniary privilege which was bought and sold like any other form of property. The support of the Church was mainly drawn from national property allocated by the State in Roman Catholic times, and continued to the Reformed Church in the sixteenth century. He could not conceive a constitution of the Church more repugnant to the principles laid down in the New Testament. It bore some analogy to the Jewish system, but not the faintest resemblance to the Christian dispensation. At every point the secular power overrode the spiritual. In proof of this he would quote the Bishop's oath of homage as given by Earl Russell in a letter to *The Times*:—

> "I, ..., Doctor of Divinity, now elected, confirmed, and consecrated Bishop of . . . . ., do hereby declare that your Majesty is the only Supreme Governor of this your realm in spiritual and ecclesiastical things, as well as in temporal, and that no foreign prelate or potentate has any jurisdiction within this realm; and I acknowledge that I hold the said Bishopric, *as well the spiritualities as the temporalities* thereof, only of your Majesty. And for the same temporalities I do my homage, presently to your Majesty. So help me God."

Surely no one nowadays could defend so naked a subjection of the spiritual to the secular power; but this subjection was of the essence of the system. The recent election of Bishop Temple to be Archbishop of Canterbury had brought out the farce of giving a *Congé d'élire* to the Dean and Chapter. The Chapter offered a prayer for Divine guidance and then read the "letter missive," in which the Sovereign designated the person to be elected; the statute required the Dean and Chapter "with all speed and celerity to elect and choose the person named in the said letter missive and none other," under peril of incurring the penalties of *præmunire*. It was not to be wondered at that a reverend clergyman once used these words:—

> "It was painful to think of the real act of blasphemy which was committed against the Holy Ghost every time a Bishop was appointed. He recently examined the official documents relating to the appointment of Bishops, and in them were directions to the Dean and Chapter that they were to invoke the Holy Spirit in making a right and proper choice."

He was sure that of late years the Prime Ministers of this country had used their great powers of appointment under a deep sense of responsibility; but this did not obviate the damning fact that the character of the National Church largely depended on the accident of who was the head of a secular administration. Lord Palmerston, advised by Lord Shaftesbury, appointed an Evangelical Bench of Bishops; subsequent High Church Premiers had almost revolutionised the Bench in an opposite direction; some subsequent Premier might be a Freethinker, and might appoint Broad Church Bishops. Could anything be more opposed to the teaching of the Divine Head of the Church? Nothing but long habit had reconciled us to this scandal, and the time was near at hand when the conscience of the nation would not endure it any longer. He would ask the House to allow him to make one quotation from the Diary of Bishop Samuel Wilberforce, which drew the curtain aside and disclosed how the Apostolic Succession was carried on in this ancient branch of the Christian Church:—

"Much talk with the Dean of Windsor. He talked with great reserve about the late appointments, but said: 'The Church does not know what it owes to the Queen. Disraeli has been utterly ignorant, utterly unprincipled; he rode the Protestant horse one day, then got frightened that it had gone too far, and was injuring the county elections, so he went right round and proposed names never heard of. Nothing he would not have done. . . Disraeli recommended —— for Canterbury, but the Queen would not have him; then Disraeli agreed, most reluctantly, and with passion, to Tait. . . Disraeli then proposed Wordsworth for London. The Queen objected strongly, . . . then she suggested Jackson, . . and Disraeli chose Jackson. The Queen would have greatly liked ——, but Disraeli would not hear of him. You cannot conceive the appointments he proposed and retracted, or was overruled. . . . He had no other thought than the votes of the moment; he showed an ignorance about all Church matters, men, opinions, that was astonishing, making propositions one way and the other, riding the Protestant horse to gain the boroughs, and then, when he thought he had gone so far as to endanger the counties, he turned round.'"

He was sure there was not a Member of that House who did not feel the shame of this exposure; yet he was certain that such scenes would recur, again and again, till the unholy alliance between Church and State came to an end. Next to the choice of bishops, he impeached the election of the parochial clergy as utterly contrary to the teachings of Christianity. No Church that he knew anything of exacted so small a modicum of theological knowledge from candidates for the ministry; it was trifling compared with the long and thorough curriculum that Presbyterian ministers had to pass through, nor were the safeguards for moral and religious character any more thorough. The Bishop of Liverpool said:—

"It cannot be denied that numbers of young men take Orders every year who are thoroughly unfit for the sacred office they enter. . . It is mere affectation to ignore these things; every man of common sense knows them."

The Rev. Baptist Noel said:—

"Chosen by Peers and squires, by colleges and Church corporations, by chancellors and State-made prelates, many are made pastors by a corrupt favouritism, many are allured to an uncongenial employment by the income which it offers them, and many embrace the profession of a pastor because they are too dull, inert, or timid for any other."

The fact was, so long as the patronage of livings was a marketable commodity, often held by men of no religious character, it was impossible to keep up a high standard of clerical fitness. Did the House realise the fearful evils which resulted from the traffic in livings? A feeble attempt was made to cure it in the Bill of last year, but it encountered so much opposition—even from Churchmen—that he much doubted if any successful attempt would be made hereafter. Would the House allow him to quote from the evidence of Mr. Emery Stark, one of the principal clerical agents, given before the Royal Commission of 1878? He said:—

"The Commissioners are well aware that the sale of an advowson with the understanding that immediate possession is to be given, is, according to the law, illegal. Three-fourths of the patrons with whom I have come in contact, and among them clergymen of the highest standing, do not recognise any moral crime in an infraction of the present law of simony, and the consequence is that they freely and unhesitatingly sell and purchase advowsons with the understanding that immediate possession is to be given, not looking upon it as any sin. When I say clergymen of high standing, I have had business with ex-colonial Bishops, Canons, and other dignitaries of the Church, who, of course, would be above suspicion in every way."

Mr. Stark was asked by the Bishop of Peterborough (Dr. Magee) whether these "pious and good clergymen deliberately break the law," and he answered "Yes, men of the highest standing." Pressing the witness further, the Bishop asked—

"These moral clergymen, who first ask you to break the law, then take an oath that they have not broken the law?"

The answer was "Yes;" and the Bishop added:—

"so that every one of these clergymen of high standing and of high moral character has been guilty of wilful and corrupt perjury."

The whole case is so well put by the late Dr. Magee, Archbishop of York, that I must ask leave to quote from one of his charges:—

"First there are one hundred patrons in England, not presumably better or wiser than other patrons, who have the right to keep the parishes in their gift as long as they please without a pastor, who, when he is appointed, need produce no evidence that he is even in Holy orders, no testimonial as to his character, and who may buy from one of these patrons the right, without check, hindrance, or so much as question from any human being, to enter upon a cure of souls, and who, moreover, by that purchase, may have been enabled to complete some nefarious transaction respecting some other piece of Church preferment, of which he may be the owner. . . . Again, it is a fact that a certain number of patrons are in the habit, whenever their livings fall vacant, of selecting the oldest and most decrepit clergymen they can find, after the most careful search and inquiry, and putting them into their livings, in order to enhance the selling value of these in the market—a proceeding which I regard as one of deliberate and enormous wickedness, and yet which, at present, may be, and is, adopted in defiance of parishioners and of Bishop, for there are absolutely no limits in law to the age or decrepitude of a presentee. . . . Again, it is a fact that any parishioner knowing of any immorality in the clergyman about to be appointed to his parish, dare not represent it to the Bishop through dread of an action for libel. . . . Again, it is a fact that immoral and scandalous clerks are sometimes presented, as I personally know, to Bishops for institution by patrons who are well aware of their character. . . . Again, it is a fact that an infant in his cradle may be nominated to the largest and most populous parish in England, that it shall be kept open for him by a resignation bond until he attains the ripe age of twenty-four, when he forthwith enters upon the duties of the parish, the temporary incumbent being turned out to make room for him; or, if he is not at once removed, remaining the life-tenant of the patron, and liable to ejectment at any moment."

He need not add a word more to show the intolerable evils of the present system of patronage; that religion in the Anglican Church had survived them was a singular proof of its vitality. Certainly the union of Church and State had not done much to keep it alive, and no real reform of this shocking state of things would come to pass till that unholy alliance was dissolved. It might be said that public patrons exercised their powers better. There were nearly 6,000 benefices in the hands of public patrons, such as the Crown, the Lord Chancellor, the Bishops, Cathedral Bodies, and the Universities. No doubt they were free from some of the grosser evils of private patronage, but they were marked by other evils nearly as bad. One of these was that much of this patronage was bestowed for political purposes. He had seen it stated that in some of the Cathedral Bodies it was customary to cast lots for the right of presenting to the livings in the gift of the Chapter. He condemned the whole system of patronage root and branch as a upas tree which poisoned the National Church, and he saw no chance of removing it except by separation of Church and State. But there were other and very weighty grounds upon which he condemned the entire system of State establishments or religion. He asserted that they were in their genius and essence hostile to freedom and popular rights. No one who knew anything of English history would deny that this was true of the Anglican Church. In the days of the Stuarts it was the servile advocate of the divine right of kings; during the Hanoverian period it stoutly opposed any relaxation of the civil disabilities of Roman Catholics and Protestant dissenters; up till 1828 no one could sit in a Town Council or hold an office of trust under the Crown, without taking the sacrament according to the rites of the Church of England; the Bishops vehemently opposed the abolition of this test; they opposed the anti-slavery movement in its earlier stages; they opposed the reform of the criminal code when its severity was extreme; they opposed Catholic emancipation, the Great Reform Bill, the commutation of tithes, the repeal of the Corn Laws; they opposed the repeal of Jewish disabilities, the opening of the Universities to dissenters; they opposed the Burials Bill, and the marriage of dissenters in their own places of worship. There were three distinguished historians who had seats in that House who had described in classic language the reactionary character of the National Church. He was tempted to quote an eloquent passage from the writings of the learned Member for Dublin University (Mr. Lecky):—

"It is to Puritanism that we mainly owe the fact that in England religion and liberty were not dissevered; amongst all the fluctuations of its fortunes it represented the alliance of these two principles, which the predominating Church invariably pronounced to be incompatible.

"The attitude of this latter Church forms indeed a strange contrast to that of Puritanism. Created in the first instance by a Court intrigue, pervaded in all its parts by a spirit of the most intense Erastianism, and aspiring at the same time to a spiritual authority scarcely less absolute than that of the Church which it had superseded, Anglicanism was from the beginning at once the most servile and most efficient agent of tyranny; endeavouring by the assistance of temporal authority, and by the display of worldly pomp, to realise in England the same position as

> Catholicism had occupied in Europe, she naturally flung herself on every occasion into the arms of the civil power. No other Church so uniformly betrayed and trampled on the liberties of her country. In all those fiery trials through which English liberty has passed since the Reformation, she invariably cast her influence into the scale of tyranny, supported and eulogised every attempt to violate the Constitution, and wrote the fearful sentence of eternal condemnation upon the tombs of the martyrs of freedom."

Could anyone explain this chronic hostility to liberty except by the blighting influence of National Establishment? The Church had produced many great, noble, and pious men, whom Nonconformists honoured and even loved, yet its influence had commonly been cast on the wrong side. Surely the inference was obvious; it was no wonder that kings always preferred Prelacy to Presbytery, for the one made for privilege, and the other for freedom. What he might call a subsection of this argument was the tendency to arrogance and exclusiveness which National Churches showed to their nonconforming brethren and other bodies of Christians. It was difficult for one brought up in this country to conceive how much sweeter was the religious life of the United States and our great colonies, from the footing of equality on which all religions stood to one another. The odious words "dissent" and "non-conformity" were unknown there; it was like living in a different world, and he believed, if the experiment were tried here, after a short time no one would wish to go back to the reign of privilege and assumption. No one wished to do so in Ireland they knew. On this ground alone the gain to charity and brotherly love would be incalculable. He passed over many counts in his indictment for want of time, but he must call the attention of the House to what, in the eyes of many, was the crowning evil of the Anglican Establishment—he referred to the portentous growth of Roman doctrine and ritual. A revolution had taken place in the last fifty years which had practically stamped out the Protestant character of the Church in most of the parishes of the land. Doctrines were taught and ceremonies were practised which were in absolute contradiction to the 39 Articles, which every clergyman had solemnly subscribed; those very practices which the Prayer-book stigmatised as "blasphemous fables and dangerous deceits" were taught in thousands of pulpits. The greater part of the clergy repudiated the word Protestant, notwithstanding that the Coronation Oath bound the Sovereign of this country, who was by law the head of the Church—[*Cries of* "No!"]—to the maintenance of the "Protestant Reformed Religion." He would read to the House the formula employed on this occasion. The Archbishop said:—

> "Will you to the utmost of your power maintain the laws of God, the true profession of the Gospel, and the Protestant Reformed Religion established by law?"

The Sovereign answered, "All this I promise to do," and then took a solemn oath to that effect. In addition to this the Sovereign also subscribed a declaration against Transubstantiation, a doctrine which was taught to-day in thousands of pulpits. [*Cries of* "No!" *and* "Hear, hear!"] It would be hardly becoming to refer to this point more fully in that House, because the subject was too sacred. ["Hear, hear!"] No historian would deny that the Church settlement in the time of Elizabeth was a Protestant settlement, yet now a great part of the clergy disowned the Reformation of the sixteenth century and eagerly longed after reunion with Rome. In a great many Anglican churches the service was now practically Roman. They saw the Confessional set up, and the Mass, and the invocation of saints, and prayers for the dead, and other practices which were forbidden by the law of the Church, were observed without let or hindrance by most of the Bishops. Lest anyone should think that he was exaggerating, he asked permission to quote from Cardinal Vaughan:—

> "The doctrines of the Catholic Church, which had been rejected and condemned as being blasphemous, superstitious, and fond inventions, have been re-examined and taken back, one by one, until the Thirty-nine Articles have been banished and buried as a rule of faith. The real presence, the sacrifice of the mass, offered for the living and the dead—some times even in Latin—not infrequent reservation of the sacrament, regular auricular confession, extreme unction, purgatory, prayers for the dead, devotions to Our Lady, to her immaculate conception, the use of the rosary, and the invocation of saints, are doctrines taught and accepted with a growing desire and relish for them in the Church of England. A celibate clergy, the institution of monks and

nuns under vows, retreats for the clergy, missions for the people, fasting and other penitential exercises, candles, lamps, incense, crucifixes, images of the Blessed Virgin, and the saints held in honour, stations of the cross, cassocks, cottas, Roman collars, birettas, copes, dalmatics, vestments, mitres, croziers, the adoption of an ornate Catholic ritual, and now recently an elaborate display of the whole ceremonial of the Catholic Pontifical—all this speaks of a change and a movement towards the Church that would have appeared absolutely incredible at the beginning of this century. And what is still more remarkable is, that the movement has been stronger than the rankest Protestantism, stronger than the Bishops, stronger than the lawyers and Legislature. A spasmodic protest, a useless prosecution, a delphic judgment, and the movement continues and spreads, lodging itself in Anglican homes and convents, in schools, churches, and even cathedrals, until it is rapidly covering the country."

These statements of the Cardinal were, perhaps, exaggerated, but no one denied that they were very largely true, and in his opinion they were ominous of great danger to the nation. In such an assembly as this they could not enter into theological argument, but this, at least, was relevant to the case: the Church of England, as by law established, was a Protestant Church; her Articles denounced in the strongest terms the doctrines and practices of Rome; she held her vast national endowments on these conditions; she could not alter a line of her Articles and formularies without the consent of Parliament; yet she acted as if she could ignore the Protestant Reformation, in spite of Parliament, and in spite of the great majority of her own laity. The position to which they had come was this. They had a National Church, enjoying an enormous revenue and immense prestige from its union with the State. It held its property and its privileges on condition of observing its side of the contract. Yet it had broken it in the most flagrant manner. Where was redress to be found? He knew of no place but the High Court of Parliament. He knew it was a most unfit Court to decide cases of theology; but this was one of the consequences of having an Established Church; the State could not wash its hands of it; it had but two courses open to it, either to reform the Church or disestablish it, either to mend it or end it. He was convinced that the days of reformation by the State had passed away, never to return. This Parliament would never again frame a Confession of Faith; but there was one thing this Parliament would do, perhaps not to-day or to-morrow, it would refuse to consent to the destruction of our Protestant faith, even should it cost the Church Establishment. He concluded in the words of the late Dean Alford:—

> "Whether years or decades of years, be taken for the accomplishment of the severance of the Church from the State, however it may be deprecated and however opposed, accomplished it will certainly be. History has for ages been preparing its way; God's arm is thrusting it on, and man's power cannot keep it back."

[*Cheers.*] He moved the Resolution standing in his name.

MR. EDWARD MORTON (Devonport) in seconding the Motion, hoped that no words of his could possibly be found to excite any kind of resentment on the part of Churchmen in the House. He had been brought up in the Church of England, and he was now a member and communicant of that Church; and, if he believed that the policy of Disestablishment, if carried out, would ruin or even injure the Church of England as a spiritual body, though he might be compelled by a sense of justice to advocate it, he should necessarily do so with the deepest possible pain. It was, however, his conviction, founded he thought upon the teaching and experience of history, that disestablishment, so far from weakening or injuring the Church of England would, he believed, free it for still greater efforts and still greater strides in its spiritual progress in future. They were not altogether without experience even within the Church of England itself. Of all matters of progress which had been so marked during the long reign of the Queen, there was probably no line of progress which had been more remarkable than the progress made in what he might call the spirituality of the Church of England. He supposed that everyone, whether Churchman, Dissenter, or Agnostic, would admit that during the past 60 or 70 years the Church of England had enormously improved in character, in earnestness, in efficiency, and in the excellence of its work. ["Hear, hear!"] Not only had the Church of England progressed in that way, but the constitution of the Church of England and the relation of the Church itself to the State had very largely changed in that time. In earlier days no office could be held by anyone who was not a member of the Church of England, either as Town Councillor, officer of Excise or Customs, or parish constable; and he could not hold office unless he proved his membership by actually taking the sacrament before entering upon it. He called attention to a speech of Lord John Russell, in 1828, in proposing the repeal of the Test and Corporation Acts, wherein he described the common scandal that attended the process of "qualification" for office. Men collected in beer-shops near a church when service was going on. A messenger would come in from the church and would say to the assembled people—sometimes in a half-drunken condition—that the time had arrived for them to "qualify," and then they would enter the church to take the sacrament. They, with their experience of the Church of England today, looked back to those times with a sense of horror; but, concomitantly with the improvement in the Church of England during the Queen's reign, there had gone on a partial disestablishment of the Church of England. The Test and Corporation Acts had been repealed; the disabilities against Dissenters, Catholics and Jews had been repealed; and the Church of England could no longer he held to be establshed in the detailed and minute manner of earlier years; and he maintained that this partial disestablishment which had been going on, Measure by Measure, during the past 60 years was the most important motive power which had brought about the increased spirituality of the Church of England itself. [*Cheers.*] They heard it said that the dissenting bodies of this country subscribed for their church purposes sums of money which might put to shame the members of the Established Church. To some extent that was true, because, no doubt, the bodies who subscribed most were for the most part distinctly poor, like the Wesleyans. Nevertheless, it was the fact that the amount raised by free subscriptions within the Church of England by its members was far larger than people generally supposed. The late Archbishop of Canterbury, in a speech delivered a few years ago, mentioned the astounding fact that within the last 50 years upwards of £100,000,000 of money had been raised in subscriptions. This was at the rate of £2,000,000 a year for Church extensions, buildings, new endowments, and other Church purposes. Where had that money been raised? If they looked abroad it would be seen that the Church of England had its strongest hold in the large towns of the country which had grown up in the last 150 or 200 years. If he were asked to lay his finger on the spot where the Church was probably strongest in the hearts of the people, he would point to the city of Manchester. Why was this? The fact was a strong argument in favour of disestablishment. In pre-Reformation times, when the old endowments of the Church had been already given and completed—["No!"]—he had the authority of the Bishop of Oxford for the statement—there were practically only two large towns in the country, London and Bristol. The vast majority of the population existed in the country districts. Therefore the old organisation of the Church was fitted and planned for the country districts mainly. All the modern endowments and all the fitting out of the Church in those towns where she succeeded in carrying out her mission with the greatest success had been effected under the influence of that voluntary enthusiasm which he desired to invoke through the whole Church by the process of disestablishment. [*Cheers.*] He denied that disestablishment would involve a certain loss of dignity to the Church. This year there was to be celebrated the 1,300th anniversary of the formation of the See of Canterbury, and on the throne of St. Augustine the Archbishop of Canterbury would preside over a pan-Anglican synod. That synod would be composed of members nearly all of whom represented sees which had been created within the reign of her present Majesty. No longer would the Archbishop preside over bishops from 34 sees within England and Wales; he would preside over upwards of 150 bishops from 150 sees, and exactly 130 of these would be bishoprics within the limits of the British Empire itself. Those 96 bishoprics outside England and Wales, nearly all of which had been founded within the reign of her Majesty, and all of which had been founded within the limits of the empire, represented every one of them a free Church in a free State. [*Cheers.*] The spiritual energy of the Anglican Church certainly had not been diminished in Ireland by disestablishment, and certainly it was not less strong in the free bishoprics which exist in every one of our great self-governing colonies. These examples and illustrations convinced him that the Church would lose nothing whatever by the process of disestablishment. He as a loyal Churchman felt aggrieved that establishment seemed to have diminished to some extent the moral enthusiasm and moral energy of the leaders of the Church of England. ["No!"] Nothing was more remarkable in the course of the present reign than the popularising of the great institutions of the country, the progress of democracy. At every point that progress had been opposed by the Bench of Bishops. In such moral questions as the abolition of slavery, again, reformers had had to meet at every step the opposition of the Bishops in the House of Lords. [*Cries of* "No!"] The Resolution, of course, made no reference to endowment. [*Cries of* "It does," *and laughter*.] He was afraid he had seen an early draft of it—[*Ministerial laughter*]—and was under that impression, but the circumstance made no difference to his argument —[*laughter*]—because he recognised that disendowment was the logical consequence of disestablishment. On this point his contention was that as the State gave the tithe, so the State could take it away. He was utterly at a loss to imagine how any hon. Member could deny the fact that the State should as a matter of fact by legislation endow the Church with the tithe. ["No."] He admitted there were many high authorities on this subject in the House, but even the collective learning of the House on a question of English ecclesiastical history could scarcely equal the learning and the authority of Dr. Stubbs, who was, it was well known, in political agreement with hon. Gentlemen opposite. Dr. Stubbs pointed out that—

> "The recognition of the legal obligation of tithe dates from the 8th century both on the Continent and in England,"

and that after that time "it was enforced by not infrequent legislation." How then was it possible to say that the State did not endow the Church? From apostolic times the clergy of the Church had been accustomed to preach that it was the duty of the people to give a tenth to the Church, but it was not done, and the clergy did not even venture to enforce it by ecclesiastical penalties, and then came in the State and made it a matter of law. The thing was as clear as could be. The argument therefore, that it was robbery to take away the money given to the Church under these circumstances could not hold. The State gave it, and the State could take it away. ["Hear, hear!"] There was no proposal to take away the great endowment which had grown up in the course of the present century. As he had already pointed out, over one hundred millions of money had been raised in 50 years to aid the Church in the large towns, where its work was most valuable, and where it had the strongest hold on the hearts of the people. He at least, as a Churchman, was not going to believe that in the richest country in the world the Church that was possessed of the richest members of the community was likely to be allowed to fail in its spiritual efforts, and in the spiritual good it did, for want of more money, which could be easily raised amongst its own people. He looked upon the Resolution, not as an attack by enemies on the Church, but as a policy by which, if successful, the Church would be free to be animated by and inspired by those voluntary efforts which within the last 50 years had enabled it to do great good; and he looked upon it as a Measure that would finally remove from the Church of England the last trace as a branch of the Civil Service and leave it simply and solely what it was—a branch of the Church of Christ. [*Cheers*.]

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR, Manchester, E.) who was loudly cheered on rising, said: We have but little cause to complain of the tone of the last speaker, at all events. But I think everybody who has sat through the two speeches which have just been delivered must admit that this Debate is little better than a sham. ["Hear, hear!"] We had a brief discussion the other night on the advantages of giving to the House of Commons occasionally the opportunity of discussing abstract resolutions, and that it may be an advantage now and then I am prepared to admit; but I deny that it can be an advantage to discuss, as we are discussing to-night, the propriety of carrying through what is little short of a great political and social revolution—["hear, hear!"—in a House constituted as this is at the present moment. ["Hear, hear!"] The occupants of the front Opposition Bench were, through the whole of the speech of the Mover, and through nine-tenths of the speech of the Seconder, conspicuous by their absence. [*Cheers.*] Hardly the faintest interest appears to be shown in the Debate by those who might be supposed to be in favour of the Motion, and who in different circumstances might be expected to come down and support it by their presence and by their cheers. When, therefore, I look upon the deserted state of the Benches opposite it seems to me the House of Commons is wasting its time, and is neither adding to its dignity nor to its efficiency in occupying itself with arguments of which, for the most part, it would be far too high a compliment to say that they were academic. [*Laughter and cheers.*] The Mover of the Motion spent the greater part of his speech in one of two occupations. He was either making an inaccurate survey of the past or he was hazarding the most perilous prophecies for the future. [*Laughter.*] I do not propose to travel with him over the very difficult, lengthy, and controversial questions of ecclesiastical history that he has raised. But I must say, parenthetically, that I dissent when he and the Seconder agree in describing the present position of the Church of England as the result of State endowments.

Mr. MORTON: No, tithes.

The FIRST LORD of the TREASURY: I beg pardon. In saying that the tithes of the Church of England are the result of State endowments they have against them not only every authority—I was going to say every investigation into the subject—including the present Bishop of Oxford, who has been so courageously quoted by both hon. Gentlemen—[*laughter and cheers*]—but they have also against them, a great authority in itself, but an authority that ought specially to appeal to hon. Gentlemen opposite—I refer to the late Home Secretary, who, I remember, in the Debate on the Welsh Church, gave specific and categorical utterance to a doctrine on the subject of tithes the very opposite to that we have heard to-night. [*Cheers and cries of* "No!"] I think every one who refers to the Debates will see that, though I quote from memory, I am not misrepresenting what was then said by the late Home Secretary. ["Hear, hear!"] The right hon. Gentleman, however, is here to answer for himself. But that is a parenthesis. I do not mean to go into the wearisome details of the subject. The two hon. Gentlemen who are responsible for this Motion, and especially the Mover, expended a great deal of eloquence in attacking what were described as the vices of the Church of England. Sir, an institution which, like the Church of England, has lasted for these many hundred years, which has been bound up, like the Church of England, with the growth of a great country, of course has episodes in its history which we should wish otherwise. ["Hear, hear!"] After all, every assembly composed of men must be liable to some of those weaknesses into which an assembly composed of men must inevitably fall. But because the Church of England has been less zealous sometimes for the spiritual welfare of the people of England than we should wish; because some members of the Church have sometimes advocated causes of which we disapprove, are we to rake up all those ancient occurrences and say, because they at one time happened, therefore we are now to deprive the Church of a large part of the machinery by which she does her work among the people of this country? [*Cheers.*] The hon. Gentleman appears to conceive that there is something in the condition of Established Churches—I think he meant all Established Churches—which make them the natural supporters of slavery, of tyranny, and of all things which we regret—[*laughter*]—whilst, on the other hand, he asserted that throughout the history of Nonconformity in England it was quite obvious that the members of those religious bodies which had separated themselves from the Church of England were one and all—from the very nature of their religious creed—advocates of toleration and liberty. [*Laughter.*] If the hon. Gentleman will give a deeper study to the history of this country and will examine more in detail precisely what has been done by non-ecclesiastical bodies in England when they had the power of the State behind them, he will be able to check the view he has expressed to-night—[*cheers*]—and he will probably come to the conclusion to which all impartial historians have arrived—namely, that all religious bodies, all communities, religious and irreligious, have worked themselves up to their present views of freedom and liberty of thought by a gradual and painful process; and that it is the height of historical injustice—I will go further, and say it is the height of historical absurdity—to make the Church of England responsible in the present day for the errors—if errors there were—she has committed in common with the whole of the rest of the civilised world. [*Cheers.*] The hon. Gentleman having surveyed in his own peculiar fashion and with his own peculiar views the ample field of history, went on to indulge in prophecy. [*Laughter.*] He said we ought at once to disestablish a Church in which the Bishops are appointed on the advice of a Minister of the Crown, because a time would certainly come when that Minister of the Crown would be an atheist, and that, therefore, we might expect to see persons holding these negative views appointed to the highest offices in the Church. [*Laughter.*]

*MR. S. SMITH: I said we might see a free-thinking Prime Minister, and that it was possible he would appoint Broad Church Bishops. [*Laughter.*]

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY: Well, we have no reason to believe that Broad Church Bishops would hold views more in harmony with the late Mr. Bradlaugh, who was the particular statesman quoted by the hon. Gentleman, than the present occupants of the Episcopal Bench. [*Laughter.*] I have not myself the gift of prophecy with which the hon. Gentleman is endowed. [*Laughter.*] I do not pretend to be able to say from what class the Bishops of the remote future will be appointed, what opinions they will hold, or what character of men they will be. But I would ask the House, can anything be more exquisitely ridiculous than to ask us to disestablish and disendow the Church of England at the present moment because in some remote and unknown future that Church may have placed at its head by Ministers of the Crown Bishops unworthy of their position? [*Laughter and cheers.*] What we are concerned with, if this Resolution means anything at all, is not with the remote past nor with the remote present, but with the actual present, and on the actual present we heard not a word from the Seconder, and nothing at all, until he got towards the end of his speech, from the Mover. But we have to judge the merits of a Resolution by seeing what would happen if it were carried out. This Resolution—as the Seconder to his surprise discovered at the end of his speech—[*laughter*]—proposes the disendowment as well as the disestablishment of the Church. It is a remarkable fact that of the few Gentlemen on the other side of the House who think it worth while to come and listen to the Debate, the one who, next to the Mover, might be supposed to take most interest in it was unacquainted with the terms of the Resolution. [*Laughter.*] I am sure the hon. Gentleman has by this time discovered that he is asking us to vote not merely for the disestablishment of the Church but for its disendowment. ["Hear, hear!" *and laughter.*] Now it has dawned on the Seconder of the Resolution that the endowments of a Church or its possessions are necessary instruments in its utility; for he pointed to the great towns in this country and said, "There the Church is doing a great work, and is liberally supported by modern contributions. There, places of worship have been built; endowments have been provided, and in consequence of those endowments and through the medium of those places of worship, a great religious work is being done among the working classes." I fail to understand why an endowment given 50 years ago is of such enormous value, and an endowment given 1,000 years ago is of no value at all. [*Cheers.*] The hon. Gentleman seems to think that it is very desirable, very proper to encourage Churchmen to make large endowments to the Church to which they belong, and that the best way to induce Churchmen to endow the Church now is to deprive the Church of all the endowments which Churchmen in former ages gave to the same body. [*Cheers.*] The hon. Gentleman said that nobody contemplated taking away the more recent endowments. I see no limitations in the Resolution, which I have read, though he has not. [*Cheers and laughter.*] I am not aware that the hon. Gentleman who moved the Resolution means to except modern endowments. He did not hint at it, nor did he suggest a date on the one side of which endowments are to be spared and on the other side of which they are to be ruthlessly sacrificed. But I am sure that the Mover of this Motion will feel that its Seconder has really given the case away. [*Cheers.*] It is not an absurdity to say that the Church is doing splendid work in the towns because there is there a clergyman and a church, but is doing no work in the country, although there is there precisely the same machinery—[*cries of* "No!" *and cheers*]—for carrying out precisely the same great task. I do not understand the arguments of the Mover; but I understand his object. It is to destroy the Church. [*Cries of* "No!" *and cheers.*] That is a simple, plain, and intelligible policy, but I protest that I do not understand the motives which animate the Seconder. He, a member of the Church, a man that boasts that he has the interests of the Church at heart and who believes in the actual value of the work now being done by the Church—he wishes to deprive every agricultural parish in this country, however poor it may be, of the existing means of carrying out religious work within its limits. [*Cheers.*] And when the hon. Gentleman says that the whole work done in the towns is by modern endowments which are quite equal to the task, I traverse his facts altogether. The work done in the great towns is largely done by precisely the same machinery and the same endowments as the work done in the country districts; and those endowments, whether they be old or new, are, I grieve to say, most inadequate—[*cheers*]—for the great work which the Church has to carry out. There is nothing, in my opinion, which Churchmen ought more earnestly to do than to meet the growing needs of the growing population, and to say that, great as has been the liberality of the Anglican communion compared with that of any communion on the face of the earth, it still lags far behind the necessities of the case, and we still owe it to the Church to enable it to meet the ever-growing demands on its energies which arise from the ever-growing populations in our great centres of industry. [*Cheers.*] I have been dragged, somewhat against my will, into discussion on the merits of the Resolution before the House. When I got up I had intended to dismiss them even more summarily than I have done. I beg the House to show its harmony with the sentiments of the country—[*cheers*]—by dismissing speedily and effectually this Resolution which has been brought forward to-night. [*Cheers.*] That the country is prepared, or in any measurable period will be prepared, to accept a Resolution of this kind I, for one, do not believe. [*Cheers.*] So long as the Church of England possesses, as it now possesses, a clergy devoted on the whole to the labours; so long as it possesses a clergy whose work is not merely or chiefly among the rich and well-to-do, but who extend the sphere of their labour to the poorest and most helpless of the population; so long as the great body of the Bishops are what even the Mover has admitted them now to be—men of untiring industry, men of great spiritual elevation; so long the Church, which has been intertwined with the memories of the people for all these centuries, will have a perfectly secure basis in their protection. [*Cheers.*] For my part I should wish, if I spoke merely as a politician, that the hon. Gentleman opposite should drag behind him into the Lobby that front Bench and that body of its supporters who show so prudent an anxiety to be absent on the present occasion. [*Laughter and cheers.*] But if I consider this matter, not as a Party politician—and I gladly dismiss all lower objects and considerations from this Debate—but as one anxious and ready to aid, as the hon. Gentleman is himself, the growth of true religion and the spread of spiritual life in all classes of the community, then I say that a greater blow could not be struck at the religious interests of this country than to deprive the greatest religious body in the country of so large a portion of the means for carrying on its allotted work. [*Cheers.*] I trust that we shall waste no more time —[*cheers*]—either in discussing the antiquarian tales so dear to the heart of the hon. Gentleman, or in following out the prophecies in which he indulged with so much courage; but that we shall by an overwhelming majority, and with no unnecessary delay, show the country that this House of Commons at all events represents their deepest feelings and their strongest convictions, and that it will not tolerate, longer than it can help, even the consideration of a Motion which is so diametrically opposed to all their wishes and hopes. [*Cheers.*] I shall not myself move an Amendment to this Motion, and I shall not suggest to any hon. Gentleman that he should do so. Let us meet it in the only way it deserves to be met—by a direct negative, and let it be uttered in no unmistakable tones. [*Cheers.*]

*MR. CARVELL WILLIAMS (Notts, Mansfield) said that this Motion might have been met with savage hostility or supercilious contempt. Perhaps the former was still to come. The speech of the right hon. Gentleman gave an example of the latter. This was not the first time that he had heard the occupants of the Front Bench deprecate discussions on great public questions, and declare that they wasted the time of the House. But dozens of great Measures now on the Statute Book had been placed there by such discussions as that on which the Leader of the House had sought to pour contempt. He would not "rake up the forgotten past," but would refer to existing facts, and to abuses which sprang from the existence of the Church, not as a religious institution, but as a political establishment. He hoped the House would not be deterred by the exhortation of the First Lord, but would continue to discuss this question, in which large numbers of persons took the deepest interest. When they were told that the country cared nothing about the question, he would remind the House that in the last Parliament a Measure for the disestablishment of the Church in Wales was carried by a substantial majority; and no one could say that the next Parliament would not contain a majority in favour of disestablishment both in Wales and in Scotland. It was asked, Why draw a distinction between ancient and modern endowments? He thought both were evil, and exercised an injurious influence on the religious communities which possessed them. But the ancient endowments were the property of the whole people; and the people were entitled to dispose of them as they thought fit. Modern endowments, however, were the gift of members of the existing Church of England, and, having a strict regard for equity, those in favour of disendowment did not wish to take such endowments away. Of course, in the main, the religious work in the large towns was carried on in the same way as in the country; but the majority of the established clergy in the large towns were maintained, not by endowments, but by voluntary offerings. They were in that respect in the same position as Nonconformist Ministers. He called the attention of the House to the curious history of the Amendment which was to have been submitted to the House, but which had not been moved. As it first appeared on the Paper, it insisted on the necessity of having a resident minister in every parish in the country, and declared that a serious blow would be struck at religion if that minister were removed. It also deprecated the diversion of Church endowments to other purposes. Probably the hon. Member for the Tunbridge Division was advised that that was rather a meagre programme to put forward as a defence of the continued existence of a Church Establishment. Or, perhaps, he remembered that only a few days before there had been a discussion in the Lower House of the Southern Convocation, in which it was contended that incumbencies in small parishes, with a diminishing population, afforded no real scope for the development of clerical energies, and were a waste of the Church's resources. As a resolution was adopted that the law relating to pluralities and the union of benefices ought to be amended, he assumed that the views of Convocation in regard to a resident clergyman were less strong than those of the hon. Member. Then, it probably occurred to him that it would be thought very odd if there were no allusion in his Amendment to a subject which was now agitating the minds of many Churchmen—viz., Church Reform, as in the second edition he expressed anxiety that "all needful Church reforms should be carried without delay." Perhaps the present perilous position of the Benefices Bill suggested some painful reflections in connection with Church reform; so the resident minister and Church reform, and even Church property, finally disappeared in the third edition, and the House was to be simply asked to give an emphatic negative to the Resolution now before it. In all probability the Motion would be negatived; but he thought that some of those who would enter the "No" Lobby would do so with a good deal of misgiving. The fact was, that this question of Disestablishment occupied a very different position from that in which it stood half-a-century ago. At that time the existence of a Church Establishment was defended on the grounds of Scripture, reason and expediency. Now the defenders of the institution were content to occupy much lower ground. Now they admitted that, if we were creating a constitution for this country, and were beginning *de novo*, no one would think of setting up a Church Establishment; but said that the institution existed, and, in spite of all anomalies, worked well, and it would be difficult and riskful to abolish it. Did the established system work well? If it did, how was it that the Established Church at that moment was the unhappiest, and the most complaining, of all the religious bodies in England? That was a question very easily answered. The Church of England had, during this century, wonderfully progressed. As the result of a great growth of spiritual life, it had increased in numbers, energy, and enterprise. It had, however, in one respect, stood absolutely still; for the Church had but little more liberty now than it had in the dark days of spiritual lethargy and of administrative corruption. The late Archdeacon Denison once said: "All England is free to do its proper work. The one thing that is not free to do its own proper work is the Church of England." The Bishop of Liverpool had also given a fuller and more diverting description of the position of his Church. "I dare not," he said,

"shut my eyes to the fact that my Church is sadly wanting in elasticity and power of adapting herself to circumstances. Its organisation is stiff and rigid, like a bar of cast-iron, when it ought to be supple and bending like whalebone. Like some old fossilised country squire who lives twenty miles from a railway, and never visits London, the poor dear old Church of England must still travel in the old family coach, shoot with the old flint-locked single-barrel gun, and wear the old jack-boots and long pigtail. And all this time Dissent is netting and bagging the Church's children by scores, and laughing in her sleeve at the old gentleman's folly."

He could give dozens of quotations from the writings or speeches of Churchmen which, if less graphic, were equally forcible and equally true. Much had been heard of late of "Church Defence"—though it had not been the Church which had required defence, but only its establishment by the State. When Churchmen were called upon to assist the cause of Church Defence, they sometimes asked what it was they were asked to defend—was it the anomalies and abuses which had already been referred to? He was a diligent reader of the reports of the proceedings in Convocation, Church Congresses, and the Diocesan Conferences, and that course of reading had enabled him to compile, not a complete, but a considerable, list of the changes which were declared to be essential to the future prosperity of the Church, and to which he hoped the House would kindly listen:—

> "1. Power to Convocation to frame schemes of Church reform, subject only to a Parliamentary veto. 2. A reform of Convocation. 3. Creation of diocesan and parochial Councils for the management of local Church affairs. 4. A multiplication of Bishops, their choice by the Church, and the abolition of the mockery of the *Congé d'elire*. 5. Removal of Bishops from the House of Lords. 6. Reform of the Patronage system. Power to the laity in the appointment of the parochial clergy, and the abolition of the traffic in livings. 7. Means to prevent the admission of unfit persons to the ministry, the displacement of incompetent or negligent clerics, and the abolition of the parson's freehold. 8. The superannuation of aged, or disabled, clergymen. 9. Improvement in the position and prospects of curates. 10. A re-distribution of Church revenue, to prevent waste, and to secure the more equitable remuneration of the clergy. 11. The relief of the clergy from burdensome exactions in connection with rates, ecclesiastical fees, the dilapidations of parsonages, &c. 12. Cathedral reform: to make the cathedrals more useful. 13. A modification of the parochial system, and the union of parishes with few parishioners and small clerical incomes. 14. A revision of the Prayer Book—either to free it from sacerdotalism, or to obtain elasticity in the services of the Church; or both. 15. A relaxation of the restrictions of the Act of Uniformity. 16. Repeal of the Act of Submission of the Clergy. 17. Means for securing 'godly discipline,' as regards both clergy and laity."

Sydney Smith once said: "All establishments die of dignity. They are too proud to think themselves ill and to take a little physic." If that were true in his time, it certainly was not true to-day, when the Established Church appeared to be suffering from a complication of disorders, and was embarrassed to decide what kind of medicine would best suit her case. On that list of Church reforms he had to offer but a few brief remarks. The first was, that no other religious body in the country required such changes, in either their constitution or their administration. The reason, of course, was, that they were not, like the Church of England, established by law. It followed from that that the evils pointed at all sprang from the same source, viz., Establishment. Many of them would, as a matter of course, cease with Disestablishment, and all the rest would be got rid of by the free action of disestablished Churchmen. The great dilemma of Church reformers was described by the late Mr. W. E. Forster—who was a Churchman as well as a Parliamentarian—when, as far back as 1881, he described the Church of England as being

> "the only great institution in the world which has to go on almost without the possibility of reform; because it can only be reformed by Parliament, and Parliament cannot effectively reform it."

Why could not Parliament effectively reform the Church, or even reform it ineffectively? The reasons were notorious. That House was so constituted as to be absolutely unfit to undertake the task. The Church of England was Protestant, Episcopal and Trinitarian—could anything be more anomalous than that it should be legislated for by Roman Catholics, Presbyterians and Unitarians

—to say nothing of Jews, Nonconformists, and even avowed unbelievers? Yet so long as that Church was a national institution, all these must possess equal rights, and discharge equal duties, in regard to the legislation which came before it. He did not wonder that an increasing number of Churchmen had come to regard further legislation for the Church with positive dread. "None but the most short-sighted," said Lord Carnarvon in 1881,

> "will look to legislation as a remedy for our present difficulties. The conditions of Parliament, as now constituted, are incapable of wise and just legislation on Church questions. There is scarcely a line on this subject in the Statute-book of recent years which would not be better out than in; and whatever our difficulties, and even our contentions, the less we have of parliamentary interposition the happier we shall be."

The present Bishop of Worcester, when Dean of Peterborough, said of a proposed alteration in the Prayer Book, it

> "would be disastrous if the sacred things of the Church were to be tossed to and fro in debate by men of all religions and of none in the House of Commons."

And, conscious of the dilemma involved in that admission, he added—

> "We must go to Parliament simply because we are an established Church, and if anyone says 'at all costs abstain from going to Parliament,' that is practically saying we must be disestablished."

If Churchmen were reluctant to bring their complaints and demands before Parliament, that House was equally reluctant to entertain them. It was idle for Church reformers to assert that the chief obstacle in the way of Church reform was the obstruction of malignant Liberationists. The Governments of past times showed the same indifference as Governments of to-day. The late Archbishop Magee, writing on his own abortive efforts to reform the system of private patronage in the Church, said of a Conservative Government (March 29 1875):—

> "The Cabinet is sick of all Church questions, and hates the very idea of Church Bills in the Commons."

Only a few days ago the Bishop of Salisbury made exactly the same cómplaint as Archbishop Magee, when he said:—

> "He was sorry to add that, whether there was a Conservative or a Liberal Government in power, they were thwarted in that matter. When a Liberal Government was in power people thwarted their Measures for Church reform because they were afraid the Church would become too strong, and when a Conservative Government was in power the reforms in question were thwarted by a defence of the rights of property, so that the Church was equally badly treated by whichever Government was in power."

There was a final reason why it was useless to look to Parliament for any substantial Measures of Church reform, and that was that the time of the House was totally inadequate for the purpose. Every Session the arrears of strictly secular legislation were increasing, and Parliament was in danger of falling into disrepute because of its inability to meet the demands—the reasonable demands—of large masses of the people. How long did Church reformers think it would take to effect all the changes enumerated in the list which he had read? Would seven Sessions suffice, even if seven Sessions could be wholly given to the gigantic task? He greatly doubted it; but had no doubt that, even if it could be accomplished, a large number of Churchmen would be thoroughly disgusted with the practical result. ["Hear, hear!"] The honourable Member for the Tunbridge Division had lately had a little experience as a Church reformer, and knew that the question of Church patronage had been before Parliament at various times for a quarter of a century, and that the Benefices Bill of last year was the 17th of a series. Who was responsible for that long delay? Not Liberationists, but, in past times at least, the Peers, the Bishops, and the clergy, as the life of Archbishop Magee clearly showed; and last year the Bill was killed by the representatives of the private patrons who sat on the Ministerial side of the House. Well, if that reform—which was said to be the ripest of all Church reforms—had taken so long to accomplish, when were they likely to witness those other and still larger reforms which he had enumerated? There were some Church reformers who thought that they had discovered a short cut to the reform they desired. The newly-formed Church Reform League proposed that Convocation should prepare schemes of reform, to be laid before Parliament, and that, if not vetoed by Parliament, they would become law. Unfortunately for that proposal, it was admitted that before Convocation could reform the Church it must be itself reformed; because it very inadequately represented the clergy, and did not represent the laity at all. ["Hear, hear!"] But, supposing that that preliminary and formidable difficulty were overcome, did anyone seriously believe that Parliament would place the Church on a voluntary basis, as regarded government, while allowing it to retain all its rights and privileges as a national institution? They might depend upon it that Parliament would not lose its grip upon the Church so long as it was in the enjoyment of millions a year of national property, and would no more allow the Church to govern itself than it allowed the Army and the Navy to govern themselves. ["Hear, hear!"] That fact was now so deeply impressed on the minds of many Churchmen that, to secure a real reformation of the Church they had lately formed "The Churchman's Liberation League;" which organisation was described in one of their publications as being

> "open to Churchmen of any Party in Church or State who recognise that the existing connection between Church and State in England has become injurious to the spiritual interests of the Church, and a hindrance to the progress of true religion, and are prepared either to advocate or support the disestablishment of the Church from within."

They, too, felt "the need of freedom on the part of the Church to manage its own affairs;" but they also recognised "the impossibility of expecting Parliament to deal properly with such matters." They therefore declared that "the great issue which lies before the Church of England" was perfectly expressed in the words of Mr. Gladstone, written nearly half-a-century ago:—"You have our decision: take your own: choose between the mess of pottage and the birthright of the Bride of Christ." Nor were the members of this League the only Churchmen who had made up their minds that the hope of the Church lay in its disestablishment. He believed the opinion of Churchmen in favour of disestablishment was rapidly growing; not only because of their discontent with the existing state of things, but because they had become distinctly conscious that the recent expansion of the Church—which was with them an object of legitimate pride, and with Christians outside the Church an object of admiration—["Hear, hear!"]—had not been the result of the action of the State, but of their own efforts. What had the State done for the Church during the last 50 years? It had done something for the Nonconformists, but little or nothing for the Church. It was generations since the State voted any money for Church purposes, and all the Church extensions of modern times had been the result of voluntary zeal. In conclusion, he referred again to the meeting of the Anglican Bishops which would assemble at Lambeth in the summer, and quoted the language of one of them, Bishop Ballarat, the senior Australian Bishop, who had lately said in Dublin:—

> "He was here to-day, after living for twenty years within and helping in the administration of an unendowed and unestablished Church, and he would say that, however great the disadvantages of such a condition of affairs were to the State, he was not prepared to say that they were a disadvantage to the spiritual well-being and prosperity of the Church itself. He for one would be very sorry to take any price he could think of for the freedom of administration and government which they enjoyed, the power to promote reform, and the power of adaptation, more difficult to secure when there was State connection."

He hoped that those honourable Members who in their hearts believed that the connection of Church and State was injurious, but stood shivering on the brink of Disestablishment would derive courage from those assuring words, and if they did not see their way to supporting the Motion, would at least refrain from voting against it. [*Cheers.*]

Mr. HERBERT ROBERTS (Denbighshire, W.) said that in supporting the Motion he wished to make it quite clear that the Welsh Members did not in any way withdraw from the position they had taken up for years past—namely, that Wales had really the first claim on Parliament in the matter of the disestablishment and disendowment of the Church. The Amendment as it originally stood on the Paper in the name of the hon. Member for Kent referred to the impossibility of maintaining the cause of religion without the help of an endowed established Church, and the Leader of the House also referred in his speech to the necessity of an established Church in the interests of the people of the agricultural parishes throughout the country. What he wished to make clear was that this argument would not apply to Wales, for the Nonconformists were quite prepared to carry on the work of religion in every parish throughout the Principality. ["Hear, hear!"] The cause of religion in Wales would not suffer in the slightest degree if the Motion was carried. Assurance of this might be gathered from the fact that while there were 970 parishes in Wales, with 970 established clergymen, there were no fewer than 2,314 ordained Nonconformist ministers in service in the Principality; that the chapels were three times more numerous than the churches, and that the amount paid by Nonconformists in support of their religious principles was very largely in excess of that contributed by Churchmen to the Church. However much advantage the Church might have, owing to its social position and wealth, in Wales, and to other things to which he need not now refer, the fact remained that the great majority of the people did not avail themselves of its ministrations. On a certain Sunday, a few years ago, there were assembled in all the churches of the Church of England in nine Denbighshire parishes 133 people out of a total population of 4,500, or three per cent. of the whole population, whereas the chapels in those districts were filled. Last year, in a particular parish in Denbighshire, there were only four persons in church on Easter Sunday out of a population of 1,200, whereas the numerous chapels in the parish were filled. He desired to lay these facts before the House to prove that there was no danger whatever of the cause of religion suffering one iota from the disestablishment and disendowment of the Church in Wales. He felt confident that whatever the result of the division might be with reference to the question generally in England, the Liberal Party having once pledged itself to Welsh disestablishment that reform would sooner or later be carried by a large majority.

*Mr. JOHN LOWLES (Shoreditch, Haggerston), speaking with personal knowledge of the work done in the East End of London by the Church of England and her devoted clergy, said that it would be an enormous loss to the toiling masses of that portion of the metropolis if the Church were disestablished and disendowed. In the East of London the feeling was distinctly in favour of the maintenance of the parochial system, and the Church was established there in the best possible manner—in the very hearts of the people. Representing an East End constituency, and knowing precisely what the feeling of the people was, he hoped the House would, by a decisive majority, reject this abstract Resolution, which, if carried, would materially affect the toilers of the country.

The House divided:—Ayes, 86; Noes, 204.—(Division List—No. 21—appended.)

AYES.

Allan, William (Gateshead)
Arch, Joseph
Balfour,Rt.Hn.J.Blair (Clckm.)
Barlow, John Emmott
Bolton, Thomas Dolling
Brigg, John
Broadhurst, Henry
Bryce, Rt. Hon. James
Buchanan, Thomas Ryburn
Cameron, Robert
Channing, Francis Allston
Condon, Thomas Joseph
Crilly, Daniel
Curran, Thomas B. (Donegal)
Davies, M.Vaughan-(Cardigan)
Davies, W. Rees (Pembrokesh.)
Davitt, Michael
Dilke, Rt. Hon. Sir Charles
Dillon, John
Doogan, P. C.
Dunn, Sir William
Fenwick, Charles
Flynn, James Christopher
Fox, Dr. Joseph Francis
Gourley, Sir Edward Temperley
Griffith, Ellis J.
Harrison, Charles
Hayne, Rt. Hon. Charles Seale-
Hazell, Walter
Hedderwick,Thomas Charles H.
Jacoby, James Alfred
Joicey, Sir James
Jones, William (Carnarvonsh.)
Kearley, Hudson E.
Kilbride, Denis
Kinloch,Sir John George Smyth
Kitson, Sir James
Labouchere, Henry
Lawson, Sir Wilfrid (Cumblnd.)
Leese, Sir JosephF.(Accrington)
Leng, Sir John
Lloyd-George, David
Logan, John William
Lough, Thomas
Lyell, Sir Leonard
Macaleese, Daniel
MacNeill, John Gordon Swift
McCarthy, Justin
McDermott, Patrick
McEwan, William
McKenna, Reginald
McLeod, John
Maden, John Henry
Morgan, J. Lloyd (Carmarthen)
Morley, Charles (Breconshire)
O'Brien, Patrick (Kilkenny)
O'Connor, James (Wicklow, W.)
O'Connor, T. P. (Liverpool)
O'Keeffe, Francis Arthur
Parnell, John Howard
Perks, Robert William
Pickard, Benjamin
Pickersgill, Edward Hare
Pinkerton, John
Pirie, Captain Duncan Vernon
Priestley, Briggs (Yorks)
Provand, Andrew Dryburgh
Roberts, John Bryan (Eifion)
Roberts, John H. (Denbighs.)
Roche, Hon. James (East Kerry)
Samuel, J. (Stockton-on-Tees)
Shaw, Thomas (Hawick B.)
Souttar, Robinson
Stevenson, Francis S.
Sullivan, Donal (Westmeath)
Thomas, Alfred (Glamorgan, E.)
Ure, Alexander
Wallace, Robert (Perth)
Walton, John Lawson
Wayman, Thomas
Whittaker, Thomas Palmer
Williams, John Carvell (Notts.)
Wilson, Charles Henry (Hull)
Wilson, Jos. H. (Middlesbrough)
Young, Samuel
Yoxall, James Henry

TELLERS FOR THE AYES, Mr. Samuel Smith and Mr. Morton.

NOES.

Acland-Hood, Capt. Sir A. F.
Aird, John
Allhusen,Augustus Henry Eden
Arnold, Alfred
Arnold-Forster, Hugh O.
Arrol, Sir William
Ascroft, Robert
Atkinson, Rt. Hon. John
Bailey, James (Walworth)
Baillie, James E. B. (Inverness)
Balcarres, Lord
Baldwin, Alfred
Balfour,Rt.Hon. A. J. (Manch'r)
Balfour,Gerald William (Leeds)
Barnes, Frederic Gorell
Bartley, George C. T.
Beach,Rt.Hon.SirM.H.(Bristol)
Begg, Ferdinand Faithfull
Bethell, Captain
Bhownaggree, M. M.
Biddulph, Michael
Bigham, John Charles
Bill, Charles
Blundell, Colonel Henry
Boscawen, Arthur Griffith-
Brassey, Albert
Brodrick, Rt. Hon. St. John
Bullard, Sir Harry
Butcher, John George
Campbell, James A.
Carson, Edward
Cavendish, R. F. (N. Lancs)
Cavendish, V.C.W.(Derbyshire)
Cecil, Lord Hugh
Chaloner, Captain R. G. W.
Chamberlain, J.Austen (Worc'r)
Chaplin, Rt. Hon. Henry
Charrington, Spencer
Chelsea, Viscount
Clarke, Sir Edward (Plymouth)
Cochrane, Hon. Thos. H. A. E.
Coddington, Sir William
Coghill, Douglas Harry
Collings, Rt. Hon. Jesse
Colston, Chas. Edw. H. Athole
Compton, Lord Alwyne (Beds)
Cook, Fred Lucas (Lambeth)
Cranborne, Viscount
Cripps, Charles Alfred
Curzon, Viscount (Bucks.)
Dalbiac, Major Philip Hugh
Dalkeith, Earl of
Darling, Charles John
Denny, Colonel
Digby, John K. D. Wingfield-
Dixon-Hartland,SirFred.Dixon
Douglas, Rt. Hon. A. Akers-
Doxford, William Theodore
Drage, Geoffrey
Drucker, A.
Duncombe, Hon. Hubert V.
Egerton, Hon. A. de Tatton
Fellowes, Hon. Ailwyn Edward
Fergusson,Rt.Hn.SirJ. (Manc'r)
Finch, George H.
Finch-Hatton, Hon. Harold H.
Finlay, Sir Robert Bannatyne
Fisher, William Hayes
Fison, Frederick William
FitzGerald, Sir R. U. Penrose
Flannery, Fortescue
Fletcher, Sir Henry
Flower, Ernest
Folkestone, Viscount
Forster Henry William
Forwood, Rt. Hn. Sir Arthur B.
Foster, Colonel (Lancaster)
Foster, Harry S. (Suffolk)
Fry, Lewis
Gedge, Sydney
Gibbs, Hon. Vicary (St.Albans.)
Gilliat, John Saunders
Godson, Augustus Frederick
Goldsworthy, Major-General
Gordon, John Edward
Gorst, Rt. Hon. Sir John Eldon
Goschen,Rt.Hn.G.J.(St.G'rg's)
Goschen, George J. (Sussex)
Greene, W. Raymond- (Cambs)
Gretton, John
Greville, Captain
Gull, Sir Cameron
Hanbury, Rt.Hon. Robert Wm.
Hanson, Sir Reginald
Hardy, Laurence
Heath, James
Helder, Augustus
Hermon-Hodge, Robert Trotter
Hill,Rt.Hn.Lord Arthur(Down)
Hill,Rt.Hn.A. Staveley (Staffs.)
Hoare,Edw.Brodie (Hampstead)
Hopkinson, Alfred
Howard, Joseph
Hudson, George Bickersteth
Hutton, John (Yorks. N.R.)
Isaacson, Frederick Wootton
Jeffreys, Arthur Frederick
Jossel, Captain Herbert Merton
Johnston, William (Belfast)
Johnstone, John H. (Sussex)
Jolliffe, Hon. H. George

Kennaway, Rt. Hon. Sir John H.
Kenny, William
Kenyon, James
Knowles, Lees
Lafone, Alfred
Laurie, Lieut.-General
Lecky, William Edward H.
Lees, Sir Elliott (Birkenhead)
Leighton, Stanley
Llewellyn, Evan H. (Somerset)
Llewelyn, Sir Dillwyn- (Swns'a)
Long, Col. Charles W. (Evesham)
Long, Rt. Hn. Walter (Liverpool)
Lorne, Marquess of
Lowles, John
Loyd, Archie Kirkman
Lucas-Shadwell, William
Lyttelton, Hon. Alfred
Macdona, John Cumming
Maclean, James Mackenzie
Maclure, John William
McCalmont, Maj-Gen. (Ant'mN)
McKillop, James
Malcolm, Ian
Martin, Richard Biddulph
Massey-Mainwaring, Hn. W. F.
Milbank, Powlett Charles John
Mildmay, Francis Bingham
Milward, Colonel Victor
Monckton, Edward Philip
Monk, Charles James
Montagu, Hon. J. Scott (Hants)
More, Robert Jasper
Morgan, Hn. Fred. (Monm'thsh.)
Morrell, George Herbert
Morrison, Walter
Mowbray, Rt. Hon. Sir John
Nicol, Donald Ninian
Northcote, Hon. Sir H. Stafford
Orr-Ewing, Charles Lindsay
Penn, John
Phillpotts, Captain Arthur
Pierpoint, Robert
Pollock, Harry Frederick
Powell, Sir Francis Sharp
Pryce-Jones, Edward
Purvis, Robert
Rankin, James
Renshaw, Charles Bine
Rentoul, James Alexander
Richards, Henry Charles
Ridley, Rt. Hon. Sir Matthew W.
Ritchie, Rt. Hon. Chas. Thomson
Round, James
Russell, T. W. (Tyrone)
Samuel, Harry S. (Limehouse)
Sandys, Lieut.-Col. Thos. Myles
Saunderson, Col. Ewd. James
Savory, Sir Joseph
Scoble, Sir Andrew Richard
Seely, Charles Hilton
Seton-Karr, Henry
Sharpe, William Edward T.
Simeon, Sir Barrington
Sinclair, Louis (Romford)
Smith, Abel (Herts)
Smith, Abel H. (Christchurch)
Smith, Hon. W. F. D. (Strand)
Stanley, Lord (Lancs.)
Stanley, Edw. Jas. (Somerset)
Stanley, Henry M. (Lambeth)
Stephens, Henry Charles
Stewart, Sir Mark J. McTaggart
Stirling-Maxwell, Sir John M.
Strutt, Hon. Charles Hedley
Sutherland, Sir Thomas
Talbot, Lord E. (Chichester)
Talbot, John G. (Oxford Univ.)
Taylor, Francis
Tomlinson, Wm. Edw. Murray
Tritton, Charles Ernest
Vincent, Col. Sir C. E. Howard
Warkworth, Lord
Warr, Augustus Frederick
Webster, Sir R. E. (Isle of Wight)
Welby, Lt.-Col. A. C. E.
Whiteley, H. (Ashton-under-L.)
Williams, Colonel R. (Dorset)
Willoughby de Eresby, Lord
Wodehouse, Edmond R. (Bath)
Wolff, Gustav Wilhelm
Wyndham, George
Wyndham-Quin, Major W. H.

TELLERS FOR THE NOES, Sir William Walrond and Mr. Anstruther.

PAUPER ALIENS.

*MR. LOWLES said he would detain the House but a few moments in bringing under notice the Motion standing in his name. He was sorry to say the evil to which he referred was an evil increasing in intensity. The Departmental Returns gave a total of 40,422 aliens as landing in this country during 1895, and the numbers in 1896 were 45,875, and none of these were on their way to other countries. The latest Return, for the month of January, showed 2,583, as against 2,494 in the corresponding month of last year. But he did not want to refer to statistics to tell the House the magnitude of the evil as it existed in the East End of London. All his life he had been acquainted with the East End of London. He had served on the London County Council Committee on the Housing of the Working Classes, and it was his duty to visit the crowded districts where the most terrible evils of the sweating system were to be found. These destitute foreigners were shipped to this country like sheep and were crowded into lodgings and workshops like animals. Every Member should read Mr. Charles Booth's book on Life and Labour in the East End of London, and in that book was described a sight he had often seen, and which Members might see at any time if they would go down to the wharves when the Hamburg boats arrived, men landing from the boats labelled with the address of the sweater to whom they were consigned like so many sheep or cattle, and perfectly helpless. He had visited the United States to see what was done in this matter on that side, and there he found some stringent regulations in force which, though they did not prevent them entirely, did put a stop to a large extent to the evils that attended this immigration. Evidences of the character of the evil continually appeared in the newspapers. Only a week ago there was the report of an inquest on one of these poor foreigners who had died at his work, and it was proved before the coroner, Mr. Wynne Baxter, that the pay of this miserable man was 8s. a week. Again, in a case tried before the magistrate at the Thames Police Court, it was shown that the price paid to a foreign girl for making four pairs of trousers was 14d., or 3½d. a pair. These poor people came to this country ignorant of the language and circumstances, and were sent to the sweaters; they were mere paupers, and God help them if they were in a worse condition in their own country. What he had seen in his own observations and knew as a fact was that every one of these aliens who settled in the East End of London, and in other industrial centres, drove out of employment one of our own poor workmen, and added to the large mass of the unemployed who crowded round the dock gates day after day clamouring for casual employment. Within the last month he became acquainted with two cases within his own constituency of men who had in this way lost their employment. One of these cases was that of a man who had been employed for 17 years in the boot trade. During that time he had lived in the same house and paid his rates, but the class of work out of which he had made his living was completely taken away by the underpaid foreigners who now monopolised the work. Only the other day he became acquainted with the case of a man in his constituency who for 32 years had been in one employment, and for three months he had been unable to get employment, because the work was taken away by the unfair competition of these unfortunate foreigners, who crowded our East End slums. The Motion he proposed was not conceived in any hostility to the Government, he simply wanted them to do what they had promised to do at the last General Election, and that which Lord Salisbury in another place actually proposed a couple of Sessions ago. He asked the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Board of Trade to give him some assurance which he might take to his constituents, that the right hon. Gentleman and the Government were in sympathy with the Resolution as it appeared on the Paper, and that they would take an early opportunity of putting a stop, as far as they could, to a state of things which caused untold mischief in the East End of London. He moved:—

"That, in the opinion of this House, the constant influx of Pauper Aliens into London and other industrial centres is prejudicially affecting and seriously displacing British labour in many industries, and demands and should receive instant attention at the hands of Her Majesty's Government."

SIR HOWARD VINCENT (Sheffield, Central) seconded the Motion. His hon. Friend had stated the facts fully, and there was no occasion to repeat them. The matter had been referred to in the House on former occasions, and it had occupied public attention during the General Election. The right hon. Gentleman at the head of the Board of Trade had referred to the subject in his address when seeking election to the House, and he felt sure that his right hon. Friend would endeavour to do all he possibly could in the matter. He had served on the Committee of 1888-9 for dealing with the question, and the evidence collected by the Committee he commended to the attention of Members. It was not alleged that the aliens were themselves a charge upon the rates, but what was alleged was, and it was confirmed by the evidence given by witnesses before the Committee, that these aliens drove English workmen on to the rates and made paupers of numbers of our poorer population. It was not that they affected the trade of the whole country, they affected the trade of certain portions of the country, and the President of the Board of Trade, who knew the East End of London, would be aware of the evil, and should do all he possibly could to find a remedy. It was the tailoring and boot-making trades that were specially injured by this alien immigration. The increased prosperity of the country which had lately prevailed had brought these aliens here in increasing numbers, and it was, therefore, incumbent on the Government and Members on the Government side of the House who had made this a great point during the General Election, to do all they possibly could to put a stop to the evil.

THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF TRADE (Mr. C. T. RITCHIE, Croydon): I am not at all surprised that my hon. Friend should have thought it necessary to draw the attention of the House to the evil under which, I cannot doubt, a considerable portion of the district he represents suffers. I, myself, have had some experience of the East End of London, and I know that although, perhaps, the number of destitute aliens who come into the country is not large, having regard to our population as a whole, and those who come to London are not large relatively to the population of London. Yet the fact is, that these destitute aliens settle down in particular parts of the Metropolis, and what is a very small percentage over London as a whole, is a large percentage in the district where these aliens settle. The numbers are unfortunately increasing. In the last three years the number of Russian Poles, some of the least desirable of these aliens who come here, have increased 50 per cent. I can assure my hon. Friend that the Government are quite alive to the evils which exist in the districts where these people settle down. It is not as if the people were desirable in themselves, for that they certainly are not, and I can quite understand the feelings of the working classes in the districts where they settle are very strong. I understand that my hon. Friend does not desire a full and ample discussion of this subject to-night. He desires to bring forward this grievance as one particularly affecting the constituency he represents, and he reminds the House, that not only individual Members, but the Government as a whole are pledged to some legislation on the subject. We do not desire to depart one iota from the pledges we have given. ["Hear, hear!"] But my hon. Friend will recognise that there are other matters of far-reaching importance we have to bring before the House of Commons this Session, and perhaps he will rest content with the assurance I have given, that we adhere to every pledge we have given, and I hope at no distant time to propose to Parliament legislation in the direction he desires. ["Hear, hear!"]

*Mr. LOWLES said after this very satisfactory assurance from the right hon. Gentleman he had no wish to press the matter further, and would ask the permission of the House to withdraw the Motion.

*Sir CHARLES DILKE (Gloucester, Forset of Dean) said before the Motion was withdrawn he had only a word to say. Of course it was not worth while for Members to take part in such a perfunctory Debate when the House was not even asked to pass a Resolution. But he desired to give notice—as he had on a former occasion—that whenever this Measure was introduced it would be met with the hottest possible Parliamentary opposition. ["Hear, hear!"]

Mr. T. LOUGH (Islington, W.) said it seemed to him that everybody was in much too great a hurry.

Sir HOWARD VINCENT: Not at all.

Mr. LOUGH said the hon. Member had tried to bring forward this Motion on many occasions, and now, when he had a splendid opportunity, when nobody wanted to go away, when they were waiting to hear the facts upon which he asked for such a drastic policy to be adopted, the hon. Member withdrew his Motion. Not a single fact had been put forward in its support.

Sir HOWARD VINCENT: The hon. Member was not pressed.

Mr. LOUGH said he was in the House during seven-eighths of the hon. Member's remarks. When he came in the hon. Gentleman was speaking in a great hurry, but he heard no fact in support of the Resolution. There were Returns every month published on the subject, and none of these had he quoted.

*Mr. LOWLES: Yes, I did.

Mr. LOUGH said the last Returns showed there were not so many destitute aliens arriving in this country as previously; the matter was, therefore, not at all pressing, and he thought the House might have expected something more from the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Board of Trade, who also seemed to be in a great hurry, as to the lines of the policy he intended to pursue. It was not for Members on that side to keep up the thread of Debate; but on such an important matter of policy there ought to be some little more foundation for the legislative structure proposed to be raised. ["Hear, hear!"]

Mr. J. HAVELOCK WILSON (Middlesbrough) said he desired to support the Motion. If the hon. Member were to visit our east coast ports he would get all the information he desired as to how far these destitute aliens affected the work of the country. Workmen throughout the country were generally in favour of some legislation on the subject. This feeling had found expression at the Trade Union Congress.

*Sir CHARLES DILKE: Not at the last.

Mr. J. HAVELOCK WILSON said he had been to a few Trade Union Congresses, and knew that resolutions in that sense had passed.

Notice taken that 40 Members were not present. House counted, and 40 Members not being present,

The House was Adjourned at Five minutes after Seven of the clock till To-morrow.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

Wednesday, 10th February 1897.

PRIVATE BUSINESS.

LONDON WATER BILLS.

The following Bills were Read the First time, and ordered to be Read a Second time:—

CHELSEA WATER (PURCHASE) BILL.

"To empower the London County Council to acquire the undertaking of the Governor and Company of Chelsea Waterworks; and for other purposes."

EAST LONDON WATER (PURCHASE) BILL.

"To empower the London County Council to acquire the undertaking of the East London Waterworks Company; and for other purposes."

GRAND JUNCTION WATER (PURCHASE) BILL.

"To empower the London County Council to acquire the undertaking of the Grand Junction Waterworks Company; and for other purposes."

KENT WATER (PURCHASE) BILL.

"To empower the London County Council to acquire the undertaking of the Company of Proprietors of the Kent Waterworks; and for other purposes."

LAMBETH WATER (PURCHASE) BILL.

"To empower the London County Council to acquire the undertaking of the Company of Proprietors of Lambeth Waterworks; and for other purposes."

LONDON WATER (PURCHASE) BILL.

"To authorise the London County Council to raise and expend money on capital account in connection with the acquisition of waterworks."

NEW RIVER WATER (PURCHASE) BILL.

"To empower the London County Council to acquire the water undertaking of the Governor and Company of the New River brought from Chadwell and Amwell to London; and for other purposes."

SOUTHWARK AND VAUXHALL WATER (PURCHASE) BILL.

"To empower the London County Council to acquire the undertaking of the Southwark and Vauxhall Water Company; and for other purposes."

WEST MIDDLESEX WATER (PURCHASE) BILL.

"To empower the London County Council to acquire the undertaking of the Company of Proprietors of the West Middlesex Waterworks; and for other purposes."

DUBLIN CORPORATION BILL.

On the order for the Second Reading of this Bill,

MR. W. JOHNSTON (Belfast, S.)—who had the following Notice of Motion on the Paper—

> "That it be an Instruction to the Committee on the Dublin Corporation Bill that, either by definition or enactment, they make provision for conferring on duly qualified women the municipal franchise within the City of Dublin and the townships specified in the Bill"—

said he did not mean by the Motion to oppose the Bill. He wished, however, to have an assurance from the Corporation of Dublin that they would agree to an extension of the franchise to women. If the Corporation agreed to this suggestion he would not oppose the Second Reading; otherwise, he should feel compelled, in the interests of justice, to do so.

MR. TIMOTHY HARRINGTON (Dublin, Harbour) appealed to the hon. Member not to object to the Second Reading. The terms of his own Motion implied that the Bill should pass the Second Reading before the discussion upon the instruction could be entered upon. The Dublin Corporation could not give the hon. Member the assurance he desired at the present moment. If the Second Reading was assented to, the Motion of the hon. Member for South Belfast could be discussed afterwards in due order.

*MR. SPEAKER: Either the Second Reading of the Bill is objected to or it is not. If it is objected to either absolutely or conditionally, it must stand over until To-morrow.

MR. W. JOHNSTON: Then I object Sir.

Bill ordered for Second Reading To-morrow.

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

PREFERENTIAL PAYMENTS IN BANKRUPTCY ACT (1888) AMENDMENT BILL.

*MR. GEORGE KEMP (Lancashire, Heywood), in moving the Second Reading of this Bill, said that in doing so he wished to ask for that forbearance which hon. Members never failed to extend to one who had seldom ventured to take part in the Debates of the House. ["Hear, hear!"] He confessed that he rose with diffidence because he knew that any efforts of his would fall short of the importance of the subject, and because he felt that the title of the Bill might be lacking in the attractiveness which was due to a Wednesday afternoon Measure. [*Laughter.*] Nevertheless, the Measure was one which would confer an act of justice. It was far-reaching in its scope, and would prove to be beneficial in its effects, and acceptable to the working classes. By the law as it at present stood, under the Act of 1888, it was enacted that in the distribution of the property of a bankrupt, or in the distribution of the assets of a company which was being wound up, certain debts should have priority—first, local rates and assessed taxes not exceeding one year's assessment; secondly, the wages or salaries of clerks or workmen not exceeding £50, due for services rendered during four months prior to the receiving order or the winding up of the company; and thirdly, the wages of workmen or labourers not exceeding £25, due for services rendered during two months before the same date. Hon. Members would see that no provision was made in that Act for claims for the payment of wages when a company was being wound up and the assets were not sufficient to more than cover the claims of the debenture holders. It was proposed by this Bill that, when a company was being wound up, the debts he had mentioned as having priority over other debts should also have priority over the claims of debenture holders under a floating charge on the assets, effects, or uncalled capital of the company, and that if a receiver was appointed on behalf of the debenture holders those debts should be paid out of the assets of the company in priority to any claims of the debenture holders for interest or capital. When they considered the number of joint stock companies in existence, and the great number of workmen and workwomen engaged by them, it must be patent that the Bill would have a far-reaching effect. It might be said that the number of cases in which workpeople would be subject to loss from wages through the winding up of companies would be small, because wages were as a rule paid weekly; but in regard to payment by piece work the case would be quite different. A weaver, for instance, might have a peculiarly delicate warp into which a great amount of work had to be put, and it might require two or three weeks to complete it. In that case the workman would be deprived of his wages under the present law. Moreover, a clerk who was paid quarterly would run the risk of losing even a larger proportion of his wages. Any Measure the object of which secured wages to the workman must have the best results for both the workman and the general trade of the country. If he had any doubt on the subject of its beneficial effect that doubt would have been laid at rest by the remark of a Radical friend of his, that he was not aware that such a good Measure could have emanated from a Member who sat on the Unionist side of the House. [*Laughter.*] He did not see that hon. Friend in his place, but he trusted he would be there that afternoon to give his blessing to, and, if need be, his vote for—though he hoped that would not be necessary—this solitary specimen of well-doing from that side of the House. [*Laughter.*] He should like to say a few words as to the justice of the Measure. In doing so he would call attention to Clause 2 of the Bill, which provided that debts such as he had referred to should have priority over the claims of debenture holders under any floating charge on the assets or uncalled capital of the company. ["Hear, hear!"] That was to say, that money which had been lent on mortgage, or in the form of mortgage debentures, on the lands and buildings alone, would not come within the scope of the Bill. To make plain the incidence of the order of payment in the case of a company being wound up, he would take the case of a limited company, with, they would suppose, an ordinary share capital of £300,000, debentures to a similar amount, and weekly wages paid of £1,000. They would suppose, too, that there was a mortgage of £10,000 on the lands and buildings of the company. First in order of payment there came this mortgage of £10,000. Secondly, came the workpeople with their claims for their wages—if their wages were in arrears, say two weeks, £2,000—as against the debenture holders under a floating charge on the remaining assets of the company; then came the debenture holders, and fourthly came the ordinary shareholders. What was the justice of this? First of all, the mortgagee got his money, because it was on the lands and buildings, which were not in any way affected by, nor did they affect, the work of the workpeople. Secondly, why should the workpeople come in priority to the debenture holders under a floating charge? For the reason that the raw material and the articles partly or wholly manufactured were part of the assets of the debenture holders. This raw material had been benefited by the work of the workpeople to the extent of the time for which their wages were in arrear. Therefore, it was only right and just that the workpeople should have the benefit of the enhanced value of these articles, which, as the law stood at the present time, would be first claimed by the holders of debentures or debenture stock. He quite agreed that the greatest care should be taken that no legislation should be passed which would minimise the security and the value of these debentures; but he submitted that, apart from the justice of the case and apart from the fact that the principle had already been admitted by the Act of 1888, the holders of debentures or debenture stock under a floating charge would not have their securities appreciably diminished by the payment of wages due. He would take the case which he had already mentioned—a case in which the figures he had given represented a business concern which was going at the present time, the actual amount of debentures, the actual amount of ordinary capital, and the actual amount of wages paid weekly. They would suppose that two weeks' wages, or £2,000, were owing. Those £2,000 were only two-thirds per cent. of the value of the debenture share, and it would be dfficult for anyone to show that the weekly wages of any business concern would be more than a fractional amount per cent. of the debentures; and supposing the debentures were very small in proportion to the whole share capital, and smaller in proportion to the weekly wages, then there would be all the less chance of the debenture holders not being paid in full, because the assets would be so much the greater. ["Hear, hear!"] But the cases they hoped to meet by that Bill were those where the debentures were very large in proportion to the whole capital and in proportion to the wages. In those cases he submitted that the wages would only form a very small fractional amount per cent. of the value of the debentures. He admitted that debentures varied in different trades and businesses, and that they could form no exact rule; but he thought that, as a general rule, what he had pointed out would be the case. But if it was a small thing to debenture holders that wages should be paid, it was by no means a small matter that the working people should get their wages. To them the loss of one or two weeks' wages was a very considerable thing. It was, in fact, a matter of bread and cheese to them, and therefore it was of the utmost importance, in his opinion, that the Bill should be passed into law. Many Measures which were brought forward from time to time in the interests of working men had, rightly or wrongly, this objection urged to them—that, while the Measures were apparently in their interest now, ultimately they would prove to be to their detriment by restricting the circulation of capital or by driving trade away to other countries. He submitted that in the case of this Bill this objection could not be made. In his opinion, not one penny less would be invested in industrial undertakings if the Bill passed into law, nor would any trade which England enjoyed at present be driven to other countries. This was a great opportunity for the House to pass a Measure which would do an act of justice to a large class of the community and would not inflict injury on anyone, and he hoped the Bill would be allowed to peacefully pass its Second Reading and ultimately to take its place on the Statute Book. [*Cheers.*]

Mr. ROBERT ASCROFT (Oldham), in seconding the Motion, said they had only one object in introducing this Bill, and that was to bring the legislation on the question of the payment of wages up to date. Circumstances had arisen since the House last dealt with this question which necessitated an alteration of the law. It would be only fair to say that this was the fifth occasion on which the House had endeavoured to grapple with this question, and on that occasion they had endeavoured, by the names on the back of the Bill, to dissociate it from any Party bias. In 1883 the Companies Act was passed, which enabled workpeople and clerks to have a preference where a company went into liquidation. In 1883 the Bankruptcy Act was passed, and this extended the preferential payments to rates as well as to wages. In 1886 another step was taken, and the Agricultural Labourers' Wages Bill was passed to enable labourers, in cases of bankruptcy, to recover a portion of their wages. In 1888 the Preferential Payments Bill was brought in and repealed the three Bills which he had just named. The noble Lord who moved the Second Reading of that Bill in the House of Lords made use of these words:—

> "The object of the Bill was to give wages in this country the same conditions of justice as they received in other countries in respect of their priority in case of bankruptcy, liquidation, or the winding up of companies. . . . The Bill would do away with much hardship to the wage-earning classes of the country."

That was the object of the Bill now before the House. Was it necessary? Speaking for his own county of Lancashire, he knew they were honeycombed with limited liability companies, and they all knew perfectly well that so long as Members of that House lent their names to these concerns the practice of limited liability companies would go on and flourish. That was all very well for a time; but now, when limited liability companies issued what were called floating debentures, which covered every stick and stone possessed by that company, it was a different matter. When the Receiver for these holders took possession he snapped his fingers at the workpeople, and took the benefits of their labour in the goods he seized on behalf of the debenture holders, and the workpeople had to go away, having lost their capital. As the hon. Member had said, this was a terrible thing for workmen, hundreds of thousands of whom lived from week to week on their wages, and who, if they had to go without a week's wages, got into arrears with rents and rates, with food bills, with contributions to insurance funds for their children in case of sickness or death, and with their contributions to their trade organisations. It might be asked were there any grievances calling for the Bill. Well, the Bill had emanated from the textile operatives of Lancashire, and there were at the moment within the precincts of the House representatives of the Textile Operatives Association, an association which represented 170,000 men. They felt the pinch caused by the want of such legislation as the Bill proposed. He mentioned two cases which had come to his knowledge within the last twelve months, which occurred in districts adjoining his constituency. One was on the south side, where a limited company mortgaged its freehold and every stock and stone was covered. Rates to the amount of £270 became due, a receiver took possession, and the Corporation of Ashton-under-Lyne were deprived of their rates, for there was nothing to distrain upon. Then again, as showing the case affecting the workpeople. On the western side of his constituency there was a limited company who issued floating debentures covering the whole stock got into arrears, and a receiver took possession. What happened? There were four workmen whose wages were in arrear to the extent of some £4 each, and these wages were lost, and in addition three of these men were called upon to pay their fellow workers under them, and the receiver for the debenture holders got the benefit of this. There were some 24 women reelers, whose average wages did not reach 16s. a week, who had the pleasure of seeing their hard-earned money go to the receiver, they receiving not a single penny on account of it. These cases were examples of thousands that might happen in consequence of these issues of debenture stock in the nature of floating debentures. On this question he thought the House would be glad to hear the opinion of the hon. Member for the Cricklade Division (Mr. Hopkinson), to whom he was greatly indebted for assistance in drawing up this rather intricate Bill. They had hoped to be able to draw a Bill of one section, but found they could not do that. They had to meet the case of companies going into liquidation, assets being paid into Court, the Court having to distribute them. The Court could only interpret the Law, and the Bill was wanted to put the Court in the position that, when distributing assets, debenture holders should not have priority over workpeople. The second clause dealt with the case in which the receiver for debenture holders popped down on a concern and took possession of everything. It was, therefore, necessary to add the second clause, and he thought if the Bill went before the Standing Committee on Trade it might require a third clause to consolidate it with the Act of 1888. His hon. Friend had referred to the justice of the claim of workpeople to payment before debenture holders. It was well understood that debentures were paid, or ought to be paid, out of the profits of a concern, that was the sum of money remaining after the payment of rates, taxes, wages, and working expenses. Debenture holders never expected to be paid out of capital, that would be an unfair and improper thing. In the paying out of profits or estimated profits, wages should first of all be deducted. It had ever been the rule of the House to afford, as far as possible, protection for the lives and limbs and health of workpeople, and he felt perfectly certain that in extending this Act and bringing it up to date the House would be only following out a principle which had been acted upon for the last 40 years.

*SIR CHARLES DILKE (Gloucester, Forest of Dean) said the admirably clear speech of the hon. Member who introduced the Bill left one point doubtful. He called it a far-reaching Measure, but for his own part he did not think it was that. As to its necessity he quite agreed, and, his own name being on the back of it, he would not say a word against the Bill so far as it went, but it was not a far-reaching Measure, it did not go far enough. No time need be spent in discussing whether a grievance existed. The cases which had occurred in Lancashire were not very numerous, but there had been cases recently, and, as there was likely to be an extension of company business in Lancashire, the cases would increase in number as time went on. It was perfectly clear that the principle of the Bill was the principle of the existing law, and the intention of Parliament was to give workpeople's claims priority. This intention was pressed a great deal further as regarded seamen, who had a much greater priority than other workmen, and the principle there laid down was continued by the Bill, a principle Parliament no doubt meant to cover the cases contemplated in the Bill. His few remarks were directed to the extent to which the Bill would go, and he spoke with great diffidence in the presence of those acquainted with Company Law, and the law in relation to debentures and bankruptcy, of which he admitted he knew nothing, though he saw there were difficulties to meet. One hon. Member whose name had been mentioned was a high authority on the subject, and another whose name was on the back of the Bill, the hon. Member for Eccles, was a high authority on Company Law. No doubt these hon. Gentlemen would tell the House how far the Bill would go. The Mover had frankly admitted that mortgages were not covered by the Bill. Would the cases which had actually arisen in Lancashire be covered by the Bill? He had doubt upon this point. Would the Bill cover ordinary debentures? It was a matter upon which he had grave doubts. The Bill had two limitations, it was limited to the winding up of companies and to debentures or debenture stock under any floating charge. Would the expression, "under any floating charge" cover ordinary debentures. Were not debentures or debenture stock under any floating charge rather a class of preference shares than ordinary debentures, and would ordinary debentures not be covered by the words? He was not a legal authority, and put this as an honest difficulty, which he hoped would be fairly thrashed out by the Standing Committee to which he supposed the Bill would be referred. He would there attempt to raise the question by putting down Amendments to extend the Bill to cover these points. The words "in the winding up of any company" appeared to be an unnecessary restriction. No doubt it might be necessary to somewhat lengthen the Bill, but why not deal with the matter thoroughly and apply the Bill to individuals and trading partnerships? He confessed he could not see why, if the principle of the Bill was good, it should not be so extended, and to debentures of every kind. These were, perhaps, points to be submitted in Committee, but even now the House might have some guidance from the Government as to how far the Bill would go.

SIR ALBERT ROLLIT (Islington, S.) said the right hon. Baronet had just disclaimed knowledge of the Law on the subject, and in doing so he was very much in the position of everybody else, whether lawyers or not, because conflicting decisions did not cover the whole question. There was the question of registration, the application of the Bills of Sale Act to debentures which left a large amount of doubt, which would be partially set at rest by the Bill. He did not rise to oppose the Bill at all, quite the contrary. It was a singular fact that when the Bill of 1888, which introduced into our Law, as distinguished from foreign law, a new principle of great commercial importance, no discussion on the principle took place at all, and the remarks made on the present occasion did not deal fully with the question of principle. For instance, the hon. Member for Oldham spoke of debentures not being payable out of capital and not attaching to capital, but he knew of no such principle; debentures were evidence of debt, coupled frequently with a charge—

MR. ASCROFT said what he meant to say was that the interest on debentures was not paid out of capital.

SIR ALBERT ROLLIT said he knew of no such principle; debentures were evidence of debt, coupled with a charge on the assets of the company, and he did not know in the ordinary way why debts should not be paid out of capital The Bill had been defended on the ground that the assets claimed by the debenture holders might be created by the workpeople, who, therefore, should have the first claim; but that principle was too widely expressed, for part of the assets covered by the Bill was the uncalled capital, with which, of course, the workpeople had nothing to do. What he thought was the general ground was the absence of means on the part of the workpeople, comparatively with the assets at large of the trading company, which rendered their livelihood the first charge on the trading concern. Even more important was the fact that debentures were not registered and workpeople had no knowledge of them, and that after the close of the operations of the company a secret hand might be stretched out and the whole of the assets taken away from the workpeople who had relied on them for payment of wages. That was the principle embedded in their Bankruptcy legislation—that where goods were in the ordinary disposition of a person and in his apparent ownership they were not to be abstracted in the event of failure, and thus be swept away assets upon the faith of which people had been working. There were many reasons for this Bill, and the principle for it was established by the Act of 1888. That Act was of very great commercial importance, and was wisely and widely extended by this Bill. But if those principles were correct, why were they limited in the measure they were by the Bill before the House? The Member for Oldham said it was wished to deal with the matter in one section. He failed to see the necessity for two sections. It was quite clear, in the Kidderminster case, that where a Receiver took possession the rights of the workpeople should be protected; but he was not aware it had been decided that where there was no Receiver in possession the debenture holders could claim priority. That was the answer to his right hon. Friend. He thought debentures would not claim the precedence which they ought not to have. But did the Bill go far enough, and if they approved its principle, ought they not to attempt to extend it? Why should it be limited to a floating charge? A debenture carrying with it a specific charge would, *a fortiori*, be held to be within the Kidderminster decision. It need not be registered, any more than a floating charge; it was thus kept secret from the workpeople, and the whole operation might be to take away the entire assets, and so deprive the operatives of their wages in the event of a winding-up. The point to be remembered and remedied was—that debentures were expressly exempted from the operation of the Bills of Sale Act by Section 17.. Why should a limited company have an advantage over the ordinary trader in withdrawing from publicity a fact which was important to creditors (including workpeople), and to all dealing with the company, as well as to shareholders? He ventured to suggest that among the Amendments introduced into the Bill should be one repealing Section 17 of the Bills of Sale Act, and giving all these instruments that publicity which was essential when dealing with limited companies. He believed the real remedy, both in principle and practice, was to secure information for the employees and others in dealing with such companies. His right hon. Friend had spoken of the case of mortgages. These were anomalies in this matter altogether. A debenture need not be registered under the Bills of Sale Act, but a mortgage—a more formal instrument—if it included personal chattels, must be registered. There was a distinction which ought to bring debentures clearly within the scope of registration. A mortgage was at present in a position which was inferior in that respect to a debenture. What was still more singular was, that not only need none of these debentures be registered, except in the list of securities of the company, but if they were not registered in the company's own book, according to the Statute, it had still been held that they operated and were valid. Advantage ought to be taken by this Bill to secure the publicity of all instruments containing charges on a company's property, thus giving the employees notice of the possibility of the assets being abstracted. A greater evil still would then be put an end to. Debentures were constantly made the instruments of systematic fraud on the part of vendors, sometimes of very rotten concerns. A business was sold, a debenture was taken in payment—often a very extortionate price—and in the end a secret hand was stretched out, to the prejudice of the shareholders, employees and creditors, and the same vendor could retake possession of the full property for which he had been paid. That was a most unjust state of the law, and one which, in the public interest, ought to be remedied. The Bill went a step in that direction; it was sound in principle, it remedied an evil in practice, and he hoped that in Committee Amendments would be introduced to widen its scope and improve the existing law.

MR. HENRY BROADHURST (Leicester) observed that the policy of the protection of the wages of workmen had been of slow growth. The first time he was concerned in obtaining such protection in that House was in connection with the Bankruptcy Act of 1883, up to which period, in the case of certain companies which became bankrupt, wages had no claim whatever, but had to take their chance with the debts of other creditors. He regarded this Bill as a distinct advance in and continuation of the policy of 1883, and on that ground he supported it. His name was on the back of the Bill, but until he heard the very lucid speech of the hon. Gentleman who had moved the Second Reading he confessed he had not noticed the qualifying words in the last line of Clause 2, by which a certain class of debenture stock would still be exempted from the operations of the Measure. He was desirous that all debenture stock should be included within its scope, and he hoped the promoters would, when the Bill got before one of the Grand Committees, consent to such Amendments as would secure this object. The system which had been described by the hon. Member for Islington of promoting debentures to be issued on a company's property without a single creditor other than the debenture holders being aware of the transaction, was a great and legal wrong and injustice to the labouring and other portions of the community of this country which ought to be remedied. He hoped that in the further stages of the Bill Parliament would insist upon making an advance upon all previous legislation, and provide that no debenture whatever should be exempt from the claims of the wages of the workpeople. He trusted the Solicitor General would take note of the strong desire from every part of the House that all forms of debentures should cease to enjoy that protection which they had hitherto had, but should come within the scope of the Bill and be made to lose any priority over the claims of workpeople to wages—which ought to be superior to any other claim. He heartily supported the Bill so far as it went, reserving to himself the right to further suggestions till a later stage.

*MR. ALFRED HOPKINSON (Wilts, Cricklade) was sure that those who supported this Bill could claim that they were dealing with a real grievance, and one which could be cured without inflicting any practical injury. With regard to the scope of the Bill, several remarks had fallen from the other side which rather indicated that it was not the far-reaching Measure it was represented to be. If that were so, and it was likely to be an incomplete Measure, not really based on sound principles, he should not be there to support it. The promoters had put their finger on a real practical grievance which could be removed without injury to anyone by merely carrying out to its legitimate conclusion the policy of the Act of 1888. The Bill was so drawn as to remove the grievance effectually. Possibly there might be some misconception as to this, owing to the ambiguity of the term "debenture." It might mean (1) a mere acknowledgment of a debt by a company. No change in the law was necessary to give the workman his priority in that case. (2) It might mean, and this was the commonest case probably, a security giving a floating charge over the assets of the companies. This did not prevent the company dealing with any part of its property while a going concern, but in case of a winding up or of a Receiver being appointed, in an action by the debenture holders, their claims would have priority over the claims of workmen, as well as other creditors of the company over the assets as they then existed. Section 2 of the Bill dealt with the case in a winding up; Section 3 with that where the debenture holders were enforcing their claim by action or by taking possession without a winding up. (3) Where a specific charge was created by a mortgage of part of the company's property as well as a floating charge over other assets. The Bill would give priority to the claims of the clerk or workman over the claims of the debenture holders under the floating charge, but would not disturb the claim under the specific mortgage. An ordinary mortgagee's security was not disturbed in case of the mortgagor's bankruptcy, and so it should not be disturbed in the winding up of a company. Probably, in practice, if the Bill were passed the workman could never lose his wages, as even where a specific mortgage was created the workman's claim to prior payment would avail against the money raised by mortgage or anything that had been purchased with it. If where specific property was transferred under a bill of sale or conveyed by mortgage to a mortgagee, workmen were given priority not only against the assets of a company, but over securities so created, the Legislature would be embarking on a dangerous policy, and he did not think it was necessary for the practical protection of the workman either under a winding up or where a Receiver had been appointed. To disturb the 17th Section of the Bills of Sale Act would interfere with a most useful and convenient form of security upon which millions of money had been invested. As the Bill was framed it met a practical grievance without introducing any anomaly in the law as to either real or personal property, and he hoped it would be rapidly passed. ["Hear, hear!"]

Mr. A. J. MUNDELLA (Sheffield, Brightside) said that everyone sympathised with the objects and intentions of the Bill, and if its provisions were not complete he hoped that in Committee it would be made as complete and thorough as its promoters intended it to be. He maintained that workmen ought to have prior claim over all others, on the ground first, that workmen had not the means, and it was not their business, to inquire into the solvency of the parties for whom they worked; secondly, because every stroke of work the workman did to the last moment of his employment contributed to increase the value of the assets for all the creditors. If the work was incomplete other workmen had to be employed to finish it. The position of the workman differed from that of the ordinary creditor, who inquired into the solvency of the people he was dealing with, and took his risk with the rest of the creditors. He believed there was every desire that this Bill should pass. ["Hear, hear!"]

Mr. WARR (Liverpool, E. Toxteth) said he desired to support this Measure because he believed it to be a Measure of justice to clerks, servants, and workmen. His only doubt was one which he shared with the right hon. Member for the Forest of Dean, as to whether it was a Measure which went far enough to give the classes which it was intended to benefit the assistance to which they were fairly entitled. Of course, it was clear that the holder of a floating debenture had a direct interest in the carrying on of the business, floating assets of which were pledged to him; and, consequently, his security was benefited by the services of the workmen. It was not clear that the same principle should apply to the holder of property specifically charged in favour of a mortgagee, but at present he saw no sufficient ground for placing a workman in a position in this respect inferior to that of a seaman. A seaman was entitled to what was known as a maritime lien upon the vessel on board of which he served, and a maritime lien takes precedence over the claims of a mortgagee of the vessel. The point is one which should receive the careful consideration of any Committee to whom the Bill might be referred.

MR HERBERT WHITELEY (Ashton-under-Lyne) said he was always reluctant to trespass on the time of the House unless the subject was one in which he took a special interest, or of which he had intimate knowledge or experience. He wished to fully endorse what had been said by his hon. Friend the Member for Oldham. Such cases as he had referred to were not of infrequent occurrence. It was a great hardship that an Official Receiver might not only deprive the workmen of the wages they had earned, but might add insult to injury by taking the results of their work. An investor could very well ascertain whether his investment was of a sound or suitable nature, whereas the worker was unable to gauge the credit of his employer. To the investor the loss of his investment meant more or less inconvenience, but to the worker the loss of his wages, in addition to his being thrown out of work, meant that he would have no food for himself and his family. The case, he thought, was a plain one, and he was sure the House would regard from a non-party point of view what was a desirable Measure.

*MR. W. E. M. TOMLINSON (Preston) supported the Bill, which he regarded as a corollary to the Act of 1888. It had come to be more and more the practice for the debenture holders in bankruptcy cases to anticipate the order of the Court in winding up, and to put in their own Receiver. He had had many cases come under his notice where the double process of the Receiver and the liquidation proceedings had gone on together, but as far as his personal experience went the cases in which there had been failure to provide in some way or other for the wages being paid were not very numerous. Generally speaking, if there was any value in the property of the company it was the object of the Receiver and of the debenture holders to carry on the business as a going concern; and when that was the case it was the general desire that the wages should be provided for. He thought that, in justice to the commercial community, it should be said that there was a desire wherever it was possible to find some means to pay the wages, and he did not think that debenture holders would offer any opposition to the Bill. As to the extension which had been suggested, it would introduce very difficult questions, and he did not think that they would be doing a service to the cause of the workmen if they tried to extend the scope of the Bill in the direction proposed. He apprehended that the Bill would have the support and good will of every portion of the House.

*THE SOLICITOR GENERAL (Sir ROBERT FINLAY, Inverness Burghs) thought there had been in every part of the House a general agreement as to the fairness of the principle on which the Bill was founded. The debenture holders had a charge upon the undertaking, and it certainly was very difficult to say why, consistently with any principle of equity, they should not be compelled, on the principle of the Act of 1888, to give a certain priority to those workmen by whose exertions their security had been provided. So far there was, he submitted, no disagreement, and he believed he expressed the views of the Government in saying that. Without attempting to give a very exhaustive definition of what a "debenture" was, he might point out that debentures might be treated as belonging to two classes. They might merely create a floating charge on the undertaking, in which case the company was at liberty to dispose of its property, and the charge was applicable only in respect of such property as was there when the debenture holders stepped in to take possession. But there was a second class of debentures, which comprised not merely a floating charge on the undertaking, but also a specific mortgage, it might be, on the land and buildings which belonged to the company. As he understood the provisions of the Bill, it was intended to apply to the first class of debentures, and to the second class so far only as the floating charge was concerned. The Bill was so drawn as to exclude from its operation the specific mortgage which might be comprised in many instruments. At the same time he thought it certainly would be desirable that in the Committee stage the language of the Bill should be made a little clearer upon that point, particularly in regard to the third section of the Bill. He thought some further words would be necessary in order that the intention of the House might be so clearly expressed that a Court of Law would give effect to them. This Bill, dealing with debentures so far as they created a floating charge, would practically meet every case of the charge so far as chattels were concerned. But when they came to the question of a specific mortgage on real property they were on much more debatable ground. The proposal to extend this Measure to such specific mortgages would certainly require serious consideration, as, if it were accepted, it was difficult to see why that principle should not be applied to all mortgages, so long as the mortgagor was allowed to remain in possession and carry on his business. He should not like to say that he was in favour of so large an extension of the principle of this Bill, particularly as he believed the application of the Bill to chattels would meet the grievances which is was desired to remedy. There were some matters which would require consideration when the Bill was in Committee. The Act of 1888, to which this Bill was perhaps a corollary, contained machinery by which the Act was carefully applied and worked out, and he thought this Bill would need to adopt that machinery so far as it was applicable to the cases which were dealt with. He suggested that the Law Committee would be the most appropriate tribunal for dealing with the Bill.

Bill read a Second time, and committed to the Standing Committee on Law, Etc.

SALE OF INTOXICATING LIQUOR ON SUNDAY BILL.

Mr. CHARLES H. WILSON (Hull, W.), in moving the Second Reading of the Sale of Intoxicating Liquor on Sunday Bill, said that his connection with this subject was one of long standing. In 1889 a similar Measure was carried in that House by a majority of 22; and last year a Bill on the subject was again carried, though in a very small House. He had brought in the present Bill in order to afford an opportunity for the subject being again debated, and he hoped that the House would be allowed to go to a Division on the Measure. As far as his long Parliamentary experience went there were few Measures in which greater interest was taken by hon. Members on both sides of the House than in the one he had under his charge. There could be no doubt that the principle of the Measure was supported by every hon. Member on the Opposition side of the House, who directly represented labour constituencies. That fact ought to make hon. Members opposite who were opposed to the Measure hesitate before they voted against a Bill of this sort, in which the working classes of the country were so deeply interested. He thought that he might safely say that the Ministers of the Church of England, of the Church of Rome, and of every one of the Nonconformist bodies without exception supported the principle of the Measure. There might, of course, be some differences of opinion as to whether the provisions of the Bill required modification, but that would be a matter to be discussed in Committee and not in a Second Reading Debate. As, however, some votes might be influenced by the extent to which modifications might be made in the Bill, he might say that personally he was prepared to accept any modifications which the Committee might deem it necessary to make in the details of the Bill. It must be remembered that the principle of Sunday closing had been carried out in Scotland, Ireland, and Wales, and that England alone had not adopted it. In 1853-54 Scotland had obtained the Forbes Mackenzie Act, under which public houses were closed on Sunday. In 1860 the working of that Act was approved by a Royal Commission, and in 1862 the Act was extended and strengthened. In the Division that took place upon the Bill of last year the Scotch Members were almost unanimously in favour of the principle of the Measure, which also received the support of many of the Conservative and Liberal Unionist Members of the House. On that occasion there voted in favour of the Bill:—Scotch Liberals, 15; Scotch Conservatives, six; and Scotch Liberal Unionists, three; whilst there voted against it one Scotch Conservative and three Scotch Liberal Unionists. He thought that those figures ought to be accepted as an indication that the principle of the Measure had taken a strong hold of the Scotch people. Since 1862, as far as he was aware, no attempt had been made to set aside or to modify the Scotch Act. With regard to Ireland, a Sunday closing Measure had been carried in 1878. The operation of that Act was limited to a period of four years, and the principal towns of Ireland were exempted from its operation. In 1888 a Select Committee of that House recommended that the Act should be made permanent, and that the large towns should be brought within its operation. A Bill which was introduced embodying those recommendations was carried in that House by a large majority. Last year four Irish Conservatives and five Irish Nationalists voted in favour of the Bill; while one Irish Liberal Unionist and 14 Nationalists voted against it. He thought that that was an act of ingratitude on the part of the Irish Nationalists to the Liberal Party, who had done their best to obtain Home Rule for them. ["Hear, hear!"] With regard to Wales, a Sunday Closing Act was passed in 1880, and in 1890 a Royal Commission reported that the Act was doing good, but needed modification and strengthening. His object in introducing this Bill was to induce the House of Commons to take a step in the direction of temperance, which was necessary to enable the country to maintain the position we were now proud to occupy. ["Hear, hear!"] In conclusion, he begged to move that the Bill be Read a Second time ["Hear, hear!"]

MR. SYDNEY GEDGE (Walsall) said that he did not wish to give a silent vote upon this Bill, because he had received numerous letters pressing him to support the Measure. He, however, found that he could not honestly take that course. The objects of the Measure were undoubtedly to promote temperance and to bring about a more proper observance of the Lord's Day. He submitted that the supporters of this Measure had to show first that there were good reasons logically for it, and, secondly, that if it was carried, it would have the desired effect. The Bill was based, first, upon the sacred duty of keeping the Lord's Day, and, secondly, on the duty of temperance; but when these two grounds were examined, it would be found that they must of necessity carry the House a great deal further. The first duty was just one of those duties as to which it was very doubtful whether Parliament had any right to interfere beyond a very limited extent. There were many things which were wrong in themselves, yet could not be remedied by legislative action; and in regard to this particular matter, the same high authority which directed the observance of the Lord's Day, held, he believed, that its observance was a matter of conscience with every man. No doubt it was right that every obstacle should be put in the way of a man working on that day, but if hon. Members were asked to close houses where liquor was sold on Sunday because it was the Lord's Day, they were driven to this—that it was no greater sin to drink, buy, or sell a glass of beer on Sunday than it was to drink, buy, or sell soda water on Sunday. Therefore, if they were to prohibit the one, they were equally bound to prohibit the other. Under the Lord's Day Observance Act, a baker or tobacconist who traded on Sunday would be punished, not by being deprived of his livelihood, but by a small fine; and he thought that if the Act were generally applied or harshly interpreted there would be an agitation for its repeal, which he would be very sorry to see. Then, again, if this Measure were supported for the sake of temperance, they would be driven a great deal further than the Bill took them. If it was wrong from the temperance point of view to drink, buy, and sell beer on Sundays, it was equally wrong to do so on any other day, and from that point of view they would be bound to have total closing of public houses, not on Sunday only, but on every day of the week. ["Hear, hear!"] But hon. Gentlemen who cheered that had not the courage of their convictions. He believed that in these matters they were bound to respect personal liberty, and though he was ready to consider and support the extension of the restrictions on Sunday opening, he could not support this Bill. There were in the Bill some very remarkable exceptions. There were exceptions in favour of lodgers in hotels and of *bonâ fide* travellers. Why were these exceptions put in? If the principle was so sacred, why should *bonâ fide* travellers and lodgers in hotels be allowed to obtain drink on Sunday? Their convenience was to be allowed to override what was put forward as a sacred principle. Were there not hundreds and thousands of others whose convenience ought to be consulted? Take, for instance, the case of lodgers not in hotels. Was an ordinary lodger who had to get his dinner out to be restrained from getting his modest glass of beer? Why should all these young men be confined to places where they could not get a glass of beer? Take the case of the married workman with a large family and a small house. Was he to be driven into the streets in order to consort with his neighbours? Why should the only public room to which he could resort be shut against him? Hon. Members in that House had their clubs to go to, where they could receive their friends in their dining-rooms or drawing-rooms. Why, then, were they who did not bear any of this inconvenience to insist on putting it on others who were not so well off? ["Hear, hear!"] That seemed to him to be class legislation of a very bad character. ["Hear, hear!"] It was said that the working man desired this change. If his desire was genuine, they could close the public houses on Sunday themselves by not going into them. If they were bound to close public houses on Sunday to shield the working man from temptation, they were equally bound to do so on the other days of the week. ["Hear, hear!"] But hon. Gentlemen who cheered that did not propose it. Let them have the courage of their convictions and vote for the total closing of public houses. In all large towns this Bill, if passed into law, would have this great evil. Drinking would be increased in this way. Instead of public houses which were under police control, a great number of drinking clubs not under police control would be established, and then there would be a great deal more drinking on Sunday. Again, a great deal of beer and spirits would be taken into the home, and instead of the man alone drinking, the wife and the children would drink also. Believing that the Bill would do more harm than good, he hoped the House would not pass it. The drink traffic resulted in evils which they all desired to lessen, but it must be remembered that repressive legislation could not do away with the desire to drink, and that if a man wanted intoxicating liquor he would get it somehow. The way to reduce the evil was by diminishing the desire for drink, which arose in very many cases from the dulness of men's lives. This and the miserable conditions of their homes drove them to the public house. By making their lives brighter and happier more would be done in the cause of sobriety than by repressive legislation. Among the upper classes the habits of intemperance that once prevailed so largely had disappeared. Books describing the manners of the community in the first decades of the century showed that drunkenness was then a common occurrence in society. Men considered it almost a duty to take their three bottles, and thought nothing of being conveyed home in a wheelbarrow. They thought they were behaving very well if they joined the ladies after dinner without walking unsteadily and speaking thickly. Now, of course, all that was changed, and he did not know why there should not be a similar improvement in the habits of the wage-earning classes. Surely the spread of education would lead to a better state of things and to greater refinement. He remembered conversing on one occasion with a cats'-meat man, who owned that he always got drunk of an afternoon when his work was over, his explanation being that, as he was quite uneducated and could not read, he found it difficult to kill time. He believed himself in the curative effects of education, and trusted that the House would not by restrictive legislation of this kind put difficulties in the way of honest and sober men who drank in moderation.

On the return of MR. SPEAKER, after the usual interval,

*MR. SHARPE (Kensington, N.) said that he had been a life-long advocate of temperance on temperance lines, and had had large experience of official life in Ceylon, where he had been familiar with the difficulties and responsibilities of administration—the administration of large provinces, where he had been the chief officer in succession in various parts of the island, and where the administration of the licensing laws had been practically in his own hands just as much as it was in this country in the hands of the licensing magistrates. Speaking, therefore, from that broad point of view, he felt no hesitation, after having thoroughly considered the position, in undertaking to move that the Bill be read a Second time that day six months. He believed the Bill was in every point of view a wrong Measure with regard to the promotion of the cause which it was supposed to have in view. The question of restricting the hours of Sunday trading in liquor had been before the House on many occasions. The discussion that took place on the proposal of Mr. Abel Smith in

1868 to reduce the time to something like three hours was closed by a report against it by a strong Select Committee, presided over by the right hon. Member for North-East Manchester, and comprising some very distinguished men. The present Earl of Derby, the late Mr. Roebuck, and Mr. Knatchbull-Hugessen were on the Committee, among others; and in the result the Committee rejected Mr. Abel Smith's report in favour of further restriction, and adopted that of Mr. Knatchbull-Hugessen. The Report admitted frankly:—

> "that there is a large public opinion in favour of further restriction of the sale of liquor on Sunday;"

but added that:

> "from the whole review of the subject they did not adopt that view."

There had been many attempts to canvass localities on this question, and it was said that the result of these canvasses was always in favour of Sunday Closing. He opposed this appeal to localities in itself as an attempt to throw upon them the responsibilities which should attach to the Legislature only; but with respect to such canvass, the Report of the Committee said:—

> "Although no imputation of dishonesty rests on the canvassers, it has been proved in many instances that the canvass has been of a partial nature, and does not adequately express the real sentiments of the community."

The men employed in making the canvass were generally interested in the result being in one direction. In the case of Manchester, the opinions of 36,562 voters were taken, and of these 30,000 were in favour of Sunday Closing. But the value of the result was discounted by the fact that the total number of voters was only one-third of the number of householders in the Division. In Bristol there was a canvass, in which 14,125 votes were given, the great majority for Sunday Closing. But here the total number of persons entitled to vote was 35,000. In Bermondsey 1,480 votes were taken by canvass, and though the majority of those were in favour of Sunday Closing, the opinions of the rest of 11,000 householders were not inquired into. The only canvass worthy of mention as satisfactory, impartial, and fairly representative, was made at Cardiff. There 8,583 persons voted for partial Sunday opening, and only 2,574 for total closing. He was opposed to any attempt to restrict the freedom of grown-up men and women in this matter. But it was said that the majority of the Labour Members were in favour of the Bill. It would be a strange thing if the representatives of the working men were desirous of having what, after all, was class legislation of the narrowest and most unfair character. The Bill would simply prevent the ordinary working man, who went into the country for exercise on Sunday afternoon, from obtaining much-needed refreshment on his way home. While well-to-do persons could go to their clubs, the working men were wholly dependent on the public-house for refreshment. The public houses on Sunday were closed till one o'clock, while the Church services were going on; they were then open from one to three, to give the working classes an opportunity of getting their Sunday dinner beer; and then they were closed again until six o'clock. He stood up for this arrangement on the ground of justice. He also urged that the Bill would punish an immense majority of sensible and temperate persons in the vain hope of promoting temperance among those who were unable to resist the temptations of drink. How far did the circumstances of the case call for this legislation? Under the present law the convictions for drunkenness had steadily declined in England and Wales between 1888 and 1895. In 1885 there were 13,000 convictions, and in 1895 only 11,000 convictions, though in the same period the population had increased from 26 millions to 30 millions. That Sunday Closing had been adopted in Ireland, Wales and Scotland was due to the fact that in those countries the Celtic races prevailed; and they were a spirit drinking people. The English were beer-drinkers. The Committee whose Report he had already quoted declared that the laws suitable to the Scotch would not be acceptable to the English, owing to the difference between the habits of the two peoples, and that the success of the Scotch law was no trustworthy guide to its applicability to this country. It was a remarkable fact that the majority of the expert witnesses examined before the Royal Commission now sitting on the Licensing Laws were in favour of the moderate policy in regard to the public houses which now prevailed. Sir Henry Poland, one of the most distinguished members of the Bar, said, in reference to the working classes:—

> "To legislate for them, when they have no private cellars, and none of the comfort of the upper and middle classes, to the extent that they shall not go into public houses on Sunday at all, is to create a restriction which I do not think will be tolerated in this metropolis in any way."

Sir John Bridge, the well-known Metropolitan Police Magistrate was asked:—

> Q.—"Does that suggest to you any change in the hours of closing?
> A.—"I see no reason to find fault with the hours of closing as they are.
> Q.—"Neither on Sundays nor on week-days?
> A.—"No, neither on one nor the other."

Superintendent McWilliam, City of London Police, was asked:—

> Q.—"Have you any views with regard to Sunday Closing which you could give us?
> A.—"I think that, as regards the hours of closing on Sundays and other days, the present arrangement is very good."

Mr. Hannay, Metropolitan Police Magistrate, was asked:—

> Q.—"As to the hours of closing in London, I think you said that they were satisfactory in your opinion?
> A.—"What I said, or intended to say, was, I thought the public were fairly satisfied with them.
> Q.—"What would be your personal opinion on that point?
> A.—"I think that possibly public houses might be open all Sunday afternoon from 1 o'clock—the opening hour. I cannot say I have formed any strong opinion about it, but when a working man goes out with his wife and family for a walk on Sunday afternoon, it seems rather hard he cannot get a glass of beer between 3 and 6 o'clock.
> Q.—"Then you would be in favour of extending the hours?
> A.—"Yes, in that particular way."

Colonel Moorsom, Chief Constable of the County of Lancashire, was asked:—

> Q.—"The club hours are practically longer (on Sundays) than the public-house hours?
> A.—"I have not noticed particularly, but the clubs are very often open when the public houses are closed.
> Q.—"So that any further restriction of hours in larger centres would inevitably, in your view, induce large additions to the number of clubs?
> A.—"I should think it would.
> Q.—"Are you in favour of Sunday Closing—absolute closing?
> A.—"No."

Mr. Sharpe.

Mr. McKenzie, Chief Constable of Cardiff, was asked:—

> Q.—"Was not Sunday Closing the cause of the great amount of illicit trading in Cardiff?
> A.—"More or less, no doubt. It was originally the cause of it."

He thought the closing of public houses on Sunday would inevitably lead to two results—an immense amount of illicit drinking and a large increase in the number of bogus clubs. In London, bogus clubs were a serious and increasing evil. They were open on Saturday night, when they caught hold of the working man with his wages in his pocket and detained him often until Monday morning, when he was turned out without a penny of his wages left for his unfortunate wife and children. That was an evil that would be enormously aggravated if the Bill became law, and he was therefore strongly opposed to the Bill, and begged to move the Amendment standing in his name.

Mr. HUBERT DUNCOMBE (Cumberland, Egremont) said he rose to Second the Amendment for the rejection of the Bill. The hon. Member who proposed the Second Reading of the Bill had said it would doubtless be described as class legislation. That was quite true. One of the chief objections to the Bill was that it was class legislation, and class legislation of the very worst kind. There were two kinds of class legislation—one in favour of a class which was well able to take care of itself, and the other against a class that was not able to look after itself. This Bill belonged to the latter, and the worst category of class legislation. It had been said that Sunday Closing was already in operation in Scotland, Ireland, and Wales. He would take the liberty of reminding hon. Members that this was not the first time in recent history that England declined to follow the lead of Scotland, Ireland, and Wales. He would also remind hon. Members from Scotland who sat on both sides of the House that, though Scotland had achieved for itself a worldwide reputation for many good and great things, she had not yet won renown for making her Sundays more than usually attractive. [*Laughter.*] Hon. Members who defended the Bill had told the House that since 1854, when Sunday Closing was introduced into Scotland, a great decrease had taken place in the consumption of spirits; but that decrease in the consumption of spirits was not so much coincident with the passing of the Sunday Closing Act as with the rise of the duty on spirituous liquors in Scotland. That brought him to another point which had been brought forward by his hon. Friend the Member for Walsall, when he said that he was as anxious as any hon. Member in the House to promote the cause of temperance, but that he did not believe the method proposed by the Bill was the right method to achieve that most desirable result. The idea of hon. Gentlemen who were in favour of the Second Reading of this Bill was that the cause of temperance could be promoted by the use of repressive legislation. After all, repressive legislation was similar to suppressing a disease rather than curing it. He did not believe that a disease suppressed was anything like cured; on the contrary, he believed it assumed a more virulent form, and that was what this Bill would lead to in the case of Sunday drinking. His hon. Friend who moved the rejection of the Bill was laughed at when he said that the total closing of public houses on Sunday would lead to secret drinking. It was obvious it must do so. If a man had a certain amount of money to spend on drink he was bound to spend it, and no legislation that could be devised would prevent him from spending it; but if, instead of being able to go to a public house, when he might be rebuked or stopped, he took the drink into his own house over night, and consumed it on Sunday, his drinking then assumed a far worse and more dangerous form. Even if the Bill would prevent drinking on Sunday, which he denied, he did not think it was the right way to set about stopping drunkenness. There were other and better ways of stopping the vice. First and foremost there was the line suggested by his hon. Friend the Member for Walsall. His hon. Friend had proved that in England, during the last 25 years, without any Sunday Closing, drunkenness was rapidly on the decrease; and that in the other three sisters of the Kingdom, where Sunday Closing prevailed, the decrease in drunkenness was not so marked. A far better way, and a way which would offend no one, was to use so far as they could the powers they possessed to prevent harmful adulteration of liquor, and if these powers were not effective, to increase them. Such action would meet with no opposition from the licensed victuallers, for it was not to their interest to sell bad liquor. It would raise the price of good stuff, and with the raised price consumption would go down. It stood to reason, that, if a man had only a small sum to spend in drink, and if the price of that drink was raised he would drink less; and besides, the drink he consumed in these circumstances being good would do him little or no harm. Why did not hon. Gentlemen interested in this question propose that spirituous liquors were not to be sold until they were a certain number of years in bond? He would appeal to medical gentlemen in the House, whether it was not the fact that one of the greatest evils of drinking, particularly in the lowest class of public house in this country, was that the drink sold was nothing more than raw potato spirits doctored.

MR. MICHAEL DAVITT (Mayo, S.): Then why do you want to sell it on Sunday?

MR. DUNCOMBE replied that he was one of those who thought that if a thing was wrong on Monday it was wrong on every other day of the week. That was one way to stop the sale of those dangerous drinks. Another was to use the power they had in their hands to shut up the low public houses where all the harm was done. At any rate, that such legislation would be open legislation and could achieve the object desired, which repressive legislation would not do and must always fail to do. It had been tried in various parts of the world and had always met with failure. [*Cries of* "No, no!"] He should like to see the hon. Members who supported this Bill put their professions into practice. Those hon. Gentlemen said that this was not class legislation; but he should like to see a Return granted which would show how many of those hon. Members had private cellars of their own, and how many of those hon. Members who had not private cellars were members of clubs. [*Laughter.*] None of the Gentlemen who would be mentioned in such a Return could possibly be affected by this Bill, though a large number of their constituents would be. He would like to see another Return showing how many hon. Gentlemen who took a glass of wine once or twice during the week-day, would refuse to take it on Sunday for conscience sake. The third Return was the most important, as it related to Sunday labour. How many hon. Members would forego one or two hot meals on Sunday in order to lessen Sunday labour? The reducing of Sunday labour was an argument which, however well it sounded, was impossible to carry out in practice. Did anyone suppose that the public houses open on Sunday in the United Kingdom employed anything like the number of people employed by the railways or the Post Office services? They had been told by the hon. Member for Hull that in Committee he would be prepared to accept an Amendment which would enable public houses to be opened during certain hours on Sunday. That was not an Amendment which would cause hon. Members to forego their opposition to the Bill; but the Bill was before the House 12 months ago, and the same thing was said. ["No; there was no Debate."] It was not said in the House, but it was said elsewhere.

Mr. C. H. WILSON: There was no Debate on the Second Reading.

Mr. DUNCOMBE asked if it was to be understood that only those pledges which were made across the floor of the House were to be kept? ["Hear, hear!"] It was known 12 months ago that some Members who opposed the Bill would forego a large portion of their opposition if some such provision as that he had named were introduced, but the Measure was again introduced in its original form. He could only suppose that the promoters of the Bill had no intention of making the alteration. He denied that the working class were emphatically unanimous in favour of the Bill, and declared that what hon. Members who supported the Measure really desired was total prohibition, a result which had never been achieved. He appealed most confidently to the House to reject decisively this Bill, which would inflict unnecessary hardship on tens of thousands of sober and industrious working people, while it would fail to achieve its professed object—the curing of the habitual drunkard.

*Mr. T. P. WHITTAKER (York, W.R., Spen Valley) said the hon. Member had argued that repression and restriction were of no use in dealing with the question of drinking, and he advised the House to rely on education. Without wishing to depreciate in the slightest degree the value of education as bearing on the question, he reminded the hon. Member that the most sober part of the United Kingdom was the sister country of Ireland, where the expenditure per head of the population was less than in any other part of the United Kingdom, and where education was most defective and less efficient than in any part of the United Kingdom. He also reminded the hon. Member that from the year 1840 to 1876 there was a marvellous improvement in the education of the people of this country; yet, during that time drunkenness and crime increased at a most alarming rate, until they culminated in 1876. Since 1876 there had been an improvement in respect to the drinking habits of the people, and the main cause of that, he maintained, was the considerable diminution in the hours of sale and in the number of public houses in proportion to the population. If there were as many fully licensed houses in the country in proportion to the population as there were 20 years ago, there would be 20,000 more public-houses than there were at present. There had been a great diminution in the facilities for obtaining liquor, and as a consequence there had been a great diminution in drinking. It was said this was class legislation, and legislation against the class who were unable to protect themselves. Did anyone seriously contend that the working men of this country, who formed a majority of the electorate, were not able to protect themselves? No permanent working men's organisation had petitioned the House against the Sunday Closing Bill, in fact the man who objected most to such a Measure was the loafer and the boozer. ["Oh, oh!"] All the objections that had been urged against this Bill were urged against the Scotch, Irish, and Welsh Sunday Closing Bills, and yet all those Measures had resulted in great good. One or two hon. Members had spoken of the claims of individual liberty in this matter, and had declared that Parliament had no right, by legislation, to prevent a man from obtaining a glass of beer on the Sunday. But that argument indicated, to a great extent, a misconception of the idea and purpose of the Bill. The main ground of this legislation was rather to protect other people to whom the opening of the public houses in the district on the Sunday was an annoyance, in consequence of the noises, the scenes, and disturbances caused thereby. While a working man might have the right to get his glass of beer on the Sunday, he had no right to demand that, in order to get it, a public house should be opened which was an evil, a nuisance, and an injury to the community. In some districts the rest and quiet of the Sunday were now destroyed for the great body of the inhabitants in consequence of the opening of the adjacent public houses, and he contended that those people had a right to come to Parliament for protection in this regard. ["Hear, hear!"] There were, no doubt, a large number of people who desired that public houses should be kept open on the Sunday; but surely that was no reason why the system should be continued if it was proved to be a nuisance to a large number of the community. Surely some consideration should be shown for people living in the neighbourhood who desired to have a quiet Sunday. ["Hear, hear!"] A special reason for closing public houses on the Sabbath was, that Saturday was the great drinking day of the week—the day on which, according to the police returns, there was the largest number of arrests for drunkenness, and when also the loss of life from the overlying of children was greatest. ["Hear, hear!"] The results of the Saturday's drinking, and the opportunities given on the Sunday for further drinking, led to what was understood by the well-known phrase "Saint Monday," and this state of things often seriously interfered with work and business. ["Hear, hear!"] The warning given by the right hon. Member for Hull, who was one of the best authorities in the House on commercial matters, as to the effect which the vice of drinking was having on the shipping and sailors of the country might well be taken to heart. ["Hear, hear!"] The hon. Member for Walsall had suggested that the Bill would lead to an increase of drinking; but he had an idea that if the Measure would have any such effect much of the present opposition to it would not have been raised. ["Hear, hear!" *and laughter.*] Similar legislation had not led to increased drinking in Scotland and Wales. ["Hear, hear!"] Moreover, considerations of health were of great importance in this matter. The House had passed many Acts to improve the sanitary conditions under which the people lived. Now, according to Returns issued by the Registrar General 10 years ago—he could not obtain any more recent returns—as to the death-rate in various occupations in the country, it was shown that the trade in alcoholic liquors was the most deadly of all trades to those engaged in it, the death-rate among the employees of publicans and hotel keepers being given as three times greater than among those engaged in many ordinarily healthy occupations. ["Hear, hear!"] Something had been said about the hours of the employment of women. We passed Factory legislation specially to protect women against excessive hours of work. In his opinion employment in a public house was one of the most dangerous and unhealthy kinds of occupation, morally and physically, in which a young woman could possibly be engaged. By this Measure something might be done to reduce their excessive hours by securing for them a complete rest on Sundays. ["Hear, hear!"] It was curious that all the outcry about depriving the working man of his beer on the Sunday did not come from the working men themselves, but mainly from those people who had no difficulty in getting their own liquor. ["Hear, hear!"] The Sunday beer difficulty was not a practical one; it could be easily solved, and he ventured to say that if the public houses were closed the publicans would soon devise a method of supplying beer in bottles, or in some other way, for use on the Sunday. ["Hear, hear!" *and ironical laughter.*"] Hon. Members might gather some information as to the working of legislation of the kind proposed by looking abroad. In Sweden and Norway, where the liquor traffic was more under the control of the people, not only had Sunday closing been nearly universally adopted, but the public houses were closed at an early hour on the Saturday evening; and those laws had been attended with success. It had been urged that they could not make people sober by Act of Parliament. It might also on the same grounds be said that they could not make people honest by Act of Parliament. Yet they passed laws against stealing. ["Hear, hear!"] At any rate, the laws against dishonesty made it difficult, and the consequences unpleasant, to steal. As Mr. Gladstone once very wisely said, it was the duty of the Legislature to make it difficult for men to do wrong and easy for them to do right. It was only reasonable to presume that a law which would prevent Sunday drinking would tend to promote sobriety. ["Hear, hear!"] The existing laws, at all events, had failed to prevent drunkenness, and the terrible extent of the vice was a sufficient justification for a trial of this and other Bills having a similar object. He should support the Second Reading of the Bill, and he trusted that others who desired modifications of details would also do so, with the view of introducing Amendments in Committee. [*Cheers.*]

SIR BARRINGTON SIMEON (Southampton) said the object of the Bill was to stop the poor man from having his drink, but there was nothing in it about the rich man at all. If a Bill were brought in making it illegal to sell drink in England except by chemists, who, on a doctor's certificate, should be allowed to sell brandy or whatever was needed for the sick person, and if people were allowed to sell drink only to the people who slept in their houses, he should not support such a Bill —[*laughter*]—he should think it, as he did of the present one, an unjustifiable interference with the liberty of the subject—but still it would be free from the taint which hung over this Bill, the taint of doing everything that could be done against the poor man, who, until the next General Election, would be unable to help himself, and leaving the rich man as comfortable in his club in or about the neighbourhood of Pall Mall as he was before the passing of this Bill. ["Hear, hear!"] He had heard no argument practically in favour of this Bill. The hon. Member opposite, who had just sat down, told them that in certain portions of the country the public houses were pandemoniums, that they were kept open for loafers and "boozers," and that nobody but loafers and "boozers" required to drink on Sundays. [*Cries of* "No!"] So he understood the hon. Member, and he apologised if he had misrepresented him. But surely it was the fault of the districts themselves if these vile excesses took place on Sundays. In such districts the Standing Joint Committee first, the chief constable next, and the police next, must be extraordinarily to blame; and it seemed to him absolutely useless to bring in a Bill of this description when the present law, if properly carried out, was perfectly competent to stop these excesses. ["Hear, hear!"] The present law allowed the conviction of persons for drunkenness. He must say, as a magistrate, that the cases in which persons were prosecuted for drunkenness alone were very few. He thought they might properly be made more. As to the sale in excess of drink on Sundays, surely the law was stringent enough in that respect? Any publican who permitted drunkenness on his premises was liable to be fined, was liable to have his licence endorsed, and he was very liable indeed to have his licence taken away from him; and if his licence was taken away from him he was a ruined man. He was perfectly certain that if hon. Gentlemen, instead of bringing in this sort of Bill, would look after their Standing Joint Committees, their chief constables, and their police, and see that the present law was properly carried out, they might possibly do some good, and they would, anyhow, gain the respect and the esteem of every honest and honourable publican in the country. There was no man who was so opposed to drunkenness as was the publican. [*Opposition cries of* "Oh!" *and* "Hear, hear!"] His worst enemy was the drunkard. His living depended on keeping his house properly and decent, and on preventing drunkenness on his premises. He did not say that the publican was always or ever great friends with the total abstainer, but there was no doubt in his mind that everything that could be done to prevent drunkenness without infringing upon the liberty of the subject, was excessively welcome to the publican and the brewer. He was not a publican or a brewer, and he had never in his life had one shilling out of what was called "the trade." He spoke absolutely from a perfectly independent standpoint. A great many of his own constituents were angry with him because he was going to speak and to vote against this Bill, which he considered an unjust, an unfair, and a perfectly useless Bill. It was not as though the Bill would stop people getting drunk on Sunday. A man who got so drunk on Sunday that he could not go to work on Monday did not do it in a public house. He ran too many risks. There was the risk of falling down, the risk of being turned out by a justly irate publican, and of being "run in" by the policeman in the street. They might depend upon it that such a man would take the drink home with him, and lie in bed, where he could get drunk without the risk of falling down or of being "run in." Nothing would induce him to believe that the man who drank to that excess was likely to run the risks he must run by getting drunk in a public house on Sunday. No effort had been made to prove that this outrageous drunkenness took place in public houses on Sunday, and until that was proved he ventured to say they had not the smallest right to shut up what, in his own district, was the poor man's only club on his only day of leisure, and yet leave the rich man in full possession of his club. ["Hear, hear!"]

MR. SAMUEL YOUNG (Cavan, E.) asked what right that House had to interfere with what a man ate or drank or the time he ate or drank, if it was not detrimental to the interests of society? ["Hear, hear!"] What right had they to interfere with the people who desired to have their liquor on Sundays? They might as well legislate, at the instance of a number of vegetarians, to shut up all shops for the sale of beef or mutton or veal, and, at the instance of those who were opposed to the use of tobacco, all tobacconists' shops. It was another question if it were for the public good. He was in a position to say that in proportion as they drew the cords tighter round the publican, who was doing business in the light of day, under the surveillance of the police, and under the care of the magistrates, so would they create bogus clubs and shebeens. ["Hear, hear!"] Giving evidence before the Licensing Commission the other day, a gentleman from Dublin declared that before 1888 there were no clubs practically in Dublin, and that shebeens and bogus clubs had increased very much since Parliament legislated on this question. Ireland had been put forward as an example for Sunday Closing, but they had not Sunday Closing in Ireland, and he denied that Ireland wanted it; the vast majority of the people of Ireland were not in favour of Sunday Closing. With regard to Wales, he found, looking over the evidence given before the Commission that dealt with the liquor laws, that a gentleman was asked the question, "Has Sunday closing decreased drunkenness in Cardiff?" The answer given was, "I do not think it has." That was Mr. Mackenzie, a first-class expert in this business. In answer to another question, he said that drunkenness had somewhat increased with the increase of population. Mr. Mallond, Assistant Commissioner of the Metropolitan Force in Dublin, was asked, if licensed houses were allowed to remain open later on Saturday or for a longer time than at present on Sunday, did he think that would check shebeens and bogus clubs, and his reply was, "I should say it would, certainly." Now, all the morality and all the desire for the improvement of the people were not with teetotallers. He was as desirous for education and the moral improvement of the people, quite as anxious for good order and higher social conditions among the working classes, as any of those who made yard-long speeches against the use of alcohol. If he believed that the closing of public houses on Sunday or on Saturday evening would benefit society, he would vote for the closing of public houses. But he conscientiously believed that the very opposite effect would follow. People would have their beer or their whisky. The better classes had their refreshment at home; they could smoke their cigars and take their wine, and there was nobody to say a word against this, and they might do the same thing in first-class social clubs. For the poor man, who earned some 18s. or 20s. a week, and could not command these social comforts, the only method was to pay a few pence at the public house for social enjoyment, and certainly he would be the last man to take this away. It had been suggested that the petitions presented were evidence that popular opinion was in favour of Sunday closing, but was there any Gentleman in the House who had a particle of regard for these petitions? The fact was, you could get any number of signatures to a petition; you could get the signatures of a whole family, many members of it under age, and from one school 60 to 80 names might be collected. Petitions offered no criterion of popular opinion; he put them aside as ciphers; they were got up by teetotallers to blind people; they had no other effect or intention. A Liquor Licensing Laws Commission had been appointed, and upon this Commission sat 24 gentlemen with terms of reference to include a question such as the House was now asked to deal with. The investigations of that Commission were proceeding; evidence from witnesses was accumulating from day to day, and in due time this Commission would present its Report. It would be exceedingly unwise for the House to deal with a subject which would come under the consideration of the Commission, and be dealt with in an exhaustive manner. He therefore hoped that upon this, apart from every other rational consideration, the House would now reject this Bill. Undoubtedly, he thought, it would be tyranny for a few well-meaning persons in a particular locality to claim the right to impose restrictions on the tastes and habits of a majority of the population, and he hoped the House would reject a proposal for arbitrary interference with property and liberty.

*MR. ARTHUR PEASE (Darlington) could not understand upon what principle public houses could claim exemption from a restriction which applied to other Sunday trading. Last week in the City of London a Jewish baker was fined for baking bread on Sunday, although he had kept his own Sabbath the day before. It seemed a monstrous absurdity to give to a trade of this character privileges withheld from other and more beneficial trades. The whole of our licensing laws made a system of restriction, not arranged simply for fiscal and revenue purposes, but because, the nature of the articles sold being injurious to the community, it was necessary to put restraint upon the trade. In 1872, under Mr. Bruce's Act, restrictions were made in the hours of sale on every day in the week, and the hours of sale on the Sabbath Day were restricted. Further restrictions had been imposed on Scotland, Ireland, and Wales, and everywhere they had proved beneficial. Contemptuous allusion had been made to petitions presented and to opinions collected by papers left at houses; but, beyond doubt, every effort had been made to obtain the faithful opinion of those canvassed. Papers were left for two days and then collected, and no influence was exercised by those who left the papers. There were a great number of persons who had made no replies, and it was not unfair to assume that these had no strong opinions to put forward. It was an honest attempt to obtain an indication of public opinion. Again, it could not be said, having regard to the number and character of the petitions, that the signatures were those of people who were indifferent on this subject. Other methods had been adopted to obtain expressions of public opinion. Hundreds of meetings had been held in various parts of the country, and he was not aware that at any of them any strong feeling was expressed against Sunday closing. The Bishop of Wakefield said that he attended a meeting at the East End of London, and there put forward suggestions for opening public houses part of the day on Sundays; but he found that at this working class meeting there was a unanimous desire in favour of Sunday closing. With reference to gentlemen having their clubs and cellars the working classes were not concerned; they wanted to be placed in a position to protect themselves. He had received a great many representations in favour of the Bill from associations representing hundreds of thousands of the working classes; while, on the other side, the representations were from those whose interests were more or less connected with an increase in the trade in intoxicating liquors. There might be some who would say the Bill went too far, and that they were ready for some restriction short of total closing on Sunday. He claimed the support of these, and was ready to give fair consideration to such suggestions as steps in the right direction. He was quite sure that the House must recognise that the whole religious opinion of this country was in favour of this Measure, as were also the working classes. In that House they were always anxious to reduce the excessive hours of labour of the working man. The employees in the public houses worked long hours—as many as 12, 14, and even 16 hours a day in some cases. Was it unreasonable to ask, in the interests of these people, that they should have the Sabbath's rest and the same freedom from labour on that day as the great body of the working classes of this country had? There could be no doubt that the fact that a man obtained the proceeds of his week's labour on the preceding day made Sunday, on which he had leisure, a day of temptation. If the House passed this Bill it would be found —as in the case of similar legislation for

Scotland, Ireland, and Wales—that it would prove a great blessing to the country, and would lead, to a large extent, to that use of the Lord's Day which they as Christian people desired. The question had been fully discussed that afternoon, and, whatever the views of the House might be, he hoped they would have an opportunity of taking a vote upon it so that the opinion of Members might be obtained.

Mr. C. E. TRITTON (Lambeth, Norwood), in supporting the Bill denied that he was in favour of repressive legislation. He desired, he said, to speak on behalf of the Church of England Temperance Society, of which he had the honour of being hon. treasurer. That society had a Bill dealing with Sunday Closing, which was shortly to be introduced, and which gave to the licensing authorities in each district power to permit off-sales for an hour in the middle of the day and at night, so that working men might have an opportunity of getting their dinner and supper beer. The promoters of the Bill had intimated their willingness to accept modifications in this direction, and he should therefore give his vote in favour of the Measure. He was in favour of Sunday Closing in the interests of the publican, of the persons employed by the publican, and in the interests of the public generally. As regarded the publicans, he wondered how many hon. Members had received a single petition from any publican asking them to vote against the Bill? He believed himself that there were enormous numbers of publicans who would welcome this Bill with the greatest possible delight if it were carried into law. A large number would close their houses now but for the fierce competition that existed on the one hand, and the fact that, on the other hand, they were not free agents. They could not move hand or foot because they inhabited tied houses, and had to do what their masters told them to do. There were 300,000 people employed in public houses, many of whom had to work on Sundays, and the passing of a Bill like this would enable them to obtain the blessings of Sunday's rest. He fancied if Mr. Speaker, who was subjected to the atmosphere of the House for so many days in the week, had also to put up with its atmosphere on Sunday, the right hon. Gentleman would object most strongly to the proposition. But what about the atmosphere of a public house bar, where these poor people had to remain on Sundays as well as the rest of the week? He thought, to put it mildly, that the atmosphere of such places could not be the purest, the nicest, or the most refined in the world. Again, taking the question of the interests of the public generally, what did Sunday Closing mean? It meant the removal of the temptation to spend Saturday's wages in Sunday drink. He believed that Sunday Closing meant more money for the wife, more clothes for the children, more food in the cupboard, more fuel in the grate, and tens of thousands of happier homes throughout the length and breadth of the land. Where did the opposition to this Bill come from? Did it come from the publican? He thought not. Did it come from the publicans' servants? Again he thought not. Did it come from the public generally? They did not see it. They had had a test lately which, he thought, had thrown some little light on this question. What did the working men of Walthamstow do? On the one hand the gentleman who was returned was a strong advocate of Sunday Closing—one of those who backed the Bill of 1893—and a labour representative knowing, he took it, far better than any of them the feelings of labour generally as regarded this question. On the other hand, the gentleman who was rejected was actually engaged in the promotion of the liquor trade. He thought his Party, from the result of that election, might learn the lesson that the working classes preferred the man who went in for Sunday Closing to the man who was engaged in the making of intoxicating liquors. The hon. Gentleman opposite spoke of teetotal tyranny, but he confessed he could not see where the tyranny came in. He had received a remarkable document from the United Parliamentary Council of the Retail Liquor Trade, who desired that he should be in his place in the House—and thus far he was able to meet their views—and record his vote against this Measure, "which must," they said, "of necessity be so distasteful to a large majority of your constituents." If the Measure was of necessity so distasteful to a large number of his constituents, surely one, at least, would have written to him and asked him to vote against the Bill; but not one single constituent in the Division he had the honour to represent had, either by word or letter, requested their Member to vote against the Bill "which must of necessity, be so very distasteful" to them. He would tell the House what was distasteful both to his constituents and himself, and that was the amount of intemperance in their land, with all its train of sin and sorrow, poverty and distress; and they could not help seeing and saying that a very large amount of this wholesale intemperance was promoted by the retail trade in intoxicating liquors. What, again, was distasteful to many of his constituents was the way in which "the trade" did all in their power to prevent any extension of temperance reforms, and the way in which they dictated to free and independent Members of that House how they should vote on subjects such as this. When he came forward as a candidate in 1892 he was utterly repudiated by the Licensed Victuallers' Association because his answer to their questions was so entirely unsatisfactory. He welcomed that Debate as giving him an opportunity of which he should avail himself—with the greatest courtesy and good humour in his possession—of entirely repudiating the Licensed Victuallers' Association and all their works, and of protesting against the supposition which, he assumed, might have entered their mind, that because a Member of Parliament sat on the Tory Benches and was a Tory at heart, therefore he was opposed to temperance legislation for the benefit of the country and the people at large. He believed the Bill would be fraught with good consequences to the country. It was not introduced in any spirit of repression, but because it was thought it would be of the greatest possible use in promoting the prosperity and happiness of a large number of the poorest of Her Majesty's subjects. Lord Salisbury, speaking at Watford, in October, 1895, said:—"The question that lies before us now is the question of social amelioration. We have got as far as we can to make this country more pleasant to live in for the vast majority of those who live in it." Because he himself believed that this Bill, with the modifications proposed, would make this country a vast deal pleasanter for the majority of people to live in that he gave it his hearty and earnest support. [*Cheers.*]

*MR. CUTHBERT QUILTER (Suffolk, Sudbury) said he told his constituents in 1892 that he would support a Measure for closing public houses in the country districts on Sundays provided the publican, if he so desired, had power to open his house for two periods in the intervals of Divine service not exceeding one hour each. If the hon. Members in charge of this Bill would undertake to support an Amendment of that kind in Committee, he would vote for the Second Reading. If not, although he yielded to no one in his desire for temperance—he should deem it his duty as an Englishman to vote against the Bill. There was a Committee sitting on Beer Materials which made it improper for him to deal at length with that part of the question, with which he was more especially connected, but he must say he could not help thinking that if half the energy that was put into what was called the temperance movement—sometimes intemperately he thought—was put into the prosecution of the purity and improvement of our national beverage, they would find the true solution of many of their difficulties. [*Cheers.*] When pure or home-brewed beer was consumed there was much less drunkenness and violence than when beer made from other materials than malt and hops was drunk, and this difference was more noticeable when the beer was partaken of more freely. [*Laughter.*] Men who took pure beer in moderation could go about their work and conduct themselves quietly; when it was taken in large quantities it might be said to have rather soothing and sedative qualities. [*Laughter.*] He hoped the House would have an unmistakable expression of opinion from those in charge of the Bill that, if the Bill passed its Second Reading, they would agree to the very moderate and reasonable Amendment he had suggested. It was monstrous to think that a man who lived in a little cottage—perhaps in one sitting-room—should be forced to get his beer on Saturday night for his Sunday dinner and supper. Why it would not be fit to drink, even if it were pure, much less the decoction which many people had to put up with. [*Laughter and cheers.*] He hoped the Amendment he had suggested would be adopted. Then, and then only, would he be able to support this Bill.

MR. ALFRED THOMAS (Glamorgan, E.) said that if it had not been for a statement made in the course of the Debate with regard to the so-called *plébiscite* taken in Cardiff with reference to the Sunday Closing Act, he should not have risen at all. A *plébiscite* should not be taken until after due notice had been given; but he contended that the *plébiscite* at Cardiff was a one-sided affair, although the gentleman who presided over it was one who took a leading part in temperance matters. Some of those who voted for the opening of public houses in Cardiff are political supporters of his own; and therefore to say that the *plébiscite* represented the feeling of that town was ridiculous. Recently an intending publican came to him and said that he should like to take a possible lease in Cardiff, but he refrained because, he said: "If a man does not drink on Sunday he will not want to drink on Monday." ["Hear, hear!" *and laughter.*] He had happened to be Mayor of Cardiff when the Sunday Closing Bill came into operation, and all he could say was that if Sunday Closing would be the blessing to England that it had been to Cardiff, the sooner it came about the better. [*Cheers.*]

*MR. HARRY MARKS (Tower Hamlets, St. George's) said the inevitable effect of this Bill, if it became law, would be to drive those who were now supplied in public houses to unlicensed clubs. The public house was under police surveillance, the club was not. The public house did not have theatrical performances, musical entertainments, dancing, and card playing, frequently all night, and almost invariably on Sundays—["Hear, hear!"]—nor was it the resort of men, women, and children from the early hours of the morning till late at night. ["Hear, hear!"] The respectable working man at present avoided the bogus club, and if he wanted a glass of beer he went to the public house for it, but if by legislation the public house was closed, the respectable man would be driven to the club or do without a glass of beer. The respectable working man did not require legal intervention to make him behave like a decent citizen on Sunday. He thought the proposal for total closing on Sundays was a preliminary step towards total closing all the week, and the hon. Gentlemen who were supporting this Measure were almost without exception prominent and more or less influential advocates of total prohibition. [*Cries of* "No!"] He said chiefly, not exclusively. They had been told that Saturday was the great drinking day, but he had never discovered that fact for himself. The assertion came with peculiar effect from a Gentleman who was a conspicuous member of the party which insisted upon making Saturday the day upon which County Council Elections, and other elections, whenever possible, should be held. Whether that was done because that day was said to be the one on which there was the most drinking, or in spite of it, he would not pretend to say. The experience of those who represented London working-class constituencies was that, where there was Sunday disorder due to drunkenness, it arose from the drinking in the clubs, and not from that which went on in the public houses. The right hon. Member for West Monmouthshire, in an admirable speech delivered some years ago at Oxford, said he was "against forbidding a man to have a glass of beer if he wants a glass of beer, against public house restriction and Parliamentary regulation. Some want to meddle with the rights of owners of public houses; others want to invade the rights of owners of private houses; the form is different, but the error is the same. Unless we resolutely set our faces against the whole system, liberty itself will suffer." [*Laughter.*] That was a judgment which should carry weight.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE HOME DEPARTMENT (Sir MATTHEW WHITE RIDLEY, Lancashire, Blackpool): I do not propose, Sir, to argue the merits of this oft-told question of Sunday Closing. We have heard it debated with eloquence and vigour on both sides of the House; but what I desire to call the attention of the House to is the extreme difficulty of the question. ["Hear, hear!"] I think I may ask hon. Gentlemen who are against legislation of this sort to admit that there is a great amount of popular feeling on the side of Sunday Closing. I think they will also admit that that feeling not only comes from enthusiasts in the cause of temperance, or intemperate advocates of temperance, but that this object is also dear to the hearts of earnest men who believe that by total prohibition on Sunday they may not only improve the keeping of the Sunday in England, but may at the same time remove many of those extra causes for intemperance which may be supposed to occur in an interval of leisure such as Sunday should be. But I would ask those who argue on the other side of this question whether the history of this question within the United Kingdom does not show how completely it is surrounded with difficulties of a practical nature. ["Hear, hear!"] In this House, whatever use we make of our Wednesdays, at all events we ought to aim at making our attempts at legislation practical, and we ought not merely to Debate theoretical and abstract legislation. What this proposal comes to is that we are called upon to vote that something ought to be done in the direction of temperance on Sunday. I admit that. I imagine that there is no man in this House who would not desire to see proposals, legislative or otherwise, carried out which would make our Sunday the most sober and temperate day in the whole week. I will not speak of Ireland, because we all know that the Irish people are differently constituted from us in England. [*Laughter.*] We are told that the Celtic people are in favour of Sunday Closing. In Ireland, with the exception of the five great cities, according to the Report which has recently been made and according to all the information I have, it is a success. [*Cheers.*] I believe it is fair to admit that there is no considerable proportion of the people of Scotland who would desire to see the Act repealed. But Wales has not been a great success in the matter of Sunday Closing. With reference to the case of Wales, I believe that all the evidence we have goes to show that the Act initiated and carried with the support of Mr. Bruce, afterwards Lord Aberdare, with the general consent of the Welsh people, contained defects, not inherent in the machinery of the Act only, but in its principles. I may quote the words of Lord Aberdare when he said, subsequently to the appointment of the Welsh Commission that examined a portion of that Act, that a Measure of total prohibition was absolutely incapable of enforcement, and that were its repeal introduced he should not feel able to vote against it. I do not quote that for the purpose of showing that the Welsh Sunday Closing Act has been a total failure, but I do quote it for the sake of showing that those Gentlemen who advocate total closing on Sunday ought to remember that when it was introduced with the good will of the population, as it was in Wales, and with a people who evidently were more disposed to receive it than admittedly the people of England are, within a very short space of time of its introduction its principal promoter was found to give utterance to the expression I have quoted. ["Hear, hear!"] I am not arguing on the merits of the question, but I am desirous of pressing on the House the fact that there are great difficulties surrounding the question. This Bill is a Bill for total Sunday Closing, and although in the course of the Debate we have heard two or three Members on both sides get up and say that as it meant something else they would support it, we must take the Bill as we find it. ["Hear, hear!"] I am not prepared to support the Bill in view of the difficulties which, as I say, surround it. We have heard something of this Commission which is now sitting. Is it not a corollary to the fact that statesman after statesman has endeavoured to deal with this question without success, and to the fact that a Royal Commission is now considering the subject, that it is almost a duty of the House of Commons not to pledge itself to a Bill which is now under the consideration of a Commission appointed with the general consent of Parliament? ["*Cheers and cries of* "No!"] I venture to think that hon. Gentlemen opposite have no right to ask the House to pledge itself in advance upon a very difficult question when it has been submitted to the judgment of a Royal Commission for the purpose of enabling this House to legislate. That Royal Commission was appointed not for the purpose of inquiring into the advisability of Sunday Closing in particular, but of inquiring whether any improvement can be introduced into our licensing laws generally. Certainly, in the face of the reports which have been made, and of the Bills which have been introduced, and of the Acts which have been passed on this subject, it is not reasonable to ask the House of Commons to give their vote in favour of total closing on Sunday until we have the Report of that Commission before us. ["Hear, hear!"] Some reference has been made to the case of clubs. I do not wish to enforce the argument that has been put forward in connection with those institutions; but everyone who reads the public Press must admit that the case of the clubs is intimately connected with Sunday Closing, and it is with reference to clubs that the evidence is now being taken before the Commission. In these circumstances I think that, in an admittedly difficult question like this, we ought to wait until we have the recommendations of the Royal Commission before we attempt to interfere with the habits of the people of this country. ["Hear, hear!"] I will not say a word more upon the particular merits of this question; but I submit that it is only right and proper that the House of Commons should pause before it sanctions the proposal for total Sunday Closing which is involved in this Bill at a time when the whole subject has been relegated to a proper body for inquiry. ["Hear, hear!"]

MR. C. H. WILSON, by leave of the House, desired to say that, after the discussion that had taken place on the Bill, and especially after the eloquent speech of the hon. Member for Norwood, he was quite prepared, after consultation with his hon. Friends, that when the Bill got into Committee, which he hoped it would, to accept Amendments that would permit public houses to be opened on Sunday for one hour in the middle of the day at dinner time and one hour in the evening at supper time.

MR. J. W. LOGAN (Leicester, Harborough) said that he was not in favour of that House taking upon itself to pledge the whole country to abstain from obtaining any refreshment on Sunday, whether people desired to do so or not. He thought that the question was one that should be left to the local authorities to determine. Personally he should be glad to see the number of public houses in the country largely reduced, provided always that it was the wish of the great majority of the people that that should be done. He, however, was not prepared to see the wishes of the people overridden by a hard-and-fast rule made in that House. He was a local optionist as far as Sunday Closing as well as week-day closing was concerned, and he was no more in favour of arbitrary restrictions being imposed on Sundays than on other days of the week. They were told that the people of this country were in favour of this Measure. If that were the case it was an additional reason for leaving the question to be determined by local option, and why Parliament should not be asked to compel people to abstain from obtaining a reasonable amount of refreshment on Sundays. Under the provisions of the Bill wealthy people would be able to obtain as much drink as they wanted on Sunday, whereas the poor men, who had no means of storing drink at their homes, would be unable to go to the public houses to get what they required for their dinners. In making these observations he was not unmindful of the enormous evils that resulted from the drink traffic in the country, but he recognised that the great majority of the people looked upon drink as a luxury, and made use of it with discretion. A great many of them, however, he believed were prepared to forego their right to this luxury in the interests of their weaker brethren if they were asked to do so in a proper manner, but he did not think that they would be disposed to be forced in the matter by such Bills as this. He did not believe that the Bill in its present form was calculated to mitigate the evils arising from excessive drinking, which had led its promoters to introduce it. The provisions of the Measure would be unendurable in the villages in the neighbourhood of large towns, to which numbers of *bonâ fide* travellers resorted on Sundays. On this question he was in favour of trusting the people. He believed that the majority of the people of Scotland, Ireland, and Wales were in favour of Sunday Closing, and what he claimed, on behalf of the majority of the people of England was, that they should not have Sunday Closing thrust upon them without their consent. Let the majority of the English people be given the power of dealing with the licensing question, and he should have no fear of the result. If it were sought to compel the people, by legislation of this character, to abstain from drink against their inclination, they would certainly find means to thwart its object and to render it abortive.

MR. J. H. STOCK (Liverpool, Walton) said he should not detain the House for more than a few moments while he stated the reasons that induced him to give his vote in favour of the Second Reading of this Measure. He should vote for the Measure because its promoters had promised to accept Amendments that would enable refreshments to be procured on Sundays at certain limited times. If the Bill were so amended he did not think that it would do injustice to anyone, and on that understanding he should vote for its Second Reading.

Mr. GRIFFITH-BOSCAWEN (Kent, Tunbridge) said that he should support the Bill. He was not in favour of total closing on Sunday, and therefore he should reserve his right to vote against the Third Reading of the Measure in the event of it not being so amended in Committee as to enable the working classes to obtain necessary refreshment on Sunday.

Mr. DUNCOMBE asked why it was that the hon. Member for West Hull had not inserted the Amendments which he said he was prepared to accept in the Bill before he introduced the Measure into the House?

Mr. SPEAKER: Order, order!

Question put, "That the word 'now,' stand part of the Question:" The House divided:—Ayes, 149; Noes, 206—(Division List—No. 22—appended).

AYES.

Abraham, William (Rhondda)
Acland, Rt. Hon. A. H. Dyke
Allan, William (Gateshead)
Allen, Wm. (Newc. under Lyme)
Allison, Robert Andrew
Arch, Joseph
Arrol, Sir William
Asher, Alexander
Atherley-Jones, L.
Bagot, Capt. Josceline FitzRoy
Bainbridge, Emerson
Balfour, Rt. Hn. J. Blair (Clackm)
Bayley, Thomas (Derbyshire)
Beaumont, Wentworth C. B.
Bethell, Captain
Biddulph, Michael
Birrell, Augustine
Blake, Edward
Bolitho, Thomas Bedford
Bolton, Thomas Dolling
Boscawen, Arthur Griffith-
Bousfield, William Robert
Brigg, John
Broadhurst, Henry
Brown, Alexander H.
Bryce, Rt. Hon. James
Buchanan, Thomas Ryburn
Burns, John
Caldwell, James
Cameron, Robert
Campbell-Bannerman, Sir H.
Cawley, Frederick
Clough, Walter Owen
Colville, John
Corbett, A. Cameron (Glasgow)
Courtney, Rt. Hon. Leonard H.
Cozens-Hardy, Herbert Hardy
Currie, Sir Donald
Curzon, Rt. Hn. G. N. (Lanc. S. W.)
Dalziel, James Henry
Davies, M. Vaughan- (Cardigan)
Davitt, Michael
Denny, Colonel
Dixon, George
Donkin, Richard Sim
Doughty, George
Dunn, Sir William
Ellis, John Edward (Notts)
Ellis, Thos. Edw. (Merionethsh.)
Evans, Sir Francis H. (South'ton)
Farquharson, Dr. Robert
Fenwick, Charles
Ferguson, R. C. Munro (Leith)
Firbank, Joseph Thomas
Foster, Harry S. (Suffolk)
Foster, Sir Walter (Derby Co.)
Fowler, Rt. Hon. Sir H. (Wol'tn)
Fowler, Matthew (Durham)
Fry, Lewis
Gordon, John Edward
Gourley Sir Edward Temperley
Griffith, Ellis J.
Haldane, Richard Burdon
Hayne, Rt. Hon. Charles Seale-
Hazell, Walter
Hemphill, Rt. Hon. Charles H.
Hill, Rt. Hn. Lord Arthur (Down)
Houldsworth, Sir Wm. Henry
Howard, Joseph
Jacoby, James Alfred
Johnston, William (Belfast)
Joicey, Sir James
Jones, William (Carnarvonshire)
Kay-Shuttleworth, Rt. Hn. Sir U.
Kearley, Hudson E.
Kinloch, Sir John George Smyth
Kitson, Sir James
Lawson, Sir Wilfrid (Cumb'land)
Lea, Sir Thomas (Londonderry)
Leese, Sir Joseph F. (Accrington)
Leng, Sir John
Llewelyn, Sir Dillwyn- (Swans'a)
Lloyd-George, David
Lockwood, Sir Frank (York)
Long, Col. Charles W. (Evesham)
Lough, Thomas
Luttrell, Hugh Fownes
McArthur, William
McKenna, Reginald
McKillop, James
McLeod, John
Maden, John Henry
Mappin, Sir Frederick Thorpe
Mellor, Rt. Hon. J. W. (Yorks.)
Mildmay, Francis Bingham
Montagu, Sir S. (Whitechapel)
Morgan, J. Lloyd (Carmarthen)
Morton, Edward John Chalmers
Mundella, Rt. Hn. Anthony John
O'Connor, Arthur (Donegal)
O'Neill, Hon. Robert Torrens
Orr-Ewing, Charles Lindsay
Parkes, Ebenezer
Paulton, James Mellor
Perks, Robert William
Pickard, Benjamin
Pickersgill, Edward Hare
Pinkerton, John
Pirie, Captain Duncan Vernon
Provand, Andrew Dryburgh
Quilter, William Cuthbert
Reckitt, Harold James
Reid, Sir Robert T.
Rentoul, James Alexander
Roberts, John Bryn (Eifion)
Roberts, John H. (Denbighs.)
Russell, T. W. (Tyrone)
Samuel, J. (Stockton-on-Tees)
Saunderson, Col. Edw. James
Savory, Sir Joseph
Schwann, Charles E.
Scott, Charles Prestwich
Shaw, Thomas (Hawick B.)
Shaw, William Rawson (Halifax)
Smith, Samuel (Flint)
Souttar, Robinson
Stanhope, Hon. Philip J.
Stewart, Sir Mark J. M'Taggart
Stock, James Henry
Sullivan, Donal (Westmeath)
Tennant, Harold John
Thomas, Alfred (Glamorgan, E.)
Tritton, Charles Ernest
Ure, Alexander
Wallace, Robert (Perth)
Warde, Lt.-Col. C. E. (Kent)
Wayman, Thomas
Wedderburn, Sir William
Weir, James Galloway
Whittaker, Thomas Palmer
Williams, Colonel R. (Dorset)
Williams, John Carvell (Notts)
Wilson, John (Falkirk)
Wilson, John (Govan)
Wolff, Gustav Wilhelm
Woodall, William
Woodhouse, Sir J. T (Hudd'rsf'ld)
Woods, Samuel
Wyndham-Quin, Major W. H.

Tellers for the Ayes, Mr. Charles Wilson and Mr. Alfred Pease.

NOES.

Abraham, William (Cork, N.E.)
Acland-Hood, Capt. Sir A. F.
Aird, John
Allhusen, Augustus Henry Eden
Allsopp, Hon. George
Anstruther, H. T.
Arnold, Alfred
Ascroft, Robert
Ashmead-Bartlett, Sir Ellis
Austin, M. (Limerick, W.)
Bailey, James (Walworth)
Balcarres, Lord
Baldwin, Alfred
Balfour, Rt. Hon. A. J. (Manch'r)
Balfour, Gerald William (Leeds)
Banbury, Frederick George
Barry, Francis Tress (Windsor)
Bass, Hamar
Beach, Rt. Hon. Sir M. H. (Bristol)
Beach, W. W. Bramston (Hants.)
Beckett, Ernest William
Bentinck, Lord Henry C.
Bhownaggree, M. M.
Bigwood, James
Bill, Charles
Blundell, Colonel Henry
Bond, Edward
Boulnois, Edmund
Bowles, Capt. H. F. (Middlesex)
Brodrick, Rt. Hon. St. John
Bullard, Sir Harry
Burdett-Coutts, W.
Carew, James Laurence
Cavendish, R. F. (N. Lancs.)
Cecil, Lord Hugh
Chaloner, Captain R. G. W.
Charrington, Spencer
Chelsea, Viscount
Clarke, Sir Edward (Plymouth)
Coddington, Sir William
Cohen, Benjamin Louis
Collings, Rt. Hon. Jesse
Colomb, Sir John Charles Ready
Colston, Chas. Edw. H. Athole
Compton, Lord Alwyne (Beds)
Condon, Thomas Joseph
Cook, Fred. Lucas (Lambeth)
Cranborne, Viscount
Crilly, Daniel
Cripps, Charles Alfred
Curran, Thomas B. (Donegal)
Curzon, Viscount (Bucks)
Dalbiac, Major Philip Hugh
Dalrymple, Sir Charles
Davenport, W. Bromley-
Dixon-Hartland, Sir F. Dixon
Doogan, P. C.
Dorington, Sir John Edward
Douglas, Rt. Hon. A. Akers-
Drucker, A.
Dyke, Rt. Hon. Sir William Hart
Edwards, Gen. Sir James Bevan
Egerton, Hon. A. de Tatton
Engledow, Charles John
Fardell, Thomas George
Fellowes, Hon. Ailwyn Edward
Fergusson, Rt. Hn. Sir J. (Manc.)
Field, William (Dublin)
Fielden, Thomas
Finch, George H.
Finch-Hatton, Hon. Harold H.
Fisher, William Hayes
Fison, Frederick William
Fletcher, Sir Henry
Flower, Ernest
Flynn, James Christopher
Forster, Henry William
Forwood, Rt. Hn. Sir Arthur B.
Foster, Colonel (Lancaster)
Fox, Dr. Joseph Francis
Galloway, William Johnson
Garfit, William
Gedge, Sydney
Gibbs, Hn. A. G. H. (City of Lond.)
Gilhooly, James
Godson, Augustus Frederick
Goldsworthy, Major-General
Goschen, George J. (Sussex)
Goulding Edward Alfred
Graham, Henry Robert
Gray, Ernest (West Ham)
Green, Walford D. (Wednesb'ry)
Greene, Henry D. (Shrewsbury)
Gretton, John
Greville, Captain
Halsey, Thomas Frederick
Hanson, Sir Reginald
Hare, Thomas Leigh
Harrington, Timothy
Heaton, John Henniker
Helder, Augustus
Hermon-Hodge, Robert Trotter
Hickman, Sir Alfred
Hill, Rt. Hon. A. Staveley (Staffs.)
Hoare, Edw. Brodie (Hampstead)
Hoare, Samuel (Norwich)
Howorth, Sir Henry Hoyle
Hubbard, Hon. Evelyn
Hudson, George Bickersteth
Hughes, Colonel Edwin
Hutchinson, Capt. G. W. Grice-
Hutton, John (Yorks, N.R.)
Isaacson, Frederick Wootton
Jenkins, Sir John Jones
Jessel, Captain Herbert Merton
Johnstone, John H. (Sussex)
Jolliffe, Hon. H. George
Kemp, George
Kenyon, James
Knowles, Lees
Laurie, Lieut.-General
Lawson, John Grant (Yorks)
Leighton, Stanley
Llewellyn, Evan H. (Somerset)
Loder, Gerald Walter Erskine
Long, Rt. Hn. Walter (Liverpool)
Lopes, Henry Yarde Buller
Lorne, Marquess of
Lowther, Rt. Hon. James (Kent)
Loyd, Archie Kirkman
Lubbock, Rt. Hon. Sir John
Lucas-Shadwell, William
Macaleese, Daniel
Macdona, John Cumming
Maclean, James Mackenzie
Maclure, John William
McDermott, Patrick
Malcolm, Ian
Marks, Henry Hananel
Martin, Richard Biddulph
Massey-Mainwaring, Hn. W. F.
Mellor, Colonel (Lancashire)
Melville, Beresford Valentine
Milbank, Powlett Charles John
Milward, Colonel Victor
Monk, Charles James
Montagu, Hon. J. Scott (Hants.)
Moon, Edward Pacy
More, Robert Jasper
Morrell, George Herbert
Morrison, Walter
Mount, William George
Murdoch, Charles Townshend
Murray, Charles J. (Coventry)
Murray, Col. Wyndham (Bath)
Myers, William Henry
Northcote, Hon. Sir H. Stafford
O'Brien, Patrick (Kilkenny)
O'Connor, James (Wicklow, W.)
O'Keeffe, Francis Arthur
O'Kelly, James
Penn, John
Phillpotts, Captain Arthur
Pierpoint, Robert
Pollock, Harry Frederick
Powell, Sir Francis Sharp
Pryce-Jones, Edward
Rankin, James
Richardson, Thomas
Ridley, Rt. Hon. Sir Matthew W.
Ritchie, Rt. Hon. Chas. Thomson
Roche, Hon. James (East Kerry)
Russell, Sir George (Berksh.)
Rutherford, John
Samuel, Harry S. (Limehouse)
Sandys, Lieut.-Col. Thos. Myles
Scoble, Sir Andrew Richard
Seely, Charles Hilton
Simeon, Sir Barrington
Sinclair, Louis (Romford)
Skewes-Cox, Thomas
Smith, Abel (Herts.)
Stanley, Lord (Lancs.)
Stanley, Edw. Jas. (Somerset)
Stanley, Henry M. (Lambeth)
Stephens, Henry Charles
Sturt, Hon. Humphry Napier
Sutherland, Sir Thomas
Taylor, Francis
Thornton, Percy M.
Tomlinson, Wm. Edw. Murray
Usborne, Thomas
Vincent, Col. Sir C. E. Howard
Walrond, Sir William Hood
Warkworth, Lord
Webster, R. G. (St. Pancras)
Webster, Sir R. E. (Isle of W.)
Welby, Lieut.-Col. A. C. E.
Whiteley, H. (Ashton-under-L
Whitmore, Charles Algernon
Wilson-Todd, Wm. H. (Yorks)
Wodehouse, Edmond R. (Bath.)
Wortley, Rt. Hon. C. B. Stuart-
Wyndham, George
Young, Samuel
Younger, William

Tellers for the Noes, Mr. Duncombe and Mr. Sharpe.

Words added.

Main Question, as amended, put, and agreed to. Second Reading put off for six months.

CEMETERIES RATING BILL.

Second Reading deferred till Wednesday next.

VEHICLES (LIGHTS) BILL.

Second Reading deferred till Wednesday next.

ALIENS BILL.

Second Reading deferred till Wednesday next.

OLD AGE PROVIDENT PENSIONS BILL.

Second Reading deferred till Thursday 25th February.

OUTDOOR PROVIDENT RELIEF BILL.

Second Reading deferred till Thursday 25th February.

SHOPS (EARLY CLOSING) BILL.

Second Reading deferred till Wednesday next.

OCCUPYING TENANTS ENFRANCHISEMENT (PURCHASE OF FEE SIMPLE) BILL.

Second Reading deferred till Tuesday 23rd February.

SHOPS BILL.

Second Reading deferred till Wednesday next.

LAND LAW (IRELAND) (No. 2.) BILL.

Second Reading deferred till Monday 22nd February.

LICENCES (IRELAND) BILL.

Second Reading deferred till Wednesday 24th February.

WORKING MEN'S DWELLINGS BILL.

Second Reading deferred till Wednesday next.

POOR LAW OFFICERS' SUPERANNUATION ACT (1896) AMENDMENT BILL.

Second Reading deferred till Wednesday next.

SUPPLY.

Committee deferred till Friday.

WAYS AND MEANS.

Committee deferred till Friday.

SUNDAY CLOSING (WALES) ACT (1881) AMENDMENT BILL.

Adjourned Debate on Second Reading [27th January] further adjourned till Wednesday 16th June.

COUNTY COUNCILLORS (QUALIFICATION OF WOMEN) (SCOTLAND) BILL.

Second Reading deferred till Wednesday 24th February.

CORONERS' INQUESTS (RAILWAY FATALITIES) BILL.

Second Reading deferred till Monday 22nd February.

SHOP ASSISTANTS (HALF-HOLIDAY) BILL.

Second Reading deferred till To-morrow.

MILITARY LANDS ACT (1882) AMENDMENT BILL.

Second Reading deferred till To-morrow.

TRUSTS (SCOTLAND) BILL.

Second Reading deferred till To-morrow.

LAW OF EVIDENCE (CRIMINAL CASES) BILL.

Second Reading deferred till To-morrow.

FACTORY ACTS (FISHING TRADE) BILL.

Committee deferred till Wednesday 23rd June.

House adjourned at Twenty minutes before Six o'clock.

HOUSE OF LORDS.

Thursday, 11th February 1897.

COMPANIES BILL.

THE PARLIAMENTARY SECRETARY TO THE BOARD OF TRADE (The Earl of DUDLEY), in moving the Second Reading of this Bill, said it was absolutely identical with that on the same subject which was read a Second time in their Lordships' House last Session. He proposed to ask the House to take the same course with regard to this Bill as was taken with regard to the Bill of last Session, which after the Second Reading was referred to a Select Committee, because it was thought right that some of its provisions should be considered and scrutinised in the light of direct commercial evidence. Unfortunately, owing to want of time, that Committee did not finish its labours, and therefore he asked the House to give the Bill a Second Reading now, in order that the Committee might be reappointed and continue the work it began last Session.

Read 2ª (according to Order), and referred to a Committee.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ELECTIONS) BILL.

House in Committee (according to Order); Bill reported without amendment.

LORD HERSCHELL said that as the Bill was of a very simple character, and as it was desirable that it should pass as rapidly as possible, he thought their Lordships would agree that it need not go to Standing Committee. He therefore moved that the Standing Committee be negatived.

Motion agreed to; and Bill to be Read 3ª To-morrow.

GAMBLING IN OPTIONS AND FUTURES.

*LORD STANLEY OF ALDERLEY rose to ask the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs if he would lay on the Table any legislative measures for prohibiting or restricting gambling in "option and future" contracts representing "fictitious" agricultural produce and metals, either passed or proposed, in Germany, Austria, Hungary, Bohemia, Belgium, France, Switzerland, Norway and Sweden, Greece, Argentina, and the United States and South Australia; and if Her Majesty's Government had asked the Hungarian Government for a copy of the official report of the International Agricultural Congress held at Budapest last September; and to ask Her Majesty's Government if they would lay on the Table the sections of the Canada Criminal Code of 1892 which came into operation in March 1893 prohibiting gambling in prices. He said he would first say to the noble Earl the Under Secretary for the Colonial Office, that he had called there and finding no information about prosecutions under the Canadian Criminal Code, he had withdrawn that part of the Question. With regard to South Australia, they had also no information. What had happened in South Australia was that, on 14th November 1894 and in August and November 1896, Mr. Archibald brought forward in the Legislative Council and House of Assembly the questions of "options and futures," and moved a Resolution to urge the Imperial Government to legislate and declare it illegal to deal in options and futures except when produce changed hands. This Debate was adjourned on the first two occasions, and on the last it was wound up by the Premier, who deprecated the resolution principally on the ground that it would be a bad precedent to ask the Imperial Government to legislate in matters affecting themselves. In May last, when he brought the subject of gambling in fictitious produce before the House, the Board of Trade made some statements to the House which were not in accordance with the facts, and, as he would presently show, placed the Board in the dilemma of either wilful concealment of facts or ignorance of them disgraceful in a public office. He said the Board of Trade, because the noble Earl was not responsible for statements put into his mouth. He had too much personal regard for Sir Courtenay Boyle to allow him to be implicated in this matter, and he had already expressed his disapproval of this system of gambling. As for the President of the Board of Trade, he had recently got into a scrape, and on that account, and on account of the County Councils, he was not prepossessed in his favour; but that was a reason why he was the more bound to say that the dates showed that the President was not responsible for the statements made by the Board of Trade; for the President only got back to Parliament in 1895 and later in the year into the Board of Trade; but Sir Robert Giffen had persistently since 1894 endeavoured to prevent any discussion of these gambling systems, and Her Majesty's Government might do well to endeavour to ascertain whether there were any external reasons for his action. The noble Lord who spoke for the Board of Trade made two statements. First, he said that he doubted whether it would be possible to check this system of gambling by legislative authority; secondly, that in no single instance had attempts made by foreign Governments to check this gambling been successful, and no Bill drawn with this object had as yet passed into law. The noble Lord was not in any way responsible for statements which the Board of Trade asked him to put before the House, but he (Lord Stanley of Alderley) was entitled to ask whether the Board of Trade were really ignorant of the fact that the Criminal Code of 1892 of Canada imposed as much as five years' imprisonment and 500 dollars fine on persons convicted of making bargains in fictitious goods, wares, or merchandise in Canada or elsewhere, with the intent to make gain or profit by the rise or fall in prices: that this Act received the assent of the Governor General on the 9th July 1892, and that the Dispatch leaving the code to its operation was dated in March 1893 and was signed by Lord Ripon. Was the Board of Trade ignorant of the fact that this Act had had the effect of preventing produce exchanges being established in Canada, and it was passed because of the ill effects of this gambling in the United States? Did the Board of Trade not know that in the case of "Forget *v.* Ostigny," reported in the "Law Reports" for 1895, there was an appeal from the Court of Queen's Bench in Canada to the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council, and that the Judicial Committee rightly reversed the decision of the Canadian Courts, and held that the practice alluded to in that case did not constitute "gambling" and therefore the broker was entitled to recover from his client? For as the broker was not to make any profit or loss, the essential points of a gaming contract were absent. This case had been decided in respect of the Canadian Civil Code, and not under the Criminal Code of 1892–93, which was posterior in date to the transactions in the case which happened in 1882. This judgment of the Privy Council was delivered by the noble and learned Lord now sitting on the Woolsack. There was another more important case, that of "Strachan *v.* Universal Stock Exchange Limited," and a series of most satisfactory judgments, the facts of which were as follows:—Mr. Strachan, an officer on half-pay, had been betting with his broker to the extent in a few months of about three millions. The broker required some security, and Mr. Strachan deposited certain shares and £3,000 in money. Mr. Strachan brought an action to recover the shares and the money. Mr. Justice Cave and a special jury gave him back the shares but not the money. He appealed in 1895 to the Court of Appeal, and Lord Esher and Lord Justice Rigby upheld the decision of Mr. Justice Cave. The "Universal Stock Exchange" then appealed to the House of Lords, which upheld the decision of the Appeal Court, on the 20th March 1896. These actions turned upon the Gaming Act 1845, Section 18. Mr. Strachan, in November 1895, appealed to the Court of Appeal in order to recover his £3,000, but Lord Esher, Lord Justice Smith, and Lord Justice Kay upheld Mr. Justice Cave's decision. When the "Universal Stock Exchange," on March 20th 1896, appealed to the House of Lords against the decision which restored to Mr. Strachan his securities, the appeal was dismissed by the noble and learned Lord on the Woolsack. Lord Halsbury, in delivering judgment, said:

> "When I look at the terms themselves the whole scheme appears to me to be intended with great ingenuity to pretend that there is to be a real transaction, and yet there is to be a payment in respect of the relations between the parties, which is only reconcilable in my mind with its being an unreal transaction. They are to get 5 per cent. Each learned counsel in turn has been asked what that was for, inasmuch as it was admitted there was

Lord Stanley of Alderley.

no purchase and no sale. In all these transactions not one single purchase or sale is proved to have existed during the whole period in which this business was going on. Then if the real meaning of the parties is this, that there is to be only a payment of differences, what is it but a gaming and wagering transaction between the two as to what shall be the payment on the one side or on the other side? My Lords, if I were on the jury I should come to that conclusion; but I am not under the necessity of trying this question as if I were upon the jury, because the jury have found that it was a gambling transaction, and upon evidence which seems to me extremely satisfactory."

Lord Herschell delivered a similar judgment, emphatically disproving the contention of the Board of Trade as to the difficulty of distinguishing between gambling and legitimate speculation. He said:

> "The proposition amounts to this, that parties who intended to gamble with one another, but wanted to have the security against one another of being able in a Court of Justice to recover their bets, could compel a Court of Justice to adjudicate, and secure to them their bets by a judgment, if only they inserted in their contract a provision which might in certain events become operative, to compel the goods to be delivered and received, although neither of them anticipated such a contingency; the purpose of inserting the provision creating an obligation being only to cloak the fact that it was a gambling transaction, and enable them to sue one another for gambling debts. The proposition contended for by the learned counsel for the appellants would really lead to that result, and I should require much consideration before I gave my assent to a proposition involving such consequences."

Lords Macnaghten and Norris concurred in that judgment. It thus appeared that the Board of Trade maintained in May last that the law could not check these gambling transactions, and could not distinguish between gambling and legitimate speculation, either in spite of or in ignorance of a case which had been tried by a judge and special jury, had been heard twice in the Queen's Bench and in the House of Lords, during which suits nine judges, including the Lord Chancellor and seven Lords of Appeal expressed views disproving the opinions of the Board of Trade. The Board of Trade might have said more justifiably that existing law provided against these gambling transactions, and that it was a question whether they should be made illegal as well as void in law. He hoped he might, perhaps, have shaken the confidence placed by Her Majesty's Government in their advisers in the Board of Trade. Surely it was more likely that persons so ill informed as to current events were wrong, rather than that the 14 Governments and Parliaments mentioned in his question were in error. In conclusion he would read part of a letter published in the *St. James's Gazette* yesterday, and written by a prominent Hungarian statesman. The writer said:

> "The Committee of the Austrian Parliament has already gone one step farther than the Imperial German law, since that Committee has reported to the effect that both Blanco-Terminal Trade (options and futures) is to be abolished, and Blanco-Delivery Trade (when no delivery takes place) is to be also made illegal. We have just now had an inquiry at the Hungarian Ministry of Commerce, on which occasion the very same clauses have been made by the Agrarian Party as in Austria. Our local inquiry was, of course, influenced not only by the Hungarian agrarians but also by the example of Germany, and also by the Debate in the Austrian Parliament."

THE PRIME MINISTER (The Marquess of SALISBURY): I hope I shall not be accused of disgraceful ignorance or dishonest concealment when I confess that I do not know one-tenth of the documents which the noble Lord desires me to produce. He tells me that there are legislative Measures either passed or proposed in many foreign countries. It may be, of course, the deficiency of the Foreign Office; it is possible that the representatives of Her Majesty abroad do not take the keen interest in this subject that is taken by the noble Lord; at all events, I have not been able to discover that any Measures have been passed excepting the well-known German Measure. If the noble Lord wishes for a copy of that, no doubt he can obtain it; but we do not generally lay the Acts of Parliament of other nations upon the Table of this House. With regard to Measures that are proposed, I have only been able to discover one—namely, in France. There a Measure was proposed last September by a private Member; but I do not think it has gone any further. I can only say that if the noble Lord will help us in our research, and tell us what are the dates of these various Measures, we will ascertain whether they can be obtained without great inconvenience. Although it is perfectly easy to procure copies of Measures that have been passed, because they are all published for the use of the inhabitants of the countries which they affect, Measures that have been simply proposed and not passed could only be discovered by very long and careful investigations into the daily reports of the various Legislatures to which the noble Lord has referred. I think, therefore, he must assist us in order to obtain this information. We have not asked the Hungarian Government for a copy of the Official Report of the International Agricultural Congress held at Budapest last September. I do not know whether the noble Lord is of opinion that it is our duty to ask for Reports of the Congresses held upon the Continent. There is no particular reason to make us ask for Reports of this kind. But if the noble Lord entertains these strong opinions, and if he can find a sufficient number of noble Lords who take the same view, the best course for him to take is to move for a Committee to report to the House upon this subject. At present the progress of economical science at the Board of Trade, or elsewhere, is so backward that I do not think there is enough sympthy with the object which the noble Lord is pursuing to induce them to make any great efforts to obtain the information which he requires.

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES (The Earl of SELBORNE) said there was no objection to the noble Lord's request that the sections of the Canadian Act referred to in the Question should be laid upon the Table.

*LORD STANLEY OF ALDERLEY was obliged to the noble Marquess for his suggestion that there should be a Committee of Investigation. That was all that was asked for last year.

THE PRIME MINISTER: Did the noble Lord move last year?

*LORD STANLEY OF ALDERLEY: No; I only asked.

HOME DEFENCE AND THE VOLUNTEERS.

*THE EARL OF MINTO rose to ask the Lord President (the Duke of Devonshire) whether, in the existing scheme for utilising the naval and military forces of the Crown, the Volunteer Force formed part of the plan for home defence; and whether the recent increase of expenditure, whereby the Navy had been strengthened and augmented, rendered it in the opinion of her Majesty's Government less necessary to maintain the Volunteer Force? He explained that the origin of the question was a statement made by the noble Duke when speaking on the subject of Imperial defence at the meeting of the British Empire League in December last. Very great importance had been attached to that statement as denoting an entirely new departure in regard to our home defence, and as affecting the question of the maintenance of our Volunteer Force, which had always been looked upon hitherto as a very important factor in the defence of the country. The noble Duke's statement amounted to this, that the Imperial defence of our Empire should be based on our sea supremacy, that the Admiralty had accepted all responsibility for the same, and that, though certain points might be liable to predatory raids carried out by the landing of a few thousand men, local defences should be generally sufficient to meet such attacks, and that on the conditions accepted by the Admiralty it was practically needless to consider the possibility of invasion by a large force. Upon that statement an interpretation had been put which he trusted was not correct. Critics and experts of some recognised authority had taken the view that this statement meant that we were on the eve of an entirely new departure in regard to home defences, that a great deal of the organisation of past years had been a mistake, that much of our expenditure had been money thrown away, and that in future the country need fear nothing beyond the predatory raids of small cruisers, invasions on a large scale being out of the question. If a statement of that kind were allowed to pass without some authoritative explanation it might have a serious effect upon the Volunteer Force, which had been formed to repel invasion. It was the fear of invasion on a large scale, and not the fear of the predatory raids of cruisers, that had brought the force into existence. When a volunteer joined the force he did so with the idea that some day he might have to defend his hearth and home. It was the thought of the possibility of invasion that induced him to join, and if that possibility was no longer to be contemplated the *raison d'être* of the force would disappear in the opinion of a large number of the rank and file. There were, of course, other reasons for the continued existence of the force besides the remote chance of invasion. It fostered a military spirit in the country, and in times of great emergency might prove a useful feeder to the Army. Such reasons, however, by themselves, would not, he thought, be sufficient incentives to recruiting. They ought to remember what had occurred in past times. At the end of the last century, and at the beginning of the present, there was a great fear of an invasion by Napoleon, and the Volunteer Force of those days sprang into existence. About 1803-4 it had risen to 460,000 men. Then came Trafalgar, and the hostile fleets were swept from the seas. The fear of invasion disappeared for the time, and the Volunteer Force began to dwindle, and in a few years had ceased to exist altogether. But he did not think that they could afford at the present time to belittle our Volunteer Army. They were justified in remembering that they had not yet had their second Trafalgar, nor, as far as he knew, had they got their second Nelson; therefore, we should do well to recognise the value of the Volunteer Force, and not let it go down too easily. They ought also to remember the composition of the force. It was entirely unpaid; it was supported very largely by Government grants, which maintained its efficiency, but neither officers nor men received anything in the shape of direct money payment. Nevertheless, they received a form of pay which they valued very much—the estimation which they earned from the public for their capability as soldiers. If they lowered that public estimation they would lower the pay, and as a natural result would obtain hereafter an inferior article. The standard of officers and men would gradually become lower. He knew very well that the Volunteer Force varied in efficiency in different parts of the country. At the same time a great deal had been done by the War Office of late years to improve its organisation, not in the matter of small details, but to organise it with the idea of forming a useful part of a large field army. The Volunteer Force had been told off in brigades; it had been divided into garrisons and mobile brigades, which had been told off to certain positions. He believed that the brigade which he had the honour to command was intended in case of great national emergency to join the field army at Dorking—a place with rather an unfortunate name. If they were on an entirely wrong tack, if the critics and experts were right, and there was no more use for a large defensive army, then the Volunteer Force ought to be told so, and the Government of the day should put the force on some sound footing of organisation, whereby the Volunteers might feel that they could do some good to their country. He wished it to be distinctly understood that he did not believe any soldier who had thought over the question of imperial defence would fail to understand the paramount necessity to this country of the supremacy of sea power, and he did not believe any money spent in that direction could be possibly thrown away. At the same time, he did not think that the nation ought to be compelled to put all its eggs into one basket; and, therefore, it seemed to him that the nation was justified in having a second string to its bow, in having a large Army for Home Defence, with the idea that if an invasion on a large scale was attempted against this country, that army might be capable of meeting it. If the noble Duke found himself able to say that in the opinion of the Government the Volunteer Force still formed a valuable part of such an army, it might go far to dispel the harm which had been done by some of the careless criticisms to which so much publicity had been given.

THE LORD PRESIDENT OF THE COUNCIL (The Duke of DEVONSHIRE): I am very much indebted to my noble Friend for giving me the opportunity of saying a few words to correct some of the misapprehensions which have arisen in consequence of the speech which I made a short time ago at the meeting of the British Empire League, and at the same time of disavowing some of what appeared to be the most extraordinary conclusions which had been drawn from that speech. I was on that occasion speaking of the advantage which I thought might be derived from a repetition of such colonial conferences as the conference which was held some time ago in this country. I was instancing as a subject which might be discussed at such a conference the conditions upon which the naval agreement with the colonies of Australia, the term of which will shortly expire, might be renewed. I went on to speak of some of the principles which the home Government hopes that some of the colonies are adopting, and will continue to adopt, in the way of preparations for their own defence. In the course of those observations I referred to a Memorandum which has been for some years in existence, and which has been in the possession of all the colonial Governments for some time. It is a Memorandum which had hitherto been treated as a confidential document, and which is, as regards some of its details, still confidential in character, but I was permitted to refer to it as far as related to the general principles underlying colonial defence. From that Memorandum I quoted words some of which have been referred to by my noble friend. These were the words of the Memorandum:—

> "The maintenance of sea supremacy has been assumed as the basis of the system of Imperial defence against attack from over sea. This is the determining factor in shaping the defensive policy of the Empire, and is fully recognised by the Admiralty, who have accepted the responsibility of protecting all British territory abroad against organised invasion from the sea."

The Memorandum went on to point out that complete freedom and independence of action was an essential condition of the efficiency of the Navy, but the presence of the fleet could not therefore be insured at all times at any particular point. The colonies could not therefore be guaranteed against predatory attacks which might be made upon them by a force either of cruisers or of a small squadron of battleships. It went on further to point out the measures by which it was considered possible and desirable for the colonies to place themselves in a position to secure themselves against attacks of that character. Now, I think the statement contained in that Memorandum which I quoted may be open to comment on the ground that perhaps it places too great a responsibility on the Navy, and that it attributes to the Admiralty the assumption of a responsibility which it has perhaps hardly to the fullest extent ever undertaken. But it is perfectly clear in what sense that statement was addressed to the colonial Governments. The evident intention of that statement was to limit the responsibility of the Imperial Government and to point out clearly to the colonies against what risks the home Government could not undertake to protect them, and that it was necessary, if they should be protected, they should undertake to protect themselves. This statement, as my noble Friend has said, has been treated in some quarters as the announcement of an absolutely new policy of defence, and of a policy of defence applicable not only to the colonies of which I am speaking, but to the United Kingdom also. But there is absolutely nothing new in the statement which I made on that occasion, although I fully admit that some extremely new deductions have been drawn from it. ["Hear, hear."] In the first place, the statement which I made applied only to the colonies and to colonial defence. I did not conceive that any sane Government ever imagined for a moment that the defence of our possessions abroad against naval attack upon a large scale could depend upon anything except the supremacy of our Navy. [*Cheers.*] No statesman, no soldier, and no sailor has ever, I conceive, imagined that a serious attack by a great maritime Power on one of our colonial possessions could be resisted by any fortifications, by the enlistment of any forces, or by any maritime provisions within the power of the colony itself to make, and that their security against an attack of that character could depend upon anything except the supremacy of the Imperial Navy. But certain critics have fastened upon this truism, which, as I have explained, is borrowed from a Memorandum long in existence of the Colonial Defence Committee, and have exposed it to a most remarkable treatment. Some of my critics have found fault with it because it referred only to our possessions beyond the sea, and not to the United Kingdom also; while other critics have commented upon it as if it referred to the defence of the United Kingdom as well as to the colonies, and, having drawn the conclusion from it that our Navy is, as it ought to be, strong enough to resist organised invasion either of our colonial possessions or of our own shores, have inferred that then any expenditure or any energy applied to the erection of fortifications, of defensive works, or to the provision of adequate military establishments which are not of a mobile character, are so much expenditure and so much energy thrown away. I have no intention of entering at this time upon a discussion of the principles of Imperial defence. All I desire to do is to protest against the assumption that in that speech or at any other time I have advanced any new principles of defence either as concerns our colonies or the United Kingdom. I was not authorised to make any announcement of any such new departure, and had not the slightest intention of doing it. The various additions which have been made to the Navy by the present, and also by former Governments to increase the strength of the Navy and to insure our sea supremacy—these efforts all testify to the paramount importance which is attached not only by the present but by former Governments to the maintenance of our sea supremacy—[*Opposition cheers*]—which we look upon not only as our first line of defence but as our main security against attack. [*Opposition cheers.*] I confess that, personally, I should have very little confidence in any defence organisation which was based on the probability of our permanently losing command of the sea; but between the permanent loss of the command of the sea and the possibility of a temporary reverse which might expose some portion of our coast to the risk of invasion there is a very wide interval, and, as far as I know, no Government has ever contemplated, and certainly this Government has never contemplated, the neglect of any precautions which might tend to the diminution of such risk. [*Opposition cheers.*] Another consideration which might appeal, I should have thought, even to those who rely most exclusively for our security upon the supremacy of our sea power, is that, as I have already pointed out, one of the most essential elements in the strength of our Navy is the freedom and independence of its action—[*Opposition cheers*]—and the more you can guarantee the safety of vital points either abroad or at home without requiring the actual and immediate presence of the fleet, the more you add to that freedom and independence of its action which constitute one of the chief elements in its strength. Therefore, under these circumstances, I think that no Government either has been or can be indifferent to the necessity of making adequate provision, either by means of fortifications or defensive works, or by the provision of adequate military establishments in order to garrison them, and if necessary, to take part in field operations in their support. No Government has ever neglected or can be indifferent to the necessity of such preparations. The question addressed to me by my noble Friend refers only to the Volunteers. As regards the Volunteers, I have no hesitation in assuring him that the Government consider that the Volunteer forces form an essential and indispensable part of our defensive arrangements. The measures which were proposed to Parliament by my noble Friend last year for strengthening the financial position of the Volunteers testify to the interest and appreciation of the services of that force by the Government, and I am informed that in the present year there will be a considerable addition asked for to the Volunteer Vote caused by the increased number of efficients—an increase which I believe is partly due to the assistance which was given to them last year. The Volunteers, who are represented on this occasion by my noble Friend, need be under no apprehension whatever that the importance of maintaining both their numbers and their efficiency is in no way neglected or discouraged by the Government. I trust that after the explanation which I have been able to give, the Volunteers will agree with me that any apprehensions which have been felt that their services are not held at their proper value by the Government are due not to anything which I have said on the part of Her Majesty's Government, but to the totally unauthorised construction which has been placed on certain statements which I have made, and for which, in my humble opinion, there was absolutely no warrant or foundation. I hope this answer may be satisfactory both to my noble Friend and to the Volunteers.

THE EARL OF KIMBERLEY: I have heard with very great satisfaction and no surprise the explanation given by the noble Duke, because I was for a long time connected with the Colonial Department and had opportunity of seeing documents at that time with reference to colonial defence, and I very well indeed remember the document to which the noble Duke referred in his former speech. It is no new principle which is laid down in that document. It has invariably been the opinion of Governments of this country, with reference to colonial defence, that the Navy, if it is to do its duty—which it cannot do unless it is free—must be supported by the colonies in such a manner as to make predatory attacks upon them capable of resistance without the presence of the fleet. That has been a constantly observed condition. With regard to home defence, I have read with great interest and extreme surprise various effusions implying that the trust which this country must always mainly put in its Navy for the protection of our coasts exempts us from thenec essity of making any other preparations. I am in no way qualified to speak upon questions either of naval or military tatics, but I should have supposed that if our Fleet is to be perfectly free to engage the enemy at a distance from our shores, it might possibly happen that at some given moment it might not be available at some particular point. Suppose we suffered some minor reverse to some squadron which was not so powerful as our main fleet, might it not easily happen that an enemy might make a serious attack upon one of our dockyards? The protection of our dockyards against any such sudden attack seems to be a matter of extreme consequence to the interests of the nation. I merely instance that because no person could conceive it was a safe thing to leave our dockyards unprotected against any sudden attack. Instances might be multiplied; and it seems to me that some preparations as regards fortifications—though I should not say very extensive fortifications—are very desirable, and that some preparations for fortifying important points, places where ships are built and where coal stores are accumulated for the use of the fleet, are absolutely indispensable. The meaning of that is not that you rely upon those fortifications or even the military preparations to meet an invasion, but that they are necessary supports for your first line of defence and indispensable to the free action of the Fleet. Speaking with some knowledge of the views of previous Governments, I can most entirely confirm every word which has been so clearly and thoroughly stated by the noble Duke.

House Adjourned at Half-past Five o'clock, till To-morrow, a Quarter past Four o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

Thursday, 11th February 1897.

PRIVATE BUSINESS.

CITY OF LONDON SEWERS BILL.

On the Motion "That this Bill be now read a Second time,"

*MR. CHARLES HARRISON (Plymouth) rose to move

"to leave out the word 'now,' and at the end of the Question to add the words 'upon this day six months.'"

He asked whether the subject of the Bill was such that it ought to be dealt with in a private Bill. The Bill was not promoted by any body constituted under the public Acts, but by the Corporation of the City of London, a body not subject to any municipal corporation Act or to the general Acts relating to boroughs or urban sanitary districts, and under it the Corporation sought to have transferred to it the powers vested in the City Commissioners of Sewers under a certain Act of Parliament. The Corporation of the City of London had no governing statutes or Acts of Parliament settling its constitution or regulating its election of officers or the constituent members of the body and it now proposed to deal with an area having a rateable value of five millions sterling and extending over 112 parishes. It sought the repeal of no less than 23 public Acts of Parliament, amongst which was the Valuation of the Metropolis Act, 1869. The administration of that Act was entrusted to the Commissioners of Sewers and not to the Corporation, but the Corporation proposed to transfer the powers and duties of that Act to themselves. They also proposed to transfer from the Commissioners to themselves the rights and powers under the Local Loans Act, which referred to the borrowing and repayment of money. The Corporation was not now subject to the Local Loans Act, but could borrow as much money as it pleased on its own corporate property, unrestricted by the provisions that applied in this respect to every municipal borough under the Municipal Corporations Act. In addition to this a Public Health Bill was passed specially for London in 1891, and Parliament, by public statute, conferred the administration of those powers as regarded the City area upon the City Commissioners of Sewers. Those powers likewise it was proposed to transfer to the Corporation. Having regard to the enormous area affected, and to the fact that legislation dealing with this great area had hitherto been undertaken by public, or by Government, Bills, he asked whether it was right or reasonable that the House should assent in this case to the large changes proposed being effected by means of a private Bill. He submitted that such large changes should only be brought forward in a public Bill. ["Hear, hear!"] The practical effect of the Bill would be to remove by private Bill legislation the whole question of the Local Government of London, as regarded the City area, from public discussion and treatment in that House, and he urged that that was not a wise or desirable thing to do. ["Hear, hear!"] Under the Act of 1848, when the City Commissioners of Sewers for London was created, that body was constituted the sole authority for executing certain municipal powers within the City area, and it was stipulated that the members should be nominees of the Corporation, though the Corporation, as he understood, were not bound under any Act to confine their nominations to members of their own body. Under that Act the Commissioners could only be deprived of their powers through the appointment of a new Commission. That being so, the Commissioners of Sewers was not, in fact, a statutory body of the Corporation, but a separate and independent body. This had been proved by the fact that in many public Acts certain powers and duties had been entrusted distinctively to the Commissioners of Sewers. Attempts had been made to alter the constitution of the Corporation of London, and it was curious that the Corporation had no rating powers beyond those connected with the City Police. But all these efforts had been made by way of public legislation. In 1888 the City of London and area was settled by a public Bill. Its position was then defined, and the late President of the Local Government Board, in discussing the Bill, stated that it was the intention of the Government to deal with that area according to their own proposals, showing that it was contemplated that any legislation affecting the City area of London should be undertaken by public or by a Government Bill, and certainly not by a private Bill. ["Hear, hear!"] He submitted that a Bill dealing with such important changes as those proposed, and affecting such a large area, should be a public and not a private Measure, and accordingly, he moved that the present Bill be read a Second time that day six months.

MR. T. LOUGH (Islington, W.), in seconding the Amendment, said he thought that the House was in rather an extraordinary position in regard to the question. No explanation had been given of the reasons why this far-reaching proposal had been brought forward in such a sudden and unexpected manner. ["Hear, hear!"] The object of the Bill, as had been stated, was to transfer to the Corporation the powers now exercised by the Commissioners of Sewers. He had searched through the papers that had been issued on the matter, and he could not find in them any reason at all why the change should not be made. No allegation of improper discharge of duty, no reflection whatever in this regard was made against the Commissioners. ["Hear, hear!"] The Commissioners were nominated by the Corporation, and it appeared to him that the Corporation had made the great mistake of supposing that because they nominated the Commissioners of Sewers—who, it must not be forgotten, were charged with certain duties under Act of Parliament—

they could abolish that body and take their duties upon themselves. Moreover, no assurance was given that, if the proposed transfer of powers and duties was made, the Corporation would carry out the duties now discharged by the Commissioners, and he doubted whether the inhabitants of London would have the power to enforce them to do so. Let the House look at these duties, as they were specified in Clauses 6, 7, and 8, and which were to be repealed. In one clause the Commissioners were required to meet at certain times and to hold weekly meetings. In another clause their powers were restricted, they were compelled to keep books, and there were restrictions about contracts, they being obliged to give notice of contracts above a certain amount, and they were obliged to obtain estimates before undertaking work; and in other clauses very important duties were imposed on this body nominated by the Corporation. Now all these were to be repealed, and no one could enforce against the Corporation the duty of attending to these necessities of the inhabitants of the City. So much for the body to be suppressed, and then he invited attention to the Bill. It was a very short Bill, with a long preamble; but within that preamble there would not be found a single statement of any reason why this step should be taken. There was no allegation that the existing authority had failed to discharge their duty. The preamble simply stated: "Whereas it is expedient that the Commission of Sewers should be dissolved." There was no reason or argument in support of that, and it was just this expediency that he called in question. The object of the Bill was to abolish a statutory body by Parliament, and to put in its stead an old body exercising powers under an old charter that no one understood. ["Oh, oh!"] Certainly no one understood the charter, no one understood the rights, powers, and duties of the Corporation of the City of London. He viewed that Corporation himself with the greatest interest. [*Laughter.*] It was the noblest relic of bygone days we possessed; but nobody knew what duties it owed to the people, no one could point to any Act of Parliament under which it exercised its powers, and the House was asked to lay violent hands on a body which had a statutory position, and to transfer its powers to an old Corporation the duties and liabilities of which no one understood. Clauses from 11 to 16 dealt with offices to be abolished and compensation to be given to those persons holding such offices, and the pensions those deprived of employment were to enjoy. But why deprive them of employment? No charge of failure to discharge their duties had been made against them. Why lay on the inhabitants of London the expenses of these compensations? It was not necessary at all, and there had been melancholy experience of the abolition of offices. If there was one strong reproach which even the friends of the Corporation would admit, it was that of extravagance. The high salaries paid by the Corporation rivalled in some cases the excessive salaries enjoyed by right hon. Gentlemen on the Treasury Bench. He believed something like £50,000 a year were paid to officers of the Corporation, and now the House was asked to sanction a proposal to provide a large sum for compensation for the taxation of the City. This important Bill should be introduced as a public Bill, and ample time should be given by the House to its discussion. In every Act dealing with municipalities up to the present time, the House had been reforming these Corporations, constituting them statutory bodies with defined duties; but to-day the House was asked to do something else, to destroy a reformed Corporation, and to substitute for it one that had no definite shape or defined duties. There was no precedent for the step they were asked to take, and he invited hon. Members who were responsible for the Bill to reconsider their position, to withdraw the Bill, and introduce it in another Session as a public Measure.

SIR FRANK LOCKWOOD (York) took the opportunity to enter his protest against a Bill of this far-reaching and extended nature being dealt with as private Bill legislation. This very question of legislation dealing with the metropolis had been matter of consideration in the House on more than one occasion in recent years. It was incidentally mentioned by the President of the Board of Trade in 1888, when he introduced the Local Government Bill of that year, that it was the intention of the Government to deal with the question of London reform by—presumably—a public

Bill recognising, as the House would recognise, that, in dealing with so important a constituency as the City of London, the duty should devolve upon a responsible Government rather than upon private Members. That was in 1888; but in 1895 this very question was brought before the House by his hon. and learned Friend now Lord James of Hereford, who, upon the Second Reading of a Bill promoted by the London County Council, objected to the introduction of such a Bill as a private Bill, and appealed for the Speaker's ruling. The reasons he gave for his objection were as follows. He said:—

> "I desire to ask your judgment, Mr. Speaker, on a point of order affecting this Bill, whether this Bill is a fit subject to be introduced into this House as a private Bill? I do not now ask you to fix any definite rule as to what constitutes a private Bill—it is difficult to form an exact rule—but I respectfully suggest to you that this Bill clearly goes beyond the line which divides private from public Bills. In the first place, although without doubt it only refers to London, it affects 5,000,000 of Her Majesty's subjects. It is moreover stated in the preamble that it is introduced for the purpose of forming a common basis of Imperial and local taxation; it also proceeds to change entirely the law as to the mode of assessment for rating and taxation, and it abolishes the jurisdiction of a Court which has hitherto administered the law, and creates a new tribunal of an entirely different character."

Upon this point of order the Speaker gave a ruling at length, in which he said that a Bill affecting the metropolis should as a rule be introduced as a public rather than as a private Bill, and finally said:—

> "I have no doubt upon the matter. I am of opinion that the Bill ought to be introduced as a public Bill."

The opinion expressed by the Speaker on that occasion was summed up on page 634 of the tenth edition of Sir Erskine May's "Parliamentary Practice," in the following words:—

> "Bills concerning the metropolis have been dealt with as public Bills, as the large area, the number of parishes, the vast population, and the variety of interests concerned, constitute them Measures of public policy rather than of local interest."

Surely, if that test be applied to this Bill—the importance and scope of which had been indicated—it must be apparent that it was a matter for public and not for private Bill legislation. Some hon. Members took exception to the remark of the seconder of the Amendment when he said that the charter of the City of London could not be understood; but they would probably accept the Report of a Royal Commission. when it said that the Corporation had no governing charter and no Acts of Parliament defining its constitution. Therefore his hon. Friend was perfectly right. They were not animated by any hostility to the Corporation in taking the course they were doing. It was rather because they had such a high appreciation of the importance of the City of London—[*ironical Ministerial laughter*]—that they said this should be a matter of public rather than of private legislation. The mover of the Amendment pointed out how it was proposed by this private Bill to repeal public statutes. Some of them really appeared to him to be very salutary Acts, which it would be very well to preserve. There was, for instance, the one referred to in the Second Schedule as "Estimates to be obtained for commencement of works to the amount of £100." There was a public Act directed against jobbery, and here, by a private Bill, they were going to repeal it. Then there was "Previous notice to be given of contracts for the amount of £200 and upwards." ["Hear, hear!"] There was, again, a public Act directed against jobbery, and they were going to repeal that by a private Bill.

The CHAIRMAN of WAYS and MEANS (Mr. J. W. Lowther, Cumberland, Penrith) was understood to say that both those sections were in private and not in public Acts.

Sir FRANK LOCKWOOD asked whether it was right, even so, that those important sections, dealing with such important subjects as the manner in which large sums of public money ought to be spent, should be got rid of by private Bill legislation. This Amendment was moved in no spirit of hostility to the promoters of the Bill. It was regarded as being a Measure which the House should keep before it in all its stages. There was no question here of any intricate examination into plans or documents such as could only be conveniently dealt with by the machinery provided for private Bill legislation. There was here a simple question of policy as to whether or no the

City of London was to have transferred to it powers, duties, and responsibilities which it had never yet exercised, and whether or no a wide-reaching reform of that kind was to be undertaken by private Members when they had the clearest intimation from the Government of 1885 that it was in contemplation to deal with this matter by a public Bill.

Mr. W. O. CLOUGH (Portsmouth) pointed out that the Bill which constituted the Commissioners of Sewers in 1848 was a private Bill. As he understood, all the present Bill sought was to give the Corporation of the City of London power to deal with the particular acts and duties which at present were discharged by the Commissioners of Sewers. For all practical purposes, the Commissioners of Sewers was a Grand Committee of the Corporation of the City of London. ["Hear, hear!" *and* "No!"] For all practical purposes it was, and they had this anomaly that they had the Commissioners of Sewers exercising authority in the City of London, and the only power which the Corporation had to veto any of the decisions come to by the Commissioners of Sewers was by creating a fresh Commission. This Bill, as he understood, was to prevent that necessity. It was to provide that the Commissioners of Sewers should be in deed and in fact one of the Grand Committees of London. They had heard a great deal about the Corporation of London being an unreformed corporation. Well, he was a member of it, and he was a member of it because he believed it was one of the most democratic corporations that could be found in the United Kingdom. He supported the Bill because he thought it was simply a Measure intended to give to the Corporation power to deal with its own household. It was not intended to create new duties. The hon. Member for Islington said that they proposed to deprive the officers of the Commissioners of Sewers of their duties and to lay upon the citizens of London a heavy expense for such pensions as might be voted to them. If the Bill passed, several of the officers, such as the engineer and certain inspectors who had experience in the duties which devolved upon the Commissioners, would, automatically, go over to the Corporation, and clauses were, or would be, inserted in the Bill for that purpose. The hon. Member for Plymouth in the statement which had been circulated, said "The Corporation is unrestricted in its powers of borrowing or redeeming its debt." The Corporation was just in the same position as any other borrower. Its stock stood well in the market, and it looked well to see that there was always a safe margin in connection with any of its loans or in dealing with Corporation money. It was further set out in the statement, that

> "the only power of rating that the Corporation exercised is in connection with the City police. All other duties relating to the provisions of municipal government and functions now classed under the comprehensive title are carried on by the said Commission of Sewers under public statutes."

He ventured to traverse that statement. As a matter of fact, there was a rate levied called the Militia rate. The rates which were necessary to be imposed in connection with the requirements of the City were also levied and, therefore, the statement was quite misleading. He hoped that if the Speaker's ruling was asked he would rule that, as a private Bill constituted the Commission of Sewers, by a private Bill the Corporation might resume its exercise of those duties, and have control over its own committee.

Mr. ALBAN GIBBS (London) said this Bill dealt with a purely domestic matter concerning the arrangements of the Corporation of London. The Corporation thought, that as in these days so many duties were cast upon local authorities it would be better that these particular duties should be discharged by themselves, instead of as they were now by a body not elected by them, and whose nomination was revocable at will, so that they might be more directly responsible. The hon. Member for Islington said that certain duties were imposed upon these Commissioners by statute, and that if this Bill passed the Corporation would have no duties. If he would turn to Section 6 he would see that in every Act of Parliament giving any power or authority to either impose any duty or liability to the Commissioners it was provided that the Acts should be read and have effect as if the words "Common Council" were substituted for the words "Commissioners." He asked the House to pass this Bill, and then it could be examined by a Committee upstairs.

*SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT (Monmouthshire, W.) said he had always abstained from taking part in discussing private Bills in this House except when they had seemed to him to be matters really of public importance. There was, he thought, nothing more important to that House than to discriminate between the subjects of private Bill and public Bill legislation. He did not wish to regard the particular character of the Corporation of London except so far as it was necessary in considering the transfer of these powers. What was it this Bill proposed to do? Here was a body, the Corporation of London, which was under no statutory regulation. For the security of the ratepayers all other municipal bodies were regulated by Acts of Parliament, but the Corporation of London was not so regulated. It was now proposed to confer upon this body a number of powers it did not at present exercise, therefore those powers were not under the regulations which they would be under if they were given to the ordinary Corporation. That was all he wished to say upon the distinctive character of the Corporation of London. His hon. and learned Friend had referred to one of the most important of the regulations, that was to say, with reference to the making of contracts. They knew that of all things in the world that which was most liable to abuse by bodies of this character was the dealing with contracts. The right hon. Gentleman the Chairman of Committees said that the Commission of Sewers was created by a private Act. How did that affect the question? When the Commissioners of Sewers were constituted by a private Act they were placed under express restrictions for obvious public reasons. But they were now going to hand over this power to the Corporation of London without the restrictions which would be placed on any public body if it was under a statutory enactment. Could they conceive a more unfair, injudicious, and impolitic proceeding as regarded the public? They were going, in point of fact, to take away from the ratepayers, in a district of which the rateable value was £5,000,000, a security which existed in the body which now exercised those powers, restricted by the condition in question. They were about to give a premium upon these very transactions which had proved a scandal to bodies of this kind, by granting powers without the restrictions which were imposed upon every other municipal corporation. The fact that they were given by a private Act did not affect the question at all. If they were going to give these new powers to the Corporation of London, they should give them under the same public securities that were provided in the case of every municipal corporation. What they were about to do now was to convert the Corporation of London into a municipal corporation with all its powers but with none of its restrictions. The effect would be, by a side wind, in a private Bill—to give to a body dealing with this important area, all the powers of a municipal corporation, while absolving it from all the restrictions. This was a very serious matter, and it would not stop there. It was not a question of dealing with Corporations alone; it was dealing with a most fundamental principle of local government, and this would be a precedent to open the door to loose dealing with matters of this description. He would take it, if they liked, that the Commissioners of Sewers were a private body regulated by a private Act. That was perfectly true, but if they were going to take over these powers, which were regulated when in the hands of the Commissioners of Sewers, and hand them over to a body which would not be governed by a public Act, he did not know how far the regulation with reference to loans would go. The Corporation of London was not restrained at all by the rules which applied to other corporations with regard to the spending of public money. They were not under the Borough Funds clause, which required the consent of the ratepayers and so forth. The Commissioners of Sewers were acting under the Public Loans Act, under the Valuation (Metropolis) Act, 1869, under the Sanitary Acts, and the various Metropolitan Acts for local government, and they were going to transfer the powers of the Commissioners of Sewers to the Corporation without any of the securities which would be given in the case of every municipal corporation. It was said that, after all, the Commissioners of Sewers were merely a deputation from the Corporation, and that was thought to be a valid argument. But was not the Watch Committee of a municipal corporation much more distinctly a deputation, because they could not appoint anybody on the Watch Committee who was not a member of the Corporation, whilst here they might have the whole Commissioners of Sewers non-members of the Corporation. He thought it was an extremely improper thing to give the power asked for by a private Bill, and he did not see why the Corporation of London should have any reason to fear the action of this House dealing with the matter by a public Bill. He submitted that it would be much better that in matters of this kind the Corporation should proceed by a public rather than a private Bill.

*COLONEL HUGHES (Woolwich) said the argument of the hon. and learned Member for York, that this Bill should be a public Bill, was not illustrated by the case quoted, for the private Bill introduced some years since by the London County Council to amend the Valuation (Metropolis) Act, 1869, was held to be wrong, because the Act of 1869 was a public Act, whereas the Act now sought to be amended was a private Act. If the Commissioners of Sewers were agreeable to the transfer, as they were, and the Corporation of London preferred to take the responsibility, the amalgamation should be allowed. Every vestry transacted such business through a committee, and the Corporation should be allowed to do so, instead of as now leaving control of its business to a delegate authority. If any particular clause were objected to, that would be for the Committee of the House. The proposal was perfectly reasonable, and, although some Members, from hostility to the City, might raise objections, he trusted the Bill would be read a Second time, and the City thus be given the opportunity of proving the expediency of the change stated in the preamble.

The House divided:—Ayes, 204; Noes, 95.—(Division List, No. 23.]

DUBLIN CORPORATION BILL.

On the Order for the Second Reading of this Bill,

MR. W. JOHNSTON (Belfast, S.) moved—

"That it be an Instruction to the Committee on the Dublin Corporation Bill that, either by definition or enactment, they make provision for conferring on women the municipal franchise within the City of Dublin."

MR. TIMOTHY HARRINGTON (Dublin, Harbour) submitted that the Instruction of the hon. Gentleman was out of order. In the Bill which had now received the Second Reading there was no extension of the franchise, there was merely a provision for the registration of those already in possession of the franchise. He submitted that the Instruction of the hon. Member would be the repealing of a public statute by means of a private Bill.

*MR. SPEAKER said the Bill altered the register by enabling persons to get on the register on different terms to those on which they could previously be on it. Therefore, he thought that the Instruction was in order as an Instruction, although he thought an Instruction was required.

MR. JOHNSTON in moving the Instruction said it spoke for itself. They only proposed by it to give to the women of Dublin what the women of Belfast already possessed.

MR. HARRINGTON said he hoped the House would not treat the citizens of Dublin and the Corporation of Dublin so unfairly as to give its assent to this Instruction. It would be in the recollection of the House—

*MR. SPEAKER: If the hon. Member is opposing the Instruction it must go on to another day.

MR. HARRINGTON: I am opposing the Instruction. But I do not oppose a Division upon it this evening.

*MR. SPEAKER: That is not the question.

Debate adjourned; to be resumed upon Wednesday next.

LONDON COUNTY COUNCIL (GENERAL POWERS) BILL.

DR. FARQUHARSON (Aberdeenshire, W.) moved the Second Reading of this Bill.

*MR. J. G. WEIR (Ross and Cromarty) opposed the Bill on various grounds, among others that under the Bill it would be competent for jerry-builders (of whom there were far too many in and around London) to lease lands and put up structures which were attractive outside but insanitary and unhealthy, in consequence of there being no provision by the County Council to prevent damp by carrying off surface drainage. The London County Council were always coming to that House asking for additional powers, but he thought they should use the powers they had first before they sought to obtain more. He thought they would agree that it was not for London Vestries to take the initiative in this matter, but that the County Council should do so. [The hon. Member, who was heard with difficulty, owing to the conversation in the House, was understood to comment on the concrete used by jerry builders, which frequently consisted of crushed coke cinders, a little lime, and a sprinkling of Portland cement, and said that the County Council ought to see that builders and district surveyors carried out their duties.] He hoped that the hon. Gentleman in charge of the Bill would give some assurance that the surface drainage of houses on lands under the supervision of the County Council would be seen to.

MR. B. L. COHEN (Islington, E.) pointed out that the County Council had not powers at present to compel the local authorities to discharge their duties, assuming that they did not do so in regard to surface drainage. By their General Powers Act of 1893, they had powers as regarded low, flat, level lands to insist that the drainage should be properly looked after, and they had powers to appeal to a tribunal constituted by that Act. He did not think it would be opportune to attempt to introduce into this private Bill provisions for powers which had hitherto been confined to local authorities. He hoped his hon. Friend would be satisfied with this explanation, and with the statement that the subject in which he took an interest was not and would not be lost sight of.

Bill read a Second time, and committed.

QUESTIONS.

SCOTTISH UNIVERSITIES GRANT.

*MR. J. G. WEIR (Ross and Cromarty): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury if he will state how much of the annual grant of £42,000 to Scottish Universities is distributed to each University, and who determines how the money should be allocated to each University?

*THE LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. GRAHAM MURRAY, Buteshire): The grant of £42,000 is distributed to the Scottish Universities by ordinances of the Commissioners which have all been laid on the Table of this House and are therefore open to the hon. Member to refer to. The proportions of the grant are: St. Andrews (including the University College of Dundee), £6,300; Glasgow, £12,180; Aberdeen, £8,400; Edinburgh, £15,120; making a total of £42,000.

MILITARY WORKS (MONEY) BILL.

*MR. WEIR: I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for War whether he has yet considered the advisability of making provision in the Military Works (Money) Bill for the constructions of works for the protection of the north-west coast of Scotland?

*THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY TO THE WAR OFFICE (Mr. POWELL-WILLIAMS, Birmingham, S.): When the whole question of the defence of the United Kingdom was considered by the Joint Naval and Military Committee no proposal was made for the construction of works on the north-west coast of Scotland.

LEE-METFORD RIFLE (ROYAL NAVAL RESERVE).

*MR. WEIR: I beg to ask the First Lord of the Admiralty, whether the Lee-Metford rifle has been issued to the Royal Naval Reserve; and, if so, to what stations?

THE FIRST LORD OF THE ADMIRALTY (Mr. GOSCHEN, St. George's, Hanover-Square): The Lee-Metford rifle has only been issued to Her Majesty's drill ships *Medea* and *Medusa*, on board which Officers and men of the Royal Naval Reserve drill. This rifle will probably be issued to the remaining seven drill ships and all the Royal Naval Reserve batteries between June and December 1897.

WEST INDIAN SUGAR COMMISSION.

SIR CHARLES DILKE (Gloucester, Forest of Dean): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies whether the West Indian Sugar Commission contains among its members or commands the services of any person competent, by knowledge of modern improvements in manufacture, to advise upon the extent to which the machinery and the processes of manufacture prevailing in the British West Indian Islands are out of date?

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Sir MICHAEL HICKS BEACH, Bristol, W.), in the absence of Mr. CHAMBERLAIN: The Commission has no such actual specialist in machinery attached to it, but the question is one upon which the Commissioners will have no difficulty in obtaining expert evidence.

EXCHANGE COMPENSATION (DEPUTY POSTMASTER, BOMBAY).

SIR WILLIAM WEDDERBURN (Banffshire): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for India whether he will inquire from the Government of India why no reply has been sent to a memorial, dated 29th November 1895, from Mr. E. R. Jardine, Deputy Postmaster of Bombay, regarding his claim to exchange compensation; and whether he is aware that Mr. Jardine, on the ground of his English domicile, drew compensation up to 30th November 1894; that the compensation was then stopped without any reason being assigned; that Mr. Jardine's father possessed an English domicile, as holding Her Majesty's commission; and that his brother Mr. A. J. A. Jardine, District Police Superintendent in Burma, and Mr. W. F. Jardine, Assistant Collector of Salt in Bombay, whose status is exactly the same as his, are allowed, without objection, to draw their compensation allowance?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR INDIA (Lord GEORGE HAMILTON, Middlesex, Ealing): The subject of the grant of exchange compensation is, as stated by me on the 26th January, now under the consideration of the Secretary of State in Council. Until the Government of India receive his decision, which I hope, will be communicated very soon, on the many points that have been raised, they are not in a position to reply to individual memorials

PEISHWA'S ESTATE (BOMBAY PRESIDENCY).

SIR WILLIAM WEDDERBURN: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for India whether the additional evidence adduced in the appeal of the Desai of Jalihal, in the Bombay Presidency, including as it does the original title deeds and accounts of the Peishwa, has induced the Government to alter their original decision of resuming the estate; and whether he will lay all the Papers upon the Table of the House;

LORD GEORGE HAMILTON: The Government of Bombay, having considered the evidence to which the hon. Member refers, reported to me that they saw no reason why the previous decisions should be reversed. In this opinion, after considering the memorial which they forwarded, I concurred. If the hon. Member wishes to move for the Papers, I shall not oppose the Motion.

AGRICULTURAL BANK (INDIA).

SIR WILLIAM WEDDERBURN: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for India whether he is aware that in the year 1884 the Viceroy in Council submitted to the India Office a proposal for the establishment of an agricultural bank near Poona, as an effective means of relieving the heavily indebted ryots, which proposal received the hearty suppart of both ryots and money-lenders; that the Bombay Government was willing to conduct the experiment; that the Manchester Chamber of Commerce memorialised the Secretary of State in its favour; but that the Secretary of State, after long delay, ultimately withheld his sanction; and whether he will state for what reasons and upon what expert advice he refused to permit an experiment, unanimously recommended by the Government of India, as being advocated on purely disinterested grounds, and as likely to be of incalculable benefit to the whole country?

LORD GEORGE HAMILTON: I am aware of the discussions to which the Question draws attention. The reasons which induced the then Secretary of State to withhold sanction from the scheme to which the hon. Member refers are stated at length at pages 55–58 of the Papers presented to Parliament on the subject in 1887. When the Poona scheme was negatived the Government of India were invited to bring forward a revised scheme that would not be open to the same objection. A valuable report on agricultural banks in different parts of the world, with suggestions for action in India, has recently been prepared by an officer of the Madras Government. I am in hopes that a practical scheme for making a beginning with such banks may before long be brought forward. The question how best to mitigate and prevent the indebtedness of the Indian peasantry is one of the most important that the Governments in India could, in ordinary times, possibly consider.

RABIES (MR. M'GOVERN'S TREATMENT).

MR. J. C. FLYNN (Cork, N.): On behalf of the hon. Member for North Leitrim (Mr. PATRICK M'HUGH), I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that the Banbridge and Rathdrum Boards of Guardians have passed Resolutions calling on the Local Government Board of Ireland to institute an inquiry into the merits of the treatment of rabies by Mr. M'Govern, of Cavan; and, will he, as official head of the Local Government Board, and in view of the importance attached to this matter in Ireland, advise the Board to grant the inquiry asked for?

THE CHIEF SECRETARY FOR IRELAND (Mr. GERALD BALFOUR, Leeds, Central): Copies of the Resolution referred to have been received. In the year 1888 the Local Government Board were pressed to grant an inquiry similar to the one now asked for, and the Board stated that if Mr. M'Govern was willing to submit to the Medical Inspectors of Board the particulars of his alleged cure, together with a recipe of the medicine or preparation given to his patients the Board would direct such inquiry to be held. In reply, the Board were informed that the M'Governs could not disclose their remedy, which they declared they were bound to hold from father to son in their family. The Board then pointed out that no advantage could, under the circumstances, be obtained by holding such inquiry. It is obviously impossible for the Local Government Board for Ireland in any way to recognise the pretensions of persons who have no professional knowledge, but lay claim to the exclusive possession of medical secrets, and are unwilling to submit their methods of treatment to the examination of competent judges.

IRISH LIGHTS COMMISSIONERS.

MR. FLYNN: On behalf of the hon. Member for Dublin, St. Patrick's (Mr. W. FIELD), I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade whether he is aware that, in a letter from the secretary of the Irish Lights Commissioners addressed to the Chairman of the Committee of Inquiry into the Mercantile Marine Fund, it is stated that their Board has had the advice of three retired Naval Officers and of their Inspector, who is a master mariner of long standing, on all nautical points; whether he can furnish the names of the retired naval officers referred to, stating their rank when on the active list of the Royal Navy; and, whether he can state what grade is the certificate of competency held by their inspector, and what date he was examined for such certificate?

THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF TRADE (Mr. C. T. RITCHIE, Croydon): I am informed by the Commissioners of Irish Lights that the names of the retired naval officers mentioned in the letter referred to in the Question are as follows: Captain the Hon. F. G. Crofton, R.N., Commander Riall, R.N., Mr. Maurice Knight, R.N. Captain Crofton held the rank of Commander, and the other two the rank of Lieutenant when on the active list of the Royal Navy. The Commissioners state that their Inspector holds a certificate of competency as first mate granted in 1867.

MAIL CONTRACT (INDIA, CHINA, AND AUSTRALIA).

SIR JOHN LENG (Dundee): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury, as representing the Postmaster General, whether the contract for the conveyance of the mails to India, China, and Australia has now been arranged; and, if so, what rates of speed have been fixed, and what saving in time will be effected to Bombay, Hong Kong, and Melbourne?

THE SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY (Mr. R. W. HANBURY, Preston): The tenders which have been accepted contemplate a speed of 14½ knots on the line to and from India, 13¼ knots on the line to and from China, and 14 knots on the line to and from Australia. The time-table has not yet been settled, but it is anticipated that under the new contract, as compared with the old, the following will be the approximate saving in the time of transit of the mails from London: to Bombay, nearly two days; to Hong Kong, four days; to Melbourne, four days.

LAND COMMISSION (COUNTY KILDARE APPLICATIONS).

*MR. C. J. ENGLEDOW (Kildare, N.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland when the Land Commission are going to hold a Court in the County of Kildare to hear applications for the fixing of fair rents?

MR. GERALD BALFOUR: A list of cases arising in the County Kildare will, it is expected, be issued in the course of a week, but the date on which the hearing of these cases will be commenced has not yet been definitely fixed.

ROYAL BARRACKS (DUBLIN).

GENERAL RUSSELL (Cheltenham): I beg to ask the Financial Secretary to the War Office whether he will agree to the Return as to the sums spent on Royal Barracks (Dublin), which stands on this day's Paper?

*MR. POWELL-WILLIAMS said that a Return could be given showing the sums spent on the Royal Barracks, but that he could not pledge himself as to the details to be included in it.

IRISH MAILS.

MR. J. L. CAREW (Dublin, College Green): On behalf of the hon. Member for Londonderry (Mr. VESEY KNOX), I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury, as representing the Postmaster General, whether any proposal was placed before the London and North Western Railway Company by the Post Office for a night mail from Euston to Dublin, leaving at 8.20 and arriving in Dublin 25 minutes sooner than now proposed; whether he is aware that the usefulness of the largely increased expenditure on the service, so far as the Irish provincial towns are concerned, will be greatly lessened by the fact that the mail will leave London 25 minutes later than hitherto, a change for which there has been no public demand; and, whether, if the main obstacle in the way of the dispatch of the mails at 8.20 is the want of adequate sorting facilities at the Post Office, such facilities will be provided?

MR. HANBURY: No such proposal as that suggested by the hon. Member was placed before the Railway Company. Though the Irish Mail nominally leaves Euston at 8.20 p.m., it is necessarily detained at Crewe till after the arrival of the Special Post Office Train which carries the letters which it is impossible to dispatch from Euston at 8.20. Though, therefore, the Irish Mail Train leaves Euston at 8.20, a large part of the Irish Mail is not even now dispatched till 8.30 p.m. As the Special Post Office Train leaves Euston at 8.30 p.m., it is impossible to start the Irish Mail until after a sufficient interval for safety, and the London and North Western Railway Company consider that the interval should not be less than 15 minutes. Unless the hours of posting in London are modified, the latest dispatch with extra fee is 7.45 p.m. for the Eastern Central District and about 7.0 p.m. for the rest of London. No addition to the Sorting Force would admit of an earlier dispatch than 8.30.

MR. PATRICK O'BRIEN (Kilkenny): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury, as representing the Postmaster General, whether, under the contract made in 1860 for the conveyance of the Irish day mails between London and Holyhead, the Government took power to limit the use of those trains to the conveyance of mails and first and second class passengers to and from Ireland; is he aware that the London and North Western Railway Company use those trains for the carriage of third class passengers to and from London to Scotland, viâ Crewe, and from Chester and intermediate stations to London, and was the consent of the Post Office authorities asked and obtained by the Company to this practice; and, if so, at what date;

whether the Post Office authorities have powers under the old mail contract and the new contract now being arranged to prohibit the London and North Western Railway Company using the Irish mail trains for the carriage of third class passengers other than passengers to and from Ireland; and, if so, will they in the new contract compel the Company either to afford Irish passengers facilities for travelling third class on the Irish mail trains between London and Holyhead or else discontinue the carriage of third class passengers altogether on those trains; and, whether, before giving final sanction to the new mail time table, he will reconsider the question with the view of meeting the wishes of the Irish people who are most concerned?

MR. HANBURY: The Government took no power in the contract of 1859, which is, I presume, the one to which the hon. Member refers, to exclude third class passengers from or to convey them in the trains referred to between London and Holyhead. It is understood that the London and North Western Railway Company use the down day mail train for the conveyance of third class passengers for Scotland between London and Crewe, and the up day mail train for third class passengers for London from Chester and certain intermediate stations. It was not necessary for the Company to obtain the consent of the Post Office to this practice, and they did not apply for it. The Postmaster General's statutory powers for dealing with railway companies are confined to making arrangements for the conveyance of mails, and do not extend to making provision for the carriage of any particular class of passengers. In these circumstances, it is not expedient to attempt to introduce any provision into the new contract binding the Company in the manner suggested. The new mail time table, which has already been laid before the House, was drawn up with the view of meeting, as far as possible, the wishes of the Irish people, and it is regretted that the concession now asked is not practicable.

MR. J. SWIFT MACNEILL (Donegal, E.): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury, as representing the Postmaster General, whether his attention has been called to a Resolution, proposed by Mr. Stubbs, D.L., and seconded by Mr. R. Sweeny, J.P., unanimously passed at a public meeting held in the Court House, Ballyshannon, on the 3rd of February, Mr. John Daly, Chairman of the Town Commissioners, presiding, complaining of the inconvenience accruing to the inhabitants of Ballyshannon and the surrounding districts from the inadequate mail service, and urging that the present system of transmission of the mails by car between Bundoran Junction and Ballyshannon, a distance of upwards of forty miles is wholly inadequate; whether he is aware that letters for the night mail must be posted in Ballyshannon before 4.25 p.m., whereas the residents of other towns of minor importance can post letters up to 6 p.m., and 6.30 p.m. in some cases; and, whether regard being had to the fact that the agitation for an improved postal service in this district has been made the subject of repeated complaints to the postal authorities, and that the recent establishment by the Government of a rifle range and military camp for 2,000 men in the immediate locality will increase the mails, the Postmaster General will be able to take any steps for the establishment of a postal service by rail between Bundoran Junction and Ballyshannon?

MR. HANBURY: The Postmaster General has received a copy of the Resolution referred to. It is the case that, under existing arrangements, the latest hour of posting in Ballyshannon for the night mail is 4.25 p.m. The question of establishing a night mail service by railway to Ballyshannon has been considered more than once, but it has been found that the expense would be altogether disproportionate to the revenue available. The matter, however, is again being inquired into.

SLAUGHTER OF CATTLE (IRELAND).

MR. FLYNN: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether the Veterinary Department has the power to order the slaughter of cattle as diseased without a thorough examination; whether his attention has been called to a case of a tenant farmer, named Patrick Frawley, Lisgriffin, Buttevant, County Cork, who sold a cow on 28th October 1896, at Mallow, which was shipped with cattle from other districts, some of these cattle being found to be diseased; whether, upon an official from the Veterinary Department calling on Mr. Frawley a few days ago, the latter offered to pay the expense of an independent veterinary surgeon with the object of thorough and reliable inspection; and has the Veterinary Department power to authorise the wholesale slaughter of cattle in cases where independent inspection is called for.

MR. GERALD BALFOUR: The Veterinary Department has power to slaughter not only cattle known to be affected with pleuro-pneumonia, or suspected of being so affected, but also any cattle ascertained to have been in contact with affected cattle. In consequence of the occurrence recently of a serious outbreak of pleuro-pneumonia in London, the affected cattle, it is stated, having been imported from Cork, the Inspectors of the Irish Veterinary Department were at once instructed to restrict the movement in Ireland of cattle which were ascertained to have been associated with the animals shipped to London and among which disease was found to have existed. Among the cattle so traced and restricted are those belonging to Patrick Frawley, and in the event of the slaughter of his cattle compensation will be paid to him out of the moneys voted by Parliament for the suppression of pleuro-pneumonia. The diagnosis of this disease cannot with safety be allowed to depend exclusively on veterinary inspection of the living animal, as experience has shown that a conclusive decision in regard to the existence of disease in cattle exposed to infection can only be arrived at after slaughter and *post-mortem* examination. Ireland has happily been entirely free from pleuro-pneumonia since 1892, and it is obviously essential in the best interests of the Irish cattle trade that any ground for suspicion as to the existence of the disease should be promptly removed.

PATENT LAWS.

CAPTAIN PHILLPOTTS (Devon, Torquay): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade whether Foreigners can, by taking out a patent in England, prevent a process from being carried out in this country by others without any obligation on their part to exercise it here themselves so long as they keep the market supplied from abroad; whether he is aware that, in all other European countries, a patentee is bound to exercise his patent within those countries; whether he is aware that trades amounting to very large sums, amongst others in certain dyes, the product of coal tar, are foreign monopolies, prejudicial to British industries, in consequence of this state of the law; and if he will take steps in the interests of Home industries and Home labour to bring the Patent Laws of the United Kingdom into conformity with those of every other European country?

MR. RITCHIE: In reply to the hon and gallant Member I would refer him to Section 22 of the Patent Act 1883. He will see that that section prescribes a course of procedure where (*inter alia*) a patent is not being worked in the United Kingdom by reason of the default of a patentee to grant licences, and in the absence of any decision to the contrary. I am not satisfied that the law is not effectual as it now stands to meet the cases suggested in the Question.

CAPTAIN PHILLPOTTS asked the right hon. Gentleman if he would answer the last paragraph of the question?

MR. RITCHIE said he was satisfied that the law as it now stood was sufficient for his hon. and gallant Friend's purpose, and, therefore, he did not propose to do anything in the matter.

CASTLETON WESLEYAN SCHOOL.

MR. ALFRED HUTTON (York, W.R., Morley): I beg to ask the Vice President of the Committee of Council on Education whether the letter addressed by the Department to Mr. Matthews, of the Castleton Wesleyan School, dated 23rd December last, has been withdrawn?

THE VICE PRESIDENT OF THE COUNCIL (Sir JOHN GORST, Cambridge University): No, Sir. The Committee of Council are still awaiting the plans asked for by their letter of the 7th of January.

EDUCATION CODE (IRISH CERTIFICATED TEACHERS).

MR. ALFRED HUTTON: I beg to ask the Vice President of the Committee of Council on Education whether there is any intention of modifying the Code so as to allow teachers holding the Irish certificate to accept positions in English schools?

Sir JOHN GORST: Yes, Sir. Several modifications to that effect will be introduced into the new Code.

NAVAL SHIPWRIGHTS.

Mr. HUDSON KEARLEY (Devonport): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Admiralty whether the skilled shipwrights of the Navy are at present considerably below their proper strength, although special efforts have been made during the past few months at all the naval ports to induce entries; would he state what has been the result of these efforts; and whether, in consequence of the scarcity, a circular has recently been issued ordering the entry of a number of carpenters' crews, although that class was abolished a few years since?

The FIRST LORD of the ADMIRALTY: The Question of the hon. Member alludes, of course, to shipwrights who go on board ship, and has nothing to do with shipwrights employed in the dockyards. The large dimensions of the increase in the Navy have naturally occasioned an increased demand for almost every branch of the *personnel*, and here and there in very special branches it very naturally is difficult to bring up the numbers at once to the desired strength. In the case of the shipwrights, the temporary difficulty is in part due to the general and striking activity in the shipbuilding trade. It has been considered desirable to enter a limited number of carpenters' crews while shipwrights are not being entered in satisfactory numbers, and orders have been issued accordingly. The rating of carpenters' crews, although allowed to lapse in May, was re-established in June, 1891.

SCHOOL PREMISES.

Mr. ALFRED HUTTON: I beg to ask the Vice President of the Committee of Council on Education whether, in the case of a Voluntary School having been closed and the building rented by the managers to a School Board, the managers can then give notice to the Board to quit, and prevent them providing additional accommodation for the scholars accustomed to attend a Board School?

Sir J. GORST: I cannot answer hypothetical questions; but if the facts of any specific case are submitted to the Committee of Council they will be considered.

PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES.

Mr. FLYNN: On behalf of my hon. Friend the Member for Leitrim, N. (Mr. Patrick M'Hugh), I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury whether he will consider the advisability of reducing the price of the daily issues of the Parliamentary Debates, or of furnishing same gratis to Members applying for them?

Mr. HANBURY: The contract binds the contractor not to charge more than a shilling for each daily part, but it does not give the Government any power to interfere with the prices charged for the separate parts within that limit. As regards the proposal to supply the parts gratis to Members, I can only repeat what I said last August, when the same question was raised in Supply. There have already been several Debates as to the heavy expenditure incurred for printing, and, in view of the two Committees of 1888 and 1893, I do not think that the Government would be justified in making any further outlay in that direction.

CARLISLE GAOL (DEATH OF PRISONER).

Captain BAGOT (Westmoreland, Kendal): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether his attention has been called to the death of a prisoner, John Nelson, which occurred in Carlisle Prison on Tuesday, 2nd instant; whether, previous to Nelson's decease, the prison surgeon had made a report upon his condition, advising his immediate release on account of the serious state of his health; and, will he explain on what grounds the Prison Commissioners refused to grant his release?

*The SECRETARY of STATE for the HOME DEPARTMENT (Sir Matthew White Ridley, Lancashire, Blackpool): Yes, Sir, I am aware of the death of this prisoner. A report was received by me five days before it happened from the prison doctor, not, as the Question suggests, advising his immediate release, but stating that he was suffering from pernicious anæmia and might die soon. The prisoner was too ill to be removed to his home, which was thirty miles away; and as the workhouse infirmary was the only other place which could receive him, and death was in all probability inevitable, I came to the conclusion that it was better he should remain undisturbed in the prison infirmary. I should add that the prisoner had been received in prison only three weeks before under a long sentence for a serious offence and that the disease was in no way due to or aggravated by his confinement.

SCHOOL ACCOMMODATION (WIMBLEDON).

MR. CARVELL WILLIAMS (Notts, Mansfield): I beg to ask the Vice President of the Committee of Council on Education (1) whether the land required to supply the deficiency of school accommodation at Wimbledon has yet been bought, and the building plans approved by, or submitted to, the Education Department; (2) whether he is aware that, as the result of appeals extending over several months, only £2,136 has been promised towards the estimated expenditure of £7,150; and (3) whether, in view of this fact, and of the continued rapid increase of the population, the Department will, without further delay, give effect to the notice which expired on the 30th of November last?

SIR J. GORST: I am informed that the conveyance of the site for the new school is in course of completion, and that plans of the buildings will be submitted as soon as it is executed. I understand that the statement in paragraph 2 is correct; but the Schools' Committee have arranged to borrow £3,500 of the total sum required, and are confident that they will raise the remaining £2,000 without any difficulty. Under these circumstances, the Committee of Council see no reason at present to order the formation of a School Board.

Secretary for Home Department.

NATIONAL EDUCATION BOARD (IRELAND).

MR. JOHN DILLON (Mayo, E.), on behalf of the hon. Member for East Tyrone (Mr. P. C. DOOGAN), I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland if he is aware that at a largely attended meeting of the members of the Belfast National Teachers' Association, which was held in Rosemary Street Hall, Belfast, on Saturday last, under the chairmanship of Mr. Erskine, President of the Association, a resolution was adopted expressing their opinion that two or more practical teachers should occupy seats on the Board of National Education in Ireland, and urge on the Central Committee to give this question a prominent place at the next congress; and whether he will take any steps to have the views of this body of teachers carried into effect?

MR. GERALD BALFOUR: Copies of the Resolution have been received. The question is not one on which I should like to express an opinion without further consideration.

REGISTERED LETTER ENVELOPES.

MR. PATRICK O'BRIEN: I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury, as representing the Postmaster-General, whether he is aware that a letter weighing under half an ounce enclosed in a registered envelope, not registered properly in the office at Thomastown, Kilkenny, but posted in an ordinary letter box, and bearing a penny stamp, was made liable to a charge of fourpence on delivery; whether the Postmaster General is liable for the loss of valuable property if sent in an official registered letter envelope without the sender obtaining a receipt; and if not, on what grounds is a charge of fourpence made for a letter because it happens to be sent, duly stamped, in an envelope issued by the Department; and whether he will alter this rule?

MR. HANBURY: The Postmaster General has made inquiry into the particular case referred to by the hon. Member, and he finds that the envelope was posted almost immediately after the publication of the new regulations, and improperly charged through an oversight. The hon. Member is probably aware that prior to the issue of recent regulations the envelope improperly posted would be liable to a charge of 6d. viz., four times the registration fee less the 2d. paid on the envelope. The clerk dealing with the case seems actually to have made this charge in the first instance and corrected it, writing 4d. over the 6d. He should, as a matter of fact, have written 2d. The Postmaster General is not legally liable for the loss of any article sent by post, but he voluntarily undertakes to grant compensation in the case of letters, etc., which have been posted and registered in accordance with the rules. A fine is levied on letters marked "Registered" but improperly posted, to make the public careful to avoid placing temptation in the way of servants of the Department, and the Postmaster General is not prepared to abolish the rule.

MR. T. P. O'CONNOR (Liverpool, Scotland): On behalf of the hon. Member for Canterbury (Mr. HENNIKER HEATON), I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury, as representing the Postmaster General, whether a person having no stamp, but having a registered letter envelope for which he has paid twopence, and which bears a twopenny embossed stamp, may send a circular, or other bookpost matter of the prescribed weight, in such envelope, provided the envelope be left unfastened, without rendering the addressee liable to a fine of fourpence on delivery; and, if a fine is thereby incurred, whether he will explain what offence has been committed, or how the Department can be injured or defrauded by the use of an unfastened registered envelope as a cover for bookpost matter?

MR. HANBURY: Registered letter envelopes are sold for the convenience of the public in sending registered letters, and must not be used for any other purpose. If a registered letter envelope therefore is dropped into a letter box instead of being handed over a counter it must be assumed, whatever its contents, that it is intended for registration, and the ordinary fine will be exacted for its irregular posting. Regulations of this kind are made to facilitate the work of the Department, and if such suggestions as he puts forward in the Question were adopted, the work of the Department would be proportionately delayed with the effect of arresting the mails and casting indirectly inconvenience on the general public.

CABLE COMMUNICATION (BERMUDA TO JAMAICA).

GENERAL LAURIE (Pembroke and Haverfordwest): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies whether he is aware that the Government of the Dominion of Canada has offered a subsidy of £3,000, and the Government of Jamaica £2,000, towards the cost of the direct telegraph cable from Bermuda to Jamaica, viâ Turk's Island, and as he stated in April 1896 that he had no reason to think there are any insuperable constructive difficulties affecting such communication, whether the delay in granting the sanction of Her Majesty's Government is on account of inadequate financial support given, or whether there is any difficulty in consequence of the prior occupation of the West Indies by any other Company which controls the service between Jamaica and the other Islands; and whether he is aware that this Company has announced its intention to give up the service between the Islands if the direct cable to Jamaica should be laid, and that the Company proposing to lay and work the direct cable has expressed its willingness at once to connect the several Islands by cable, and maintain a satisfactory service at a much reduced rate. In putting his question General Laurie said he believed there was a slight error for which he was responsible. It was stated that the Government of Canada had offered a subsidy. He was informed they had the matter under consideration only.

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER: I believe that what the hon. Member states is the case. The Government of Canada are prepared to consider the matter; they have not got further than that. I have reason to believe that the Government of Canada are disposed to contribute to the cost of providing direct telegraphic communication between Bermuda and Jamaica, but I am not aware that they have offered a subsidy of £3,000 for that purpose. The Government of Jamaica have expressed their willingness to transfer to a company providing such communication the subsidy of £2,000 a year, which they now pay to the

Company which now provides telegraphic communication between that colony and the United Kingdom, viâ the United States and Cuba and Panama. In dealing with proposals which have been made for the construction and working of a cable between Bermuda and Jamaica Her Majesty's Government have been obliged to take into consideration not only financial questions, but the provision of communication between Jamaica and Her Majesty's other West Indian possessions. These questions have presented considerable difficulties, which have not yet been surmounted. I am not aware that the Companies to which I understand the hon. and gallant Member to refer in his last Question have committed themselves to the statements which he attributes to them.

PATTERN POST (RUBBER SAMPLES).

MR. T. P. O'CONNOR: On behalf of the hon. Member for Canterbury (Mr. HENNIKER HEATON), I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury, as representing the Postmaster General, under what authority the transmission of samples of rubber by British firms by pattern post has been absolutely prohibited within the last few days, on the ground that the odour of it is injurious to other correspondence or annoying to the officials, although such samples have been transmitted by post for 30 years without injury to the mails, and are still freely introduced from abroad and delivered in this country by the British postal authorities; is he aware that the rubber trade of Liverpool exceeds six millions sterling per annum, and that the fact that the prohibition of the posting of British samples has been to transfer that trade bodily into the hands of foreign manufacturers; whether he has been informed that by certain processes the odour of crude rubber is now largely got rid of, and that by packing the substance in a tin canister any remaining odour is entirely suppressed; and whether he will at once give directions that the said prohibition shall not apply to samples packed in air-tight canisters?

MR. HANBURY: The exclusion of crude rubber from the sample post was decided upon on the ground that it is the duty of the Post Office to protect the contents of the mails. By 47 and 48 Vict. c. 76 articles such as crude rubber which are likely to injure the other contents of the mails cannot be admitted to the Sample post. It is a necessary condition that samples must be packed in such a manner as to be easily withdrawn for examination, and this would of course be impossible in the samples packed in air-tight canisters. The prohibition applies equally to samples of crude rubber received from places abroad as to those posted in this country, and my hon. Friend is mistaken as to his facts. Neither is it the fact that such samples have been transmitted for 30 years without injury to the mails. In 1894 parcels containing crude rubber were forbidden to pass through the post, unless so packed as to render the smell imperceptible, but continued trouble has been given by the dispatch of these substances.

CORDITE EXPERIMENTS (WOOLWICH ARSENAL).

MR. H. LABOUCHERE (Northampton): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for War, with regard to the experiment carried out at Woolwich Arsenal, on the 2nd instant, with cordite, what were the exact weights of cordite, used, how were the packages constructed, and of what material or materials; how were the cases arranged, and at what distances apart; who suggested the experiment, and who authorised it; what was it intended to prove, what did it prove, and what were the exact results; and whether, in any of Her Majesty's ships having guns especially constructed for the use of cordite, any cordite is carried?

*MR. POWELL-WILLIAMS: It is neither desirable nor usual to give the details of experiments which are carried out for special purposes with warlike stores. The experiments on the 2nd instant were a series made at Woolwich with different amounts of cordite packed in wooden boxes, in metal-lined boxes, and metal cases. These experiments were made under the authority of the Inspector-General of Ordnance at the suggestion of the Committee on Dangerous Buildings, and were carried on under the supervision of the Ordnance Committee. The object was to ascertain what would be the result of cordite becoming ignited when stored under different conditions. The results of the experiments have so far afforded valuable information—[*laughter*]—and further experiments will take place with a view of determining points that have arisen in connection with the safe storage of cordite. Her Majesty's ships carry cordite charges.

MR. LABOUCHERE inquired whether the hon. Gentleman could tell them what the results of the experiments showed except the blowing up of a church. [*Laughter.*]

*MR. POWELL-WILLIAMS was informed that that was not one of the results. Perhaps it might be arranged that the hon. Member should be present at the next explosion. [*Laughter.*]

VACCINATION (PROSECUTIONS).

MR. J. W. LOGAN (Leicester, Harborough): I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board if he is aware that boards of guardians in various parts of the country are just now more than usually energetic in prosecuting persons who, having conscientious objections to vaccination, naturally conclude that some regard will be had to the recommendations of a Royal Commission, and are causing the homes of such persons to be broken up for the recovery of penalties; and if, in view of his declaration that no legislation on the subject can be attempted during the present Session, he will advise boards of guardians to suspend prosecutions under the Vaccination Law for the present?

THE PRESIDENT OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (Mr. HENRY CHAPLIN, Lincolnshire, Sleaford): It is the duty of boards of guardians to enforce the existing law in regard to vaccination, and the report of a Royal Commission in no way relieves them of that duty. I have no dispensing power, and I should not be justified in advising boards of guardians to take the course suggested by the hon. Member, namely, to advise boards of guardians to suspend prosecutions under the Vaccination Law for the present.

BRITISH SOUTH AFRICA COMPANY.

MR. THOMAS BAYLEY (Derbyshire, Chesterfield): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for War whether any accounts have been made out between the War Office and the Chartered Company (in payment of Imperial troops lent to the Chartered Company); what sums have been paid by the Company, and what amount is still owing in account by them; and, whether any payments made and sums due or estimated, or both, will appear in the Estimates; if not, in what Statement or accounts can they be found?

*MR. POWELL-WILLIAMS: It is known that considerable payments have been made in South Africa to the War Office account, but details cannot yet be given. In addition the Company have provided for the subsistence of the Imperial troops employed, besides meeting heavy charges for transport. The whole question of the claim to be preferred against the British South Africa Company is under consideration, but it is expected to be settled on this years' accounts, so that no provision in next year's Estimates was necessary.

MR. BAYLEY asked whether the hon. Gentleman could state the total amount that had been paid up to the present time?

*MR. POWELL-WILLIAMS said he could not do so, because the final accounts had not yet been received.

MR. PATRICK O'BRIEN: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies whether the Government has taken or intend to take any steps to procure the attendance for the purpose of examination before the South African Committee of this House of Messrs. Sampson and Davis, now imprisoned in Pretoria?

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER, replying in the absence of Mr. CHAMBERLAIN, said that the Question of the attendance of witnesses was in the hands of the Committee.

QUEEN'S REIGN (SOUTH KENSINGTON MUSEUM).

MR. MASSEY-MAINWARING (Finsbury, Central): I beg to ask the First Commissioner of Works whether, considering that the Prince Consort was the originator of the South Kensington Museum, and that the front of the building has never been completed, although numerous plans have been prepared, he will endeavour to induce the Treasury to provide the necessary funds by a supplementary Estimate to complete the front in commemoration of Her Majesty's Diamond Jubilee?

THE FIRST COMMISSIONER OF WORKS (Mr. AKERS-DOUGLAS, Kent, St. Augustine's): This question was carefully considered by the Treasury within the last few weeks in connection with the Estimates for 1897–98, when it was decided that the necessary funds could not be found. I do not think that under these circumstances it is of any use my applying to them to do so by means of a supplementary Estimate.

NEWBLISS PETTY SESSIONS.

MR. MACALEESE (Monaghan, N.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland (1) how many magistrates there are in the Newbliss Petty Sessions; (2) have those magistrates held any meetings to consider the wisdom of holding their Court of Petty Sessions in an Orange Lodge; (3) what are the names of those magistrates, and how did they individually vote in this matter; (4) was there a majority of them in favour of removing the Petty Sessions Court from the Orange Lodge; and (5) what prevented the carrying out of their decision?

MR. GERALD BALFOUR: There are twelve magistrates appointed to attend the Newbliss Petty Sessions. The Court of Petty Sessions is not held in an Orange Lodge as alleged in the second paragraph, but in one room of many, in a building which is private property, and this room is rented by the Grand Jury as a Public Justice Room. On Thursday last I informed the hon. Member that the occupation of this room on a certain date in July 1896, by the members of an Orange Lodge has been brought under the notice of the magistrates by the Lord Chancellor, and I also stated the views of the magistrates in reference to the occurrence. I have no information regarding the third and fourth paragraphs and as to the last paragraph I can only repeat what I have again and again explained, that the question of providing accommodation for the use of the Justices in Petty Sessions rests entirely with the Grand Jury over whose action the Government exercise no control.

CRETE.

MR. FLYNN: I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether the Foreign Office are in possession of authentic information respecting the position of the Vali in Crete; whether his authority as Governor General of the island has been practically superseded and the Turkish troops act under the sole command of the Military Governor; and what steps, if any, have been taken by the representatives of the Powers to restore the authority of the Vali?

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS (Mr. G. CURZON, Lancashire, Southport): Under the scheme of reforms sanctioned by the Sultan in August last, the Turkish troops were placed at the disposal of the Vali, in the event of disturbance. His power in this respect does not appear to have been questioned since; and no steps accordingly have been taken to restore an authority which has not, so far as we are aware, been impaired.

CHRISTIAN POPULATION AT HALEPA.

MR. FLYNN: I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs what information the Foreign Office can give the House regarding the position of the Christian population in and around Halepa; and, whether the Mussulman population have been armed and encouraged to acts of lawlessness by the Turkish authorities?

MR. CURZON: A few days ago Her Majesty's Consul reported that 700 armed Christians were on the heights above Halepa, and an unknown number of Christians to the westward. The embarkation of Christians from Halepa does not seem to have met with any interference on the part of the Mussulmans. The general tenour of the reports indicate that in this neighbourhood the Christians were rather the assailants than the attacked, and the British Naval Commander reported on the 7th of February that an agreement had been made that they should not advance further. No information has been received showing that the Turkish authorities have armed the Mussulmans or encouraged them to lawless acts. A Mussulman mob attacked the Arsenal at Candia and possessed themselves forcibly of 2,000 rifles; two Turkish soldiers were killed and five wounded during the assault. But the town has since been reported to be quiet.

ST. ANDREW'S SCHOOL, WILLESDEN.

MR. J. H. YOXALL (Nottingham, W.): I beg to ask the Vice-President of the Committee of Council on Education whether his attention has been called to the fact that at the public elementary school of St. Andrew's, Willesden, another assistant master is threatened with dismissal by the vicar, because the assistant master declines to relinquish his post of organist at another parish church in order to attend the church of St. Andrew; whether in view of the fact that the managers of the said school received some £1,200 of public money during the year last reported on by the Education Department, any steps can be taken by the Department to prevent the threatened dismissal; and, whether if the Department does not at present possess the requisite powers to redress abuses of management, he will take the necessary steps to obtain them?

SIR J. GORST: The Committee of Council have received no information on the subject; but, as I have frequently stated, the Committee of Council have no power to interfere in the contracts made by the managers and teachers of elementary schools, and do not see how it would be possible for them to exercise such a power.

INDIAN FAMINE.

SIR WILLIAM WEDDERBURN: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for India whether he will request the Viceroy, in his usual weekly telegram stating the number of persons on relief, also to include the number of deaths due to the famine in each of the affected districts; and, whether he has ascertained by telegraph the number of deaths due to famine in the Central Provinces?

LORD GEORGE HAMILTON: As I informed the hon. Member on the 5th inst., it is not possible to associate with the telegrams describing the weekly progress of relief operations and the numbers receiving relief any statistics relating to mortality for the same period. An interval of time must elapse between the period to which vital statistics in India refer and their receipt in this country. In a Dispatch (see page 176 of the Blue-book on Famine) I anticipated the hon. Member's request by asking for:—

> "The earliest possible information of any considerable rise of the death-rate above normal, and also a periodical report of continued mortality of an unusually high rate in any province."

I have also requested the Government of India to let me know the total number of deaths from all causes in the Central Provinces in 1896 as soon as the statistics are available.

VOLUNTARY SCHOOLS BILL.

COLONEL MILWARD (Warwick, Stratford-upon-Avon): I beg to ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer whether the sum represented by 5s. per head for every child in average attendance in Voluntary Schools will be paid for the whole of the financial year 1897-8; whether such sum will be paid in respect of every school, whether its school year ends before or after the Bill receives Royal Assent, and the necessary machinery for distribution is set up; and whether it will be possible to pay the aid grant quarterly, as is now done in the case of the fee grant?

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER said the sum represented by 5s. per head for every child in average attendance in Voluntary Schools would be paid for the whole of the financial year 1897-98. The date of the school year would not affect the distribution of the grant. It would probably not be possible to pay the aid grant quarterly (certainly not during this first year), but the question would be further considered after the necessary machinery had been set up.

RATING COMMISSION.

MR. T. R. BUCHANAN (Aberdeenshire, E.): I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board whether the Rating Commission has begun its sittings; and, what progress has been made in its work?

MR. CHAPLIN: I am informed that the Commission met in the autumn, and decided upon the character of the information it was desirable to secure from certain public departments and public bodies. They appointed a Committee to arrange the precise form in which the information should be obtained, and to communicate with the public departments and public bodies concerned. The information required being largely composed of statistics, has taken the various Government departments a considerable time to prepare, but it is nearly complete; and regular sittings to hear witnesses have been arranged, and will commence at an early date.

CIVIL SERVICE ESTIMATES (SUPPLEMENTARY).

MR. BUCHANAN: I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury when the Supplementary Civil Service Estimates will be issued?

MR. HANBURY: The usual date for sending in these Estimates to the Treasury is the middle of February, and whether Parliament meets early or late the Departments cannot be expected to ascertain their requirements before that date, as even then there are six weeks left of the current financial year. I hope to issue them next week.

SOLDIERS' EFFECTS FUND.

MR. KEARLEY: I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for War whether his attention has been directed to the failure on the part of the Commissioners of the Royal Patriotic Fund, as disclosed by the Report of the Select Committee, to administer the "Soldiers' Effects Fund," formed from the unclaimed balances of soldiers' effects transferred by the War Office to the Patriotic Fund Commissioners from time to time; whether he is aware that since 1884 the funds in the hands of the Commisioners have been allowed to accumulate from £44,182 to £134,333, and that from the income of £4,830 in 1895 the Commissioners expended in relief £1,060 only, although the corpus of the fund is being added to continuously by further sums arising from soldiers' unclaimed effects; and, whether, in view of the fact that urgent cases of destitution among widows, children, and dependent relatives of soldiers who have lost their lives in performance of Military duty are frequently brought to the attention of the War Department, he will consider the advisability of recommending to Her Majesty that the Soldiers' Effects Fund for the future should remain under the control and be distributed as formerly by the War Department?

*MR. POWELL-WILLIAMS: When the balance of the "Soldiers' Effects Fund" was transferred in 1884 to the Commissioners of the Royal Patriotic Fund, it was anticipated that, with short service, the source whence it is replenished would be much diminished, and in that view the Commissioners were informed that the fund should not be appropriated to provide allowances for widows other than those of men on war service, actual campaigns being at that time in progress. The remainder of the fund was to be kept in hand to meet any extraordinary demand which might arise. Further instructions were issued in 1887 modifying this restriction, and it is believed that in consequence all the widows of men who have lost their lives in the performance of military duty have been relieved by the Commissioners. Instructions conveying further modifications in the same direction are being issued to the Commissioners, but there is no intention of removing the distribution of the fund from them.

ESSEX ASSIZES (TRIAL OF W. WALDEN).

MR. PATRICK M'HUGH (Leitrim, N.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether he will cause an official inquiry to be made into the allegation that William Walden, who was tried and acquitted at the last Essex Assizes, was nearly starved in prison while awaiting his trial, and that, during his detention he was not allowed to see any newspaper with an account of his case in it?

*SIR MATTHEW WHITE RIDLEY: I have not seen or heard of any such allegation. The prisoner received the ordinary diet of prisoners awaiting trial, and when asked if he wished to spend on food any of the money he received from his friends replied "No." Nor were any of the newspapers sent to him withheld, with the exception of two which contained an account of the inquest on his brother, and the comments in which might, it was thought, be painful to him.

EDUCATION (IRELAND).

MR. W. FIELD (Dublin, St. Patrick's): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether the Government intend to amend the Compulsory Education Act, 1892, and whether it is intended to make the Act effectual to insure attendance, and to provide primary, technical and agricultural education in Ireland, especially in view of the fact that the United States Senate has passed a law against the admission of illiterate immigrants into the United States?

MR. GERALD BALFOUR: I introduced a Bill last year with the object of amending the Irish Education Act of 1892, and I am ready to introduce a Bill this year embodying those clauses of last year's Bill which were intended to remedy the acknowledged defects in the Act of 1892, provided I receive an assurance that such a Bill would be treated as non-contentious. If, however, it were treated as a contentious Measure and made the battleground for fighting the questions connected with the exclusion of the Christian Brothers' and other schools from the benefits of the national system, it would be impossible for the Government to ask the House to spend over it the time that would be necessary to pass it into law.

MR. JOHN DILLON (Mayo, E.): asked whether the Government had definitely abandoned the intention of settling the claims of the Christian Brothers?

MR. GERALD BALFOUR: Oh, no Sir.

PRIVATE BILL LEGISLATION.

MR. FIELD: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether he can state at what time it is intended to bring in the Bill to amend the existing system of Private Bill Legislation; and whether he is aware that there is a practical unanimity amongst all classes of Irishmen asking for its immediate amendment.

MR. GERALD BALFOUR: I believe there is a considerable volume of opinion entertained among the various classes in Ireland in favour of an amendment of the existing system of Private Bill legislation. On the general question, however, I cannot add anything to the statement in Her Majesty's Speech at the opening of the present Session of Parliament.

LAND COMMISSION COURT (BALLYMENA).

MR. J. PINKERTON (Galway): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland if he is aware that a considerable number of land cases were heard before the Sub-Commission Court in Ballymena on 5th November 1896, and that no decisions have yet been given; and if he can explain the reason why these decisions have been so long delayed?

MR. GERALD BALFOUR: The Land Commissioners report that the decisions in the cases referred to will be given at an early date.

LOCAL TAXATION (IRELAND).

MR. DILLON: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, what is the amount of money paid to the Local Taxation (Ireland) Account under the Local Taxation (Ireland) Estate Duty Act of 1896; and to what purposes the Government intend that this money shall be devoted?

MR. GERALD BALFOUR: It is not possible at the present time to make an exact statement of the amount payable to Ireland, and I am not yet in a position to state the purposes to which the Government propose to allocate the money in Ireland.

MARSHALL'S CHARITY (NORFOLK).

MR. T. L. HARE (Norfolk, S.W.): I beg to ask the hon. Member for Thirsk and Malton, as a Charity Commissioner, why the Charity Commissioners do not proceed to apportion Marshall's Charity, at Welney, Norfolk, in accordance with the application of the parish council, who desire to appoint trustees?

MR. GRANT LAWSON (York, N. R., Thirsk): This Charity is applicable to purposes partly ecclesiastical, partly eleemosynary, and partly those of an Elementary School. The Commissioners could apportion between the ecclesiastical part and the rest of the Charity, if that would give effect to the Local Government Act 1894, and enable the parish council to appoint trustees, but this is not the case. Before they can do so it is necessary, having regard to Section 66 of the Parish Councils Act, to separate eleemosynary from the educational part of the Charity, and the Act gives no power to do this. I understand that a Bill will be introduced by Members on both sides to remedy this state of things, which has caused disappointment in many parishes. Until that Bill is passed the Commissioners cannot give the parish councils representation on any part of these mixed trusts—except by way of scheme, and the trustees in this case have not made the necessary application.

EDUCATION GRANT (SCOTLAND).

MR. THOMAS SHAW (Hawick Burghs): I beg to ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer whether he is now able to state approximately what is the amount of the additional grant proposed to be given for educational purposes in Scotland?

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER: I have nothing, and shall not have anything, to add to the statements I have already made on this subject. I have said that in my opinion it cannot be dealt with on the basis of an equivalent grant, but that, if the Voluntary Schools Bill becomes law, fair consideration will be given to providing for the educational requirements of Scotland. Any questions as to the nature of that provision should be addressed not to me, but to the Lord Advocate; but I do not suppose they could be answered until the consideration of the English Bill is completed.

ARMY RETIRED PAY.

MR. ARTHUR O'CONNOR (Donegal, E.): I beg to ask the Financial Secretary to the War Office whether the limit imposed by the Treasury on the amount of the just equivalent under Article 978 xiii. of the Royal Warrant of the 18th June 1884 affected Engineer Officers of the regimental rank of Lieutenant Colonel; and, if so, how many; and, if only one, what was his name?

***MR. POWELL-WILLIAMS**: The limit referred to affected thirty-one regimental Lieutenant-Colonels of Royal Engineers.

LAND COMMISSION (KING'S COUNTY).

MR. CAREW: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland when is it likely a Sub-commission will sit in Edenderry, King's County, for the hearing of the land cases listed in the district; and, is he aware that a Commission has not sat there for two years, and that there is a considerable nnmber of cases awaiting a hearing?

MR. GERALD BALFOUR: It is probable that a list containing cases arising in the district referred to will be issued in the course of the coming month. A Commission last sat for the disposal of cases in the Edenderry Union in March 1895. All cases then outstanding were disposed of. There are now 36 cases awaiting a hearing.

FINANCIAL RELATIONS INQUIRY (GREAT BRITAIN AND IRELAND).

MR. DILLON: I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether he is now in a position to state to the House the terms of reference to the Royal Commission on the Financial Relations between Great Britain and Ireland which the Government propose to appoint?

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR, Manchester, E.): The Resolution to which the right hon. Gentleman refers was necessarily passed in ignorance of the terms of the reference to the proposed Commission, and, though I should not like to question its authority, it is a decision come to on very imperfect information. The actual terms of reference which we propose are as follows: (1.) To inquire and report how much of the total expenditure which the State provides may properly be considered to be expenditure common to England, Scotland, and Ireland, and what share of such common expenditure each country is contributing after the amount expended on local service has been deducted from its true revenue.

(2.) How the expenditure on Irish local services which the State wholly or in part provides compares with the corresponding expenditure in England and in Scotland—[*Cheers*]—and whether such Irish expenditure may with advantage be readjusted or reduced. (3.) Whether when regard is had to the nature of the taxes now in force, to the existing exemptions, and to the amount of expenditure by the State on local services, the provision in the Act of Union between Great Britain and Ireland with regard to particular exemptions or abatements calls for any modification in the financial system of the United Kingdom. [*Cheers.*]

SUGAR REFINING INDUSTRY (UNITED KINGDOM).

SIR THOMAS SUTHERLAND (Greenock): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury if he is aware that the sugar refining business of this country has dwindled to such an extent that the output in 1896 was only 712,000 tons compared with 916,000 tons in 1888, whilst the import of foreign refined sugar has risen during the same period from 344,000 tons to 729,000 tons; and, whether Her Majesty's Government will consider the propriety of causing an inquiry to be made into the operation of the bounties granted by Foreign Powers with the view, if possible, of arresting the further decline of the refining industry in this country, simultaneously with the separate investigation which is now being made with regard to the sugar growing interests of the West Indies?

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY: In answer to my hon. Friend I have to say that the figures supplied to me by the Board of Trade do not quite agree with those in the question, but there is, I believe, no doubt that the industry referred to is in a very depressed condition. I think, however, any special inquiry into it, if it should be decided that such inquiry should ever take place, should at all events be reserved until we know the results of the inquiry of the Commission now sitting.

PROSECUTION OF MR. IVORY.

MR. PATRICK O'BRIEN: I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether the Government intend to compensate Mr. Ivory (*alias* Bell), a citizen of the United States of America, who was recently imprisoned for four months in London; have the Government received any communications from the United States Government relative to the question of compensation to Mr. Ivory; and, what amount of compensation is claimed, and what amount do the Government propose to give?

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY: No communication on this subject has been received by Her Majesty's Government from the United States, and I am informed by my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State that it would be entirely contrary to the established practice to admit any claim for compensation in such a case as this.

QUEEN'S REIGN (NATIONAL HOLIDAY).

SIR JOHN LUBBOCK (London University): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether the Government would take into consideration the desirability of establishing a National holiday in commemoration of Her Majesty's long and auspicious reign?

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY: I believe that in 1887, the year of the Jubilee, there was a Bank Holiday provided under the existing statute, and we should propose to follow the precedent then set, in the present year. [*Cheers.*]

SIR JOHN LUBBOCK: I should like to ask the right hon. Gentleman if the Government will not consider whether they should continue that holiday in the future and make it a permanent holiday. [*Cries of* "No!"]

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY: That opens a very difficult and much larger question. I hardly think that would be desirable. ["Hear, hear."]

NECESSITOUS BOARD SCHOOLS.

MR. LABOUCHERE: I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether the Bill authorising an aid grant to necessitous Board Schools is drafted; and whether he will introduce this Bill with a view to its being read a First time and in the hands of Members before a division is taken on the Second Reading of the Voluntary Schools Bill, in order that Members may be in possession at once of the contemplated intentions of the Government both in regard to Voluntary Schools and of Board Schools?

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY: I do not think any advantage would be gained by introducing this Bill before we have disposed of the Measure dealing with the Voluntary Schools now before the House.

MR. LABOUCHERE: The right hon. Gentleman has not answered the first part of my question.

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY: The Bill is quite ready to be brought in as soon as a proper opportunity offers. (*Opposition laughter.*)

LAW OF EVIDENCE (CRIMINAL CASES) BILL.

MR. J. LLOYD MORGAN (Carmarthen, W.): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether the Government intend to move the Second Reading of the Law of Evidence (Criminal Cases) Bill before they take the Committee stage of the Education Bill?

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY: I can give no definite answer to this question, but in view of the immediate business before the House I do not think it very likely that an opportunity will be found in the course of next week, but I should not like to pledge myself on the point.

LAND TAX.

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER, replying to Mr. GRANT LAWSON said: The Land Tax Commissioners, in distributing the fixed quota among the unexonerated properties in a parish, are not bound to take the Income-Tax assessment, or the ratable value, or any other particular valuation as the basis of distribution. They are free to take any basis, as long as they distribute the charge, in the words of the original Land Tax Acts, "with as much equality and indifference as possible." [*Laughter.*] But, where relief is claimed under Section 31 of the Finance Act 1896, which provides that the land-tax in any parish shall not exceed 1s. in the pound on the annual value of the unexonerated lands in that parish, the "annual value" referred to is, as defined by the interpretation clause of the Act, the Income-Tax assessment. As there seems to be much misapprehension on the subject, I have instructed the Commissioners of Inland Revenue, before the next land-tax assessments are made, to issue a circular to the land-tax authorities explaining the provisions of the law. ["Hear, hear."]

VOLUNTARY SCHOOLS BILL.

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY rose to move:—

> "That the several stages of the Voluntary School Bill have precedence of all Orders of the Day and Notices of Motions on every day for which the Bill is appointed."

The right hon. Gentleman said: Quite apart from the Notice standing on the Paper, I should imagine the House fully expected and, on the whole, approves of the course which the Government find themselves obliged to take on the present occasion. I think it was in answer to a question put to me by the learned Member for Louth, at a very early period of the Session, that I stated that the Government did not propose, as had been reported, to take all the Wednesdays up to Easter, but that no doubt we should feel ourselves obliged, when once the proceedings on the Education Bill had commenced, to propose that the successive stages of the Bill should be taken continuously until each was finished. That obviously is the most convenient plan, and a plan which has been adopted by successive Administrations in dealing with Bills of this important character. Though I admit this will, of course, inflict hardship on private Members which I would gladly avoid, I do not see how I can possibly do so consistently with the general interest of the business of the House and of the great mass of Members belonging to the House. ["Hear!"] I am sanguine enough to think that the Bill is of so simple a character that it need not occupy any very prolonged period, and if that forecast proves to be accurate the sacrifice on the part of private Members will be extremely trifling. If, on the other hand, hon. Gentlemen think they would not be fulfilling their duty to their constituents without discussing the Bill at great length, then I admit the hardship to private Members will be increased considerably, and private Members will be the first to admit that the necessity for pursuing the course we propose is forced upon us by the action of the Opposition. [" Hear, hear ! " *and* " Oh, oh ! "] On that hypothesis, I mean. I am afraid these objections come from hon. Gentlemen who have not followed me. If, I say, the period of time taken for the successive stages of the Bill proves to be brief, then the sacrifice on the part of private Members will be small, but if that period is prolonged, the necessity for asking for further privileges for Government business stands manifest in the eyes of everybody. [" Hear, hear ! "] Under the circumstances I hope the House will feel that in doing what every Government has found it necessary to do, we are doing that which the interests of the House, the interests of the country, the interests of legislation in connection with Voluntary schools, and the interest of the general legislation of the Session alike require, It is with some confidence I ask the House to accept this Motion, reminding hon. Members of what I have before stated, that, although it is not absolutely necessary that the Bill should come into operation at a given moment of a given day, it is in the highest degree desirable from the point of view of the Voluntary Schools that it should pass into law as soon as possible, so that the fullest time may be given for those organisations to spring into existence on whose work so much of the success of the Bill must, in my judgment, depend. I will not argue this further or I shall be launching into Debate more proper to the Second Reading than to this preliminary notice, but I thought it necessary to remind the House in the general interest of the work of the Session, and of the interest of education in Voluntary Schools, this Measure should be placed on the Statute-book without any unnecessary delay. I do not think it necessary to say more, and now I ask you, Sir, to put the Motion from the Chair.

MR. JAMES LOWTHER (Kent, Thanet) said before the House adopted this Motion, it would be well to consider, without at all going into the merits or demerits of the Bill to be affected by the Motion, the position the House occupied in regard to its Standing Orders. It was very possible those Standing Orders were not absolutely perfect, he was perfectly willing to admit that, but while those Standing Orders remained to guide the proceedings of the House, some attempt ought to be made to conform to them. What a good many Members complained of was that they did not know from day to day what the order of business would be. [" Hear, hear ! "] What took place last Session certainly did not tend to regularise the conduct of business, and a condition of Parliamentary anarchy might be said to have prevailed. [" Hear ! "] It was the law of the strongest. The Standing Orders prescribed one class of business for a particular day, but the law of the strongest interposed and that day was taken away for purposes which, whether good or bad, were not the purposes contemplated in the Standing Orders of the House. The House might very well consider how far it was conducive to business that its Orders should remain to be violated from day to day. Whether private Members should have the right to make Motions at all was a matter for the House to consider. Some hon. Members thought such Motions a nuisance which should be put down. [" Hear, hear ! "] His right hon. Friend behind him with a large Parliamentary experience emphatically endorsed that idea. Others said that Bills introduced by private Members were for the most part advertisements for the purpose of ventilating " fads," and to glorify Members who advocated those Bills, and he was not prepared very loudly to contradict that opinion, but what he did say was, that the House ought to establish some reasonable code of rules and orders, and when established these should be adhered to. [" Hear, hear ! "] What had happened this Session in regard to Tuesdays, which, according to Standing Orders should be set apart for Motions? The very first Tuesday, he would not say whether rightly or wrongly, was allocated to another purpose, and after one Tuesday had been used for the purpose contemplated in the Standing Orders, probably for the rest of the Session or nearly so, those days would be diverted from the purpose contemplated in the Orders. The House had been told that if these Tuesdays were given up, Members would still find opportunities for bringing on subjects in which they were interested on the details of Supply. Now, whatever the merits or demerits of the rule in regard to Supply, which he was bound to admit had in many respects worked uncommonly well, it did not fulfil all the purposes, for there were many questions it was perfectly impossible to raise on Fridays in connection with the Votes in Supply. He would not go into detail, but under the rules of Debate, rightly interpreted by the Chairman of Committees, many questions which were legitimate subjects for discussion in the House had been ruled not within the four corners of any single Vote, and could not, therefore, be discussed. So much for Tuesdays and Fridays. Then they were told that any question of real urgency could be discussed under Standing Order No. 91 on a Motion for Adjournment. But what happened was well known. A rumour obtained currency that such an intention existed, and a Notice made its appearance on the Paper effectively precluding the intended course from being taken. Of course, he would not be in order in referring to Standing Order No. 91 in detail, but he thought when the Government took away from the great body of the House, that was all the non-official Members, facilities which the Standing Orders placed within their reach, they had a right to ask whether some modification should be made in the Rule governing the right of Members to call attention to matters of urgent public importance. A blocking Notice, perhaps inspired from interested quarters might preclude discussion, and the obstacles to the free ventilation of grievances concerned every Member. He thought some alteration might reasonably be made under which the Speaker should be judge of the desirability and fitness of the subject proposed for Debate. Some concession of this kind might go some way to accommodate Members for this huge encroachment on the rights and privileges they had hitherto enjoyed. On the present proposal he would not follow the right hon. Gentleman into the merits of the Bill, and he was rather trespassing on delicate ground when he spoke of the urgency of the Bill. He assumed the matter was urgent. Every Government thought every Bill it brought forward of great importance and urgency, and his right hon. Friend found a reason for the course he proposed in the fact that all Governments had done the same thing, and within recent years had asked for similar facilities. But where was this to end? Were non- official Members simply to be converted into cog-wheels in a law-making machine? Were they to maintain the position of the House as the grand inquest of the nation, or were matters of urgent importance to be tabooed and no convenience to be consulted but that of the Government? This it would be well for the House to consider when once more the opportunities for private Members were annexed for an indefinite time. They would perhaps be told that this was only to last perhaps for a few days, that if the House behaved well and did as the Government wished that even next Tuesday would be at the disposal of Members, and that with a moderate amount of good behaviour even Wednesdays would be left at the disposal of Members who had been fortunate enough to obtain days for their Bills, but he asked the House to consider whether it was desirable that the condition of affairs last year, which he referred to as absolutely chaotic, should be perpetuated.

Mr. LOUGH said that this discussion might have been shortened, or altogether obviated, if the right hon. Gentleman had not put down the Second Reading of the Education Bill for such an early day. The country had not had time to understand the Bill.

*Mr. SPEAKER: The hon. Gentleman is not in order in discussing the question whether the Bill should have been postponed or not.

Mr. LOUGH said that the Bill was a very complicated Measure. But his chief objection to the present Motion was that it was the most drastic of its kind ever submitted to the House. The right hon. Gentleman took precedence for the Bill in all its stages; he might have held out hope that, with fair progress in the earlier stages, consideration would be shown to private Members when the later stages were reached. He hoped the Bill would not be put down on every day in the week. The right hon. Gentleman had not mentioned Tuesdays, but, of course, that priceless possession of private Members went by the board with the Wednesdays. The right hon. Gentleman would have shortened discussion by adopting a more conciliatory tone, and leaving to private Members some shred of those ancient rights which the right hon. Gentleman had so often defended.

Mr. J. SAMUEL (Stockton) said that he had charge of the Steam Engines and

Boilers (Persons in Charge) Bill, which was down for Wednesday next. He hoped that that day would be excluded from the Resolution. This Bill had been introduced for many years, and in 1895 it obtained a Second Reading. It was regarded with the deepest interest by a large section of the working classes, and last year the Trade Union Congress unanimously passed a resolution in favour of the Bill.

Mr. HENRY SETON-KARR (St. Helens) said he did not desire to delay the progress of the Education Bill, but he could not approve or support the Government's Motion. He had secured in the ballot Tuesday fortnight for the question of our National Food Supplies; and he should like to have an assurance that that date would be exempted from the Resolution. The right hon. Gentleman said that he did not anticipate that the Education Bill would take long to discuss. If so, this Motion was quite unnecessary; and if the Bill were to be obstructed, the Government ought to wait till the obstruction had declared itself before proposing such a Motion. If private Members' time was to be taken away so early Session after Session, there should be some examination of the Standing Orders. Private Members balloted for Tuesdays on the understanding that they would have a chance of using those days for their own questions. During the last 11 years, however, he had often secured first or second place on Tuesdays and Fridays, but on every single occasion he had had his privilege taken away by the Government of the day. This was turning the Standing Orders into a farce, without the element of humour, which was the only justification for a farce.

Mr. JOHN WILSON (Durham) supported the appeal on behalf of the Steam Engines and Boilers Bill. There was quite as much urgency for it as for the Education Bill. The Measure had been before the House for the last 18 or 19 years; and it was thought to be of the greatest importance by the working classes of the country, as promoting the safety of the men working by the side of engines and boilers. If, at the outset of the Session, the Government had given notice that they would thus early take away private Members' time, the promoters of the Bill would have set it down for a later day.

*Mr. J. G. WEIR said, that although Parliament had been summoned earlier than usual, the time of private Members was also taken earlier than usual by the Government. He had a most important Motion down for Tuesday next—a Motion which affected every county Member in the United Kingdom. It seemed as though private Members were destined to become the mere slaves of the two Front Benches. The interests of the working classes should be considered first, rather than that the time and attention of the House and the nation's money should be devoted to creating nurseries for Ritualistic Churches. [*Laughter.*]

*Mr. SPEAKER: I have great difficulty in hearing what the hon. Gentleman is saying, but I am under the impression that he is out of order. [*Laughter.*]

*Mr. WEIR, who, on again rising, was received with cries of "Speak up," concluded by stating that the Government's line of action in regard to the Education Bill was unfair, undignified, and unworthy of a great Party. [*Laughter.*]

Mr. DOUGLAS COGHILL (Stoke-upon-Trent) asked whether the First Lord of the Treasury could indicate what time it was proposed to occupy with the Second Reading of the Education Bill. He would point out that when the subject was last before the House, notwithstanding all their tremendous orations, only 99 of the Gentlemen of the Opposition went into the Lobby against the Bill. ["Hear, hear!"]

Mr. JOSEPH A. PEASE (Northumberland, Tyneside) proposed, after the word "That," to insert the words "except on Wednesday, the 17th February." He said that last year he had charge of the Engines and Boilers Bill, which was down for consideration on Wednesday, February 17, and he could assure the House that the Measure—the object of which was to save the lives and limbs of the working classes—had not only the unanimous support of the workmen, but the support of a large number of the employers. ["Hear, hear!"] He found that Wednesdays had never before been taken from private Members earlier than March 30th, and that was in 1893, when the Home Rule Bill was under consideration.

MR. J. M. PAULTON (Durham, Bishop Auckland) seconded the Amendment, which he should be glad to see extended so as to cover all Wednesdays. ["Hear, hear!"] He agreed with the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Thanet that there ought to be a little more certainty about the conduct of the business of the House. ["Hear, hear!"]

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY said he rose not, of course, to reply to the general queries which had been put to him from both sides of the House, but merely to deal with the Amendment, which was that Wednesday next should be excluded from the operation of the Resolution. He expressed his entire sympathy with the views of the hon. Gentleman who had urged upon him the importance of discussing the Boilers Bill. He did not profess to be entirely acquainted with the merits of that Bill, but he believed it had found acceptance on previous occasions by hon. Members on both sides of the House. ["Hear, hear!"] He hoped the Bill was in no danger whatever from the rule now under discussion. The rule did not take every Wednesday. It only provided that on any day the Education Bill was put down it should have precedence over every other Order of the Day, the object in view being to obtain continuous discussion of each separate stage of the Measure. He was sure, from what had fallen from hon. Gentlemen opposite in regard to the Boilers Bill, that they would co-operate with the Government in bringing the Debate on the Second Reading of the Education Bill to a close before Wednesday next. [*Cheers and Opposition cries of* "Oh!"] Those hon. Gentlemen had said that the lives and limbs of working men were imperilled by the existing machinery of the law, and they had impressed earnestly upon the House the desirability of having that state of things altered. He had never in his wildest moments imagined that the Second Reading Debate on the Education Bill would extend over next Tuesday night—[*Opposition cries of* "Oh!"] —and if he were right in that forecast the Boilers Bill would be absolutely safe from the operation of the rule. He hoped, therefore, that everybody on both sides of the House would co-operate in bringing the discussion on the Second Reading of the Education Bill to a close before that day. [*Cheers.*]

*SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT (Monmouthshire, W.) said he did not think he had ever heard before such an attempt to put the House under duress. [*Opposition cheers and Ministerial laughter.*] First of all the right hon. Gentleman, departing from the usual practice in such cases, began his reasons for asking for this control over the time of the House with a sort of anticipatory censure of the conduct the Opposition might possibly pursue. [*Cheers.*]

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY: Not at all; nothing of the sort.

*SIR W. HARCOURT said he certainly understood the language of the right hon. Gentleman to convey such a censure, and he was not alone in getting that impression. ["Hear, hear!"] There was no dispute at all that this demand was far beyond that which any Government had ever made under similar circumstances. Why was it necessary to make that extraordinary and unprecedented demand? The First Lord of the Treasury was under the impression that the Education Bill was a very simple Measure. [*Laughter.*] He thought the right hon. Gentleman had said the same of the Bill of last year. ["Hear, hear!" *and laughter.*]

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY: No; I never said so.

*SIR W. HARCOURT said that the simplicity was rather in the author than in the Bill. [*Laughter.*] The right hon. Gentleman had given the House as a reason for coming to a speedy decision on the Bill that it was in order that the voluntary organisations might get to work at the earliest opportunity. Might he suggest to the right hon. Gentleman that it would be a good thing, at the earliest possible opportunity, that the House of Commons should discuss these voluntary organisations, and that the country should have some opportunity of understanding them? [THE FIRST LORD of the TREASURY: "Hear, hear!"] The right hon. Gentleman told them that these voluntary organisations were very simple affairs. They were very simple, no doubt, because they were not explained. Part of the principal business of the House, if it was going to do its duty, was to insist on particulars as to their voluntary organisations which the Government had not inserted in the Bill. That was true of every line of the Bill, for it suggested a great number of things of which it made no explanation whatever; therefore to call it a simple Bill which was to be passed under this sort of pressure was to give an entirely wrong interpretation of the character of the Measure. From the nature of the Motion of the right hon. Gentleman it was clear that as soon as the House got into Committee on the Bill all the Wednesdays were gone. They had a perfect right, and it was, indeed, their business, to demand that this Bill and its bearings should be understood by the country. The Second Reading stage was the proper occasion on which the House should consider whether this was a fair Bill, having regard to what it did and did not contain. There had been no previous proposal on the part of any Government to take the Wednesdays in February under any circumstances. He desired to point out that next Wednesday was to have been devoted to a subject of great interest and importance; therefore, the Division they should take on the Amendment was a declaration that, in order to hurry through the House this Education Bill before the country had had time to examine and understand it, the Government were going to take a Wednesday which was to be devoted to a subject of the highest importance to the working classes. [*Cheers.*]

MR. LLOYD-GEORGE (Carnarvon Boroughs) observed that as it was the general desire that the opinion of the House should not be taken with regard to this particular Wednesday, but all Wednesdays, he proposed to amend the Amendment by moving to insert, after "17th of February," the words "and following Wednesdays." He made this Motion in the interests of two or three Bills which were of the first importance, and of a particularly urgent and practical character. For instance, for the 17th of March a Bill was to have been considered for the Amendment of the Coal Mines Regulation Act. That, he submitted, was a matter of great and urgent importance. Many of the accidents which occurred were reported by the inspectors to be attributable to negligence in the management of the mines, and when they had accidents from explosions imperilling the lives of workmen it was highly essential that a Bill of this character should receive the early and earnest consideration of the House of Commons. The First Lord of the Treasury did not attempt to make any case of urgency for this Motion. It was true he made the assertion that other Governments had done the same thing, but he failed to point to a single instance of it. The Coal Mines Regulation Bill was not the only Bill of importance which was to come on upon a Wednesday. There was a Bill for dealing with the land question in Ireland, and also a Measure which hon. Gentlemen opposite had stated to be of the greatest possible importance to agriculture—namely, the Agricultural Produce Marks Bill. These were to be swept on one side altogther, for the purpose of dealing with a Bill for which there was no urgency at all amongst its attributes. He begged to move his Amendment to the proposed Amendment.

MR. EDWARD MORTON (Devonport) seconded the Amendment to the proposed Amendment. He said he wished to remind the House of the position in which they stood. At the end of last Session they were told by the First Lord of the Treasury that Parliament was to be summoned at an exceptionally early time in order that there might be got through a Bill—the present Education Bill—before the 31st March. Parliament this year did meet at an exceptionally early period, and one of the first things hon. Members were told was that there was no necessity whatever to get this Bill through before the 31st March. The result was they found themselves to-day about to commence the Second Reading of the Bill at a period which was two days earlier than Parliament met last Session, and at that period they were asked by the Government to allow them, whenever they chose, to take the whole time of the House. Last Session the Government did not come to the House with any such demand until the 27th April, or ten weeks later than the period they were now at. This had been done for the sake of a Bill which the Leader of the House himself told them was not a Bill of urgency, and did not need to be passed before the close of the financial year. The usual practice was, that when a Government asked for the time of the private Members it was because there was special urgency for Government business. It was perfectly impossible for the Government to pretend now, at a period earlier than that at which the House met at all last Session, and earlier than that at which the Session usually commenced, that the Government business was of such urgency that they required all the time of private Members whenever they chose to take it. As had been already said, the Government ought seriously to consider whether they should repeal all the Standing Orders of the House. What was the use of Standing Orders, when Session after Session—and this year before the usual time for the Session to commence at all—the Government proposed absolutely to abrogate the Standing Orders of the House?

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted."

Proposed Amendment amended, by adding, at the end thereof, the words "and other Wednesdays."

The House divided:—Ayes, 129; Noes, 256.—(Division List, No. 24.)

*Mr. SPEAKER read, and was about to put the main Question, when

Mr. CARVELL WILLIAMS (Notts, Mansfield) proposed that on the Opposition side of the House they should assent to the proposals of the Government with regard to the Second Reading of the Bill, but refuse to tie the hands of the House in all the future stages of the Measure. He, therefore, moved to leave out the words "the several stages of," leaving the House free to come to a decision on each successive stage as circumstances seemed desirable.

Mr. JOHN BRIGG (York, W.R., Keighley) seconded the Amendment.

*Mr. SPEAKER having put the Amendment to the House,

Mr. PHILIP STANHOPE (Burnley) rose to address the House amid cries of "Order!"

*Mr. SPEAKER: The hon. Member is too late.

Mr. STANHOPE: I regret that I did not catch your eye, Sir, but I certainly did rise before you put the Amendment for the purpose of making a few observations.

*Mr. SPEAKER: I did not see the hon. Member rise, although I was looking in his direction. When I did see him I had already collected the opinions of both sides of the House.

The House divided:—Ayes, 257; Noes, 123.—(Division List, No. 25.)

Mr. Lloyd-George, Mr. John Dillon (Mayo, E.), Mr. P. Stanhope, and other Members of the Opposition rose to continue the discussion, but

The FIRST LORD of the TREASURY claimed to move "That the Question be now put." [*Loud Opposition cries of* "Oh," *and cheers.*]

Question put, "That the words "the several stages of' stand part of the Question."

The House divided:—Ayes, 257; Noes, 123.—(Division List, No. 26.)

Main Question put accordingly.—The House divided:—Ayes, 255; Noes, 117.—(Division List—No. 27—appended.)

AYES.

Acland-Hood, Capt. Sir A. F.
Allhusen, Augustus Henry Eden
Arnold, Alfred
Arnold-Forster, Hugh O.
Arrol, Sir William
Atkinson, Rt. Hon. John
Baden-Powell, Sir Geo. Smyth
Bagot, Capt. Josceline FitzRoy
Bailey, James (Walworth)
Balcarres, Lord
Baldwin, Alfred
Balfour, Rt. Hon. A. J. (Manch'r)
Balfour, Gerald William (Leeds)
Banbury, Frederick George
Banes, Major George Edward
Barnes, Frederic Gorell
Barry, A. H. Smith- (Hunts.)
Barry, Francis Tress (Windsor)
Bathurst, Hon. Allen Benjamin
Beach, Rt. Hon. Sir M. H. (Bristol)
Beach, W. W. Bramston (Hants.)
Beckett, Ernest William
Bemrose, Henry Howe
Bethell, Commander
Biddulph, Michael
Bigwood, James
Bill, Charles
Blundell, Colonel Henry
Boscawen, Arthur Griffith-
Boulnois, Edmund
Bowles, Capt. H. F. (Middlesex)
Brassey, Albert
Brodrick, Rt. Hon. St. John
Brown, Alexander H.
Bullard, Sir Harry
Butcher, John George
Campbell, James A.
Carson, Edward
Cavendish, V. C. W. (Derbyshire)

Cecil, Lord Hugh
Chaloner, Captain R. G. W.
Chamberlain J. Austen (Worc'r)
Chaplin, Rt. Hon. Henry
Chelsea, Viscount
Clare, Octavius Leigh
Clarke, Sir Edward (Plymouth)
Cochrane, Hon. Thos. H. A. E.
Coddington, Sir William
Coghill, Douglas Harry
Cohen, Benjamin Louis
Collings, Rt. Hon. Jesse
Colomb, Sir John Charles Ready
Colston, Chas. Edw. H. Athole
Compton, Lord Alwyne (Beds.)
Cook, Fred. Lucas (Lambeth)
Corbett, A. Cameron (Glasgow)
Cranborne, Viscount
Cripps, Charles Alfred
Currie, Sir Donald
Curzon, Rt. Hn. G. N. (Lancs. SW.)
Curzon, Viscount (Bucks.)
Dalbiac, Major Philip Hugh
Dalkeith, Earl of
Dalrymple, Sir Charles
Darling, Charles John
Dixon-Hartland, Sir Fred. Dixon
Donkin, Richard Sim
Dorington, Sir John Edward
Douglas, Rt. Hon. A. Akers-
Drage, Geoffrey
Drucker, A.
Duncombe, Hon. Hubert V.
Dyke, Rt. Hn. Sir William Hart
Fardell, Thomas George
Fellowes, Hon. Ailwyn Edward
Fergusson, Rt. Hn. Sir J. (Manc'r)
Fielden, Thomas
Finch, George H.
Finlay, Sir Robert Bannatyne
Firbank, Joseph Thomas
Fisher, William Hayes
Fison, Frederick William
FitzGerald, Sir R. U. Penrose
Flannery, Fortescue
Folkestone, Viscount
Forster, Henry William
Foster, Colonel (Lancaster)
Foster, Harry S. (Suffolk)
Fry, Lewis
Galloway, William Johnson
Garfit, William
Gibbs, Hn. A. G. H. (City of Lond.)
Gibbs, Hon. Vicary (St. Albans)
Giles, Charles Tyrrell
Gilliat, John Saunders
Godson, Augustus Frederick
Goldsworthy, Major-General
Gordon, John Edward
Gorst, Rt. Hon. Sir John Eldon
Goschen, Rt. Hon. G. J. (St. G'rg's)
Goschen, George J. (Sussex)
Goulding, Edward Alfred
Graham, Henry Robert
Gray, Ernest (West Ham)
Green, Walford D. (Wednesb'y)
Gretton, John
Greville, Captain
Gull, Sir Cameron
Halsey, Thomas Frederick
Hamilton, Rt. Hon. Lord Geo.
Hanbury, Rt. Hon. Robert Wm.
Hanson, Sir Reginald
Hardy, Laurence
Hare, Thomas Leigh
Havelock-Allan, General Sir H.
Heath, James
Heaton, John Henniker
Helder, Augustus
Hill, Rt. Hn. Lord Arthur (Down)
Hoare, Edw. Brodie (Hampstead)
Hoare, Samuel (Norwich)
Hobhouse, Henry
Holland, Hon. Lionel Raleigh
Hopkinson, Alfred
Houston, R. P.
Howard, Joseph
Hozier, James
Hudson, George Bickersteth
Hughes, Colonel Edwin
Hutton, John (Yorks., N.R.)
Isaacson, Frederick Wootton
Jebb, Richard Claverhouse
Jenkins, Sir John Jones
Jessel, Captain Herbert Merton
Johnston, William (Belfast)
Johnstone, John H. (Sussex)
Joliffe, Hon. H. George
Kemp, George
Kennaway, Rt. Hon. Sir John H.
Kenny, William
Kenrick, William
Kenyon, James
King, Sir Henry Seymour
Knowles, Lees
Laurie, Lieut.-General
Lawrence, Wm. F. (Liverpool)
Lawson, John Grant (Yorks.)
Lecky, William Edward H.
Lees, Elliott (Birkenhead)
Llewellyn, Evan H. (Somerset)
Llewelyn, Sir Dillwyn-(Swnsea)
Lockwood, Lt.-Col. A. R. (Essex)
Loder, Gerald Walter Erskine
Long, Col. Charles W. (Evesham)
Long, Rt. Hon. Walter (L'pool.)
Lopes, Henry Yarde Buller
Lorne, Marquess of
Lowles, John
Loyd, Archie Kirkman
Lucas-Shadwell, William
Lyttelton, Hon. Alfred
Macdona, John Cumming
McCalmont, Mj.-Gen (Antr'm N)
Malcolm, Ian
Massey-Mainwaring, Hon. W. F.
Melville, Beresford Valentine
Milbank, Powlett Charles John
Milner, Sir Frederick George
Milward, Colonel Victor
Monckton, Edward Philip
Monk, Charles James
Montagu, Hon. J. Scott (Hants.)
Moon, Edward Robert Pacy
More, Robert Jasper
Morrison, Walter
Mount, William George
Mowbray, Rt. Hon. Sir John
Muntz, Philip A.
Murdoch, Charles Townshend
Murray, Rt. Hn. A. Graham (Bute)
Murray, Charles J. (Coventry)
Murray, Col. Wyndham (Bath)
Nicol, Donald Ninian
Northcote, Hon. Sir H. Stafford
O'Brien, Patrick (Kilkenny)
O'Kelly, James
O'Neill, Hon. Robert Torrens
Orr-Ewing, Charles Lindsay
Parkes, Ebenezer
Pease, Arthur (Darlington)
Penn, John
Phillpotts, Captain Arthur
Pierpoint, Robert
Pollock, Harry Frederick
Powell, Sir Francis Sharp
Pryce-Jones, Edward
Purvis, Robert
Quilter, William Cuthbert
Rankin, James
Rasch, Major Frederic Carne
Richards, Henry Charles
Richardson, Thomas
Ridley, Rt. Hn. Sir Matthew W.
Ritchie, Rt. Hon. Chas. Thomson
Robinson, Brooke
Rollit, Sir Albert Kaye
Round, James
Russell, Gen. F. S. (Cheltenham)
Russell, Sir George (Berkshire)
Russell, T. W. (Tyrone)
Rutherford, John
Samuel, Harry S. (Limehouse)
Savory, Sir Joseph
Scoble, Sir Andrew Richard
Seely, Charles Hilton
Sharpe, William Edward T.
Simeon, Sir Barrington
Sinclair, Louis (Romford)
Smith, Abel (Herts)
Smith, Hon. W. F. D. (Strand)
Stanley, Lord (Lancs.)
Stanley, Edw. Jas. (Somerset)
Stanley, Henry M. (Lambeth)
Stirling-Maxwell, Sir John M.
Stone, Sir Benjamin
Strauss, Arthur
Strutt, Hon. Charles Hedley
Sturt, Hon. Humphry Napier
Sullivan, Donal (Westmeath)
Talbot, Lord E. (Chichester)
Talbot, John G. (Oxford Un.)
Taylor, Francis
Thornton, Percy M.
Tomlinson, Wm. Edw. Murray
Tritton, Charles Ernest
Usborne, Thomas
Valentia, Viscount
Wanklyn, James Leslie
Warkworth, Lord
Webster, R. G. (St. Pancras)
Webster, Sir R. E. (I. of W.)
Welby, Lieut.-Col. A. C. E.
Whiteley, George (Stockport)
Whiteley, H. (Ashton-under-L.)
Whitmore, Charles Algernon
Williams, Colonel R. (Dorset)
Williams, Joseph Powell-(Birm.)
Wilson, John (Falkirk)
Wilson, J. W. (Worc'sh. N.)
Wilson-Todd, Wm. H. (Yorks.)
Wodehouse, Edmond R. (Bath)
Wyndham, George
Wyndham-Quin, Major W. H.
Wyvill, Marmaduke D'Arcy

TELLERS FOR THE AYES, Sir William Walrond and Mr. Anstruther.

NOES.

Abraham, William (Rhondda)
Allan, William (Gateshead)
Arch, Joseph
Asher, Alexander
Ashton, Thomas Gair
Asquith, Rt. Hn. Herbert Henry
Atherley-Jones, L.
Bayley, Thomas (Derbyshire)
Birrell, Augustine
Bolton, Thomas Dolling
Brigg, John
Brunner, Sir John Thomas
Bryce, Rt. Hon. James
Buchanan, Thomas Ryburn
Buxton, Sydney Charles
Caldwell, James
Cameron, Robert
Campbell-Bannerman, Sir H.
Causton, Richard Knight
Cawley, Frederick
Channing, Francis Allston
Clough, Walter Owen
Colville, John
Condon, Thomas Joseph
Cozens-Hardy, Herbert Hardy
Dalziel, James Henry
Davies, M. Vaughan- (Cardigan)
Dilke, Rt. Hon. Sir Charles
Dillon, John
Doughty, George
Dunn, Sir William
Ellis, John Edward (Notts.)
Engledow, Charles John
Evans, Sir Francis H. (South'ton)
Ferguson, R. C. Munro (Leith)
Fowler, Rt. Hn. Sir Hy. (Wol'tn)
Gilhooly, James
Gladstone, Rt. Hn. Herbert John
Goddard, Daniel Ford
Gold, Charles
Gourley, Sir Edward Temperley
Griffith, Ellis J.
Haldane, Richard Burdon
Harcourt, Rt. Hon. Sir W.
Harrison, Charles
Hayne, Rt. Hon. Charles Seale-
Hemphill, Rt. Hon. Charles H.
Hogan, James Francis
Hutton, Alfred E. (Morley)
Jacoby, James Alfred
Johnson-Ferguson, Jabez Edw.
Kearley, Hudson E.
Kilbride, Denis
Kinloch, Sir John George Smyth
Labouchere, Henry
Lambert, George
Lawson, Sir Wilfrid (Cumb'land)
Leese, Sir Joseph F. (Accrington)
Leng, Sir John
Lloyd-George, David
Lockwood, Sir Frank (York)
Logan, John William
Lough, Thomas
Lowther, Rt. Hon. James (Kent)
Luttrell, Hugh Fownes
Lyell, Sir Leonard
Macaleese, Daniel
McEwan, William
McKenna, Reginald
McLaren, Charles Benjamin
McLeod, John
Maden, John Henry
Mappin, Sir Frederick Thorpe
Montagu, Sir S. (Whitechapel)
Morgan, J. Lloyd (Carmarthen)
Morley, Charles (Breconshire)
Morley, Rt. Hn. John (Montrose)
Morton, Edward John Chalmers
Mundella, Rt. Hn. Anthony John
O'Brien, James F. X. (Cork)
O'Connor, T. P. (Liverpool)
Paulton, James Mellor
Pease, Joseph A. (Northumb.)
Perks, Robert William
Pickard, Benjamin
Pickersgill, Edward Hare
Priestley, Briggs (Yorks)
Reid, Sir Robert T.
Rickett, J. Compton
Roberts, John H. (Denbighs)
Robson, William Snowdon
Samuel, J. (Stockton-on-Tees)
Scott, Charles Prestwich
Seton-Karr, Henry
Shaw, Thomas (Hawick B)
Shaw, William Rawson (Halifax)
Smith, Samuel (Flint)
Spicer, Albert
Stanhope, Hon. Philip J.
Stevenson, Francis S.
Tanner, Charles Kearns
Tennant, Harold John
Thomas, Alfred (Glamorgan)
Ure, Alexander
Wallace, Robert (Perth)
Walton, John Lawson
Wayman, Thomas
Weir, James Galloway
Whittaker, Thomas Palmer
Williams, John Carvell (Notts)
Wilson, Charles Henry (Hull)
Wilson, Frederick W. (Norfolk)
Wilson, Henry J. (York, W.R.)
Wilson, John (Durham, Mid.)
Wilson, John (Govan)
Woodall, William
Woods, Samuel

TELLERS FOR THE NOES, Mr. Thomas Ellis and Mr. McArthur.

Ordered, that the several stages of the Voluntary Schools Bill have precedence of all Orders of the Day and Notices of Motion on every day for which the Bill is appointed.

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

VOLUNTARY SCHOOLS BILL.

Order for Second Reading read.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a Second time."

*MR. REGINALD M'KENNA (Monmouth, N.) proposed to leave out the word "That," to the end of the Question, in order to add the words "no Bill will be satisfactory to this House which does not provide for Board Schools as well as Voluntary Schools." He stated that he approached the problem raised by the Second Reading of this Bill on general principles. He did not pretend to any further knowledge than was open to every hon. Member. The basis of our educational establishment was the voluntary system, and the Act of 1870 distributed the carrying out of our educational system over school districts. The Act compelled each district to provide sufficient school accommodation, and where before 1870 there was already sufficient accommodation in existence, the Acts of that year and of 1876 were rather Acts in the nature of exoneration than of bringing fresh burdens to bear on those districts. Three classes of districts had been created by the Act of 1870:—(1) School districts already fully supplied with educational facilities, or subsequently supplied by voluntary effort—these were the Voluntary School Districts; (2) districts which might be called mixed districts, partly supplied by School Boards and partly by Voluntary Schools; (3) a very large class of districts supplied exclusively by School Boards. The Voluntary School district was the one which generally speaking possessed prior to 1870 the greatest adaptation for the needs of education. Many districts now supplied by Voluntary Schools had not been affected by the Act of 1870 except in so far as they had received an additional parliamentary grant. In the pure School Board District, on the other hand, the inhabitants had from the beginning supplied the whole of their educational requirements. They had had no endowment; no beneficent ancestor had established a school in their district; no wealthy residents had borne the expense of maintenance. Without experience, endowment or wealth, they had had to supply themselves with the whole of their educational equipment since the Education Act came into force. The right hon. Gentleman proposed to discriminate between these different districts, and the pure School Board district was the only one which, under this Measure, was to receive no relief. He was going to say to the district, which had the least burden to bear, "Well done, thou good and faithful servant, thou hast paid little and much shall be given thee;" and, on the other hand, he was going to say to the pure Board School district, which from a variety of causes had been least equipped for the educational struggle, "You shall have nothing at all!" The right hon. Gentleman under this Bill, "fed the rich and the poor he sent empty away." That was the principle on which the right hon. Gentleman acted in discriminating as between districts. Passing from the question of districts, he proceeded to consider its bearing on the inhabitants. It was clear that within the Voluntary Schools district the voluntary subscribers had borne the whole cost of education, apart from the grants from the Education Department. In the mixed district the ratepayers paid part, and the Voluntary School subscribers paid as ratepayers and something more in respect of voluntary subscriptions. It was evident, therefore, that if they were going to discriminate at all between classes of persons, the voluntary subscriber in the mixed district was entitled to double relief as against a subscriber in a pure Voluntary School district where there were no rates. On the principle of the Amendment such a subscriber would receive double relief, inasmuch as his rates would be diminished at the same time that he received assistance in respect of his Voluntary School. What had been the avowed reason for introducing this Measure? They had been told that it was the intolerable strain on the Voluntary Schools. The intolerable strain was supposed to be represented in these schools by £620,000 a year. This strain was supposed to be brought about by the Education Department in making further demands upon the schools. That increased strain was no doubt met by increased voluntary subscriptions. Since 1876, when the Parliamentary grant was increased, voluntary subscriptions had been augmented to the amount of a little over £100,000 a year. But what was the extent of the relief? For every pound of increased strain the right hon. Gentleman gave £5 of relief. He called that an intolerable relief to a slight burden. The right hon. Gentleman could not justify his proposal upon any statement of figures; he could only justify it by either open or covert attack on the Board Schools. If the right hon. Gentleman wished to establish universal denominational education let him do so openly. Let him propose rate aid to the Voluntary Schools. The right hon. Gentleman had not got the courage of his opinions. He could only indulge in a plan of piecemeal pilfering. He surreptitiously nibbled at a principle which he dared not openly attack. His own supporters would not follow him in a declared assault on the School Boards; and all he did, therefore, was to offer a bribe to each school district in turn to renounce their freedom and to accept denominational teaching. He hoped that on this Amendment they should have the unanimous support of hon. Members from Ireland, who on the resolutions were not able to go into the same Lobby with the Leader of the Opposition. This was a question of abstract principle; a claim for equal treatment of one school district as against another school district, just such a claim as hon.

Members from Ireland would bring before the House in connection with the Report of the Financial Relations Committee. Some hon. Members had stated that the difficulty of the Voluntary School subscribers had been that there were so few of them that a heavy burden was cast upon individuals. That was an argument against the whole Voluntary School system. It only showed that in particular districts where the money was not easily raised, there was no effective demand for denominational teaching; otherwise the inhabitants, with the fear of a School Board Rate before them, would willingly subscribe to the schools. He begged to move.

Mr. HERBERT ROBERTS (Denbighshire, W.) seconded the Amendment. He said the discussion on the Second Reading could be narrowed down to one issue—whether there was at present equality of treatment between the Board and Voluntary Schools, and what would be the effect of the Bill on the relative positions. It was clear that before the two classes of schools could be compared, it must be supposed that the Board Schools were under private management and control. He admitted to the full the value of the sacrifices made by Churchmen for the maintenance and building of the Voluntary Schools; but the moment an appeal was made on their behalf to public funds, the public had a right to some degree of popular control. His contention was that the denominational system had succeeded in spite of its voluntary element, and not on account of it. Further, the history of the last half-century showed that it was impossible for the denominational schools to provide adequately for the elementary education of the country. The Government claimed a mandate from the country for this Bill. But the mandate would extend to the helping of the necessitous Board Schools as well as of the Voluntary Schools; and, at any rate, it was not backed by the overwhelming feeling of the country. This mandate seemed to be a variable quantity according to circumstances. For instance, as the present Archbishop of Canterbury complained, if the Bishops asked the Government for temperance legislation, the deputation was politely bowed out; but if they asked for increased aid to the Voluntary Schools, they received it at once. He looked forward to a universal system of School Boards; and this Bill failed entirely, because it handed over more money to private control, appointed sectarian bodies to administer it, compelled well-managed schools to confederate with badly-managed schools, and, by repealing the 17s. 6d. limit, removed the chief security for the continuance of voluntary subscriptions. It did all this without giving any corresponding advantage to Board Schools. There were special reasons why Wales should oppose the Second Reading of the Bill. The overwhelming feeling of the Principality was against this Bill. Even in the present condition of parties there were 25 Welsh Members against the Bill and only nine for it. Lord Salisbury had said it was unfair that legislation should be forced on England by the Celtic fringes. Was it not still more unjust that English and Conservative legislation in behalf of Anglican education should be forced on Welsh Nonconformity. Again, Wales already had her separate system of education. She had her own intermediate schools, colleges, and universities established by Act of Parliament, and all were popularly controlled. Was it likely then that Wales would submit to the perpetuation of irresponsible primary education without a protest? No one who knew Wales, the circumstances of the people, and the part which the Church schools had played in the life of Wales, would wonder at the attitude taken by the Welsh Members. He should like to point out how the Bill would operate in Wales upon the system of elementary education. There were 840 denominational schools and 821 Board Schools in the Principality. The number of children in average attendance in the denominational schools was—Church of England, 71,940; of other denominations, 24,400—making a total of 96,000. In the Board Schools there were 171,507 children. The subscriptions of members of the Church of England amounted to 7s. per head of the children attending their Voluntary Schools, or a total of £25,000. They earned in grant £101,314; and the result of the Bill would be to hand them over an additional sum of £17,895. It would, therefore, be possible for the subscriptions to drop from 7s. per child to 2s. per child, and for every 2s. subscribed the Voluntary Schools would receive

£1 17s. 6d. from the State, or 17 times the amount of their subscriptions. The cost of the Board Schools in Wales was £2 4s. 4d. per child, provided from the parliamentary grant, and from a rate which yielded 14s. 10½d. per child. On the whole, the ratepayers of Wales paid £127,998 every year towards the Board Schools. They received nothing from the Bill, and that, in his opinion, constituted a grave injustice. But there were special reasons why that injustice should be more keenly felt in Wales than in other parts of the country. Most of the Church Schools in Wales were in country parts. The great majority of the inhabitants of those parishes were Nonconformists in religion and Liberals in politics; and he could say, from his own personal experience, that the Church Schools in Wales were indirectly made instruments of party and agencies to win the children of Nonconformists to the Church of England. It would, of course, be said that there was a Conscience Clause. But the Conscience Clause was a dead letter. ["Hear, hear!"] The First Lord of the Treasury had said that one of the chief aims of the Bill was to maintain the efficiency of religious teaching in the day schools throughout the country. That was another grievance. Over 70,000 children—most of them Dissenters—were forced to attend those schools in Wales, and were forced to accept the teaching of the Church of England. Again, so far as the teachers were concerned, the case of Wales was worse than the case of England. Wales was a poor country, and some of the most painful episodes he had witnessed there were the instances of bright children who had been made pupil teachers—to whose families the few pounds a year they earned as pupil teachers was a great help—and who had been forced to leave the religious communion to which their parents were attached in order that they might retain those positions. ["Hear, hear!"] Some hon. Members in favour of the Bill had asserted that it was necessary, for the sake of religion, to maintain the denominational schools. So far as Wales was concerned, that was absolutely unnecessary. The cause of religion in Wales had long ago been lifted far above the elementary schools. There were in Wales 2,300 competent ministers; 4,000 Nonconformist Churches, and the people subscribed over £500,000 every year towards the support of religion. There were also in Wales a large number of Nonconformist Sunday Schools. In connection with only three of the principal Nonconformist bodies in Wales there were 450,000 members of Sunday Schools in the Principality. If, therefore, they took the number of children as compared with adults to be one-half of that number, they had as many children attending the Sunday Schools of three of the Nonconformist communities in Wales as there were attending all the elementary schools, Board and Voluntary, every day of the week. It had been said over and over again in emphatic terms that it would be impossible to establish a system of universal participation by all schools in those State grants. But they voted many millions in addition to the Army and Navy Estimates every year without a murmur; and if they were willing to do that for the purposes of the Army and Navy, how much more willingly ought they to do it for the paramount interest of the education of the children! Besides, if the Bill passed it would place a charge of £620,000 upon the Consolidated Fund. And for what purpose? For the purpose of aiding one class of schools only. He opposed the Bill because he believed it would be educationally bad. But he opposed it on higher grounds. It was a sad thing that, after 2,000 years of Christianity, they were unable to agree as to the teaching to children of the fundamental principles of Christianity. He believed that the passing of this Bill would strengthen the perpetuation of the present system of denominational education in this country, and would be, in the long run, a very great bar to spiritual progress. We had built up a splendid Empire; and it was beginning to dawn upon the millions of the country now that the roots of industrial progress were to be found in the completeness and the wisdom of our system of primary education. [*Cheers.*]

On the return of Mr. SPEAKER, after the usual interval,

*MR. WALFORD GREEN (Wednesbury) said the question of the Voluntary Schools was often argued as if it were a question between the Church of England and the Roman Catholics on the one side and the entire body of Nonconformists on the other. He thought that method of arguing the question was very misleading. There were a very large number of British schools, which were Voluntary Schools, and which at the same time were undenominational, and those British undenominational schools enjoyed the implicit confidence of Nonconformists in exactly the same degree as the Board Schools did. But apart from the British Schools, there were a large number of Wesleyan schools, and he desired to speak chiefly on the question as to how the Wesleyan community, with which he was himself connected, would be affected by this Bill. The Wesleyans had always taken a keener interest in education than other Nonconformist body, and they were deeply committed to the principle of denominationalism. He thought there was distinct evidence that the Wesleyans were desirous, as a body, of maintaining their denominational schools in the fact that under the late administration at the Education Office of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Rotherham, they raised, in response to his demands, a sum of £70,000, which had to be spent on buildings alone. The evidence that the Wesleyans felt the pinch of the present system was found in the fact that in 1894-5 they had to give up no fewer than 29 of their schools, owing to the intolerable strain which hon. Members opposite were fond of deriding. The Wesleyans had 168,010 scholars in their day schools at the present time, so that this religious community would receive under this Bill a sum of more than £42,000 a year from the extra grant alone, in addition to what they would receive from the exemption of their schools from rates and the abolition of the 17s. 6d. limit. Apart from the establishment of day schools the Wesleyan community had shown their keen interest and belief in denominational education by establishing training colleges for teachers. ["Hear, hear!"] There had passed through these training colleges 2,700 teachers, and at the present time there were 228 students in them. It was, he thought, a very natural thing that the Wesleyan teachers should ask themselves what would be their position if increased aid to Voluntary Schools were not given. They had asked themselves that question, and there was no doubt whatever that whatever might be the opinion of perhaps the majority of Wesleyans on the Government Bill, those who knew most of the position of Wesleyan day schools—that was the teachers themselves—were strongly in favour of the Bill, and strongly felt the absolute necessity of an increased grant to Voluntary Schools. ["Hear, hear!"] The Manchester and District Wesleyan Teachers' Association, at a meeting at Manchester in November last, unanimously passed a long and strong resolution in favour of increased aid to Voluntary Schools. This Bill did not, unfortunately, go quite so far as their resolution in favour of some legislative enactment, which would place Voluntary Schools on an equal footing, financially, with Board Schools, but he thought it was a matter of great importance that the House should realise that there was a body of Nonconformist educational experts, such as these Wesleyan teachers undoubtedly were, which was strongly in favour of the continuance of the Voluntary system, and which realised that, if that system were to be continued, some extra help was necessary, and immediately necessary. ["Hear, hear!"] There was one grievance of Nonconformists, which had been admitted, he thought, by everyone who had studied the education question, from Lord Salisbury downwards. That grievance was that, in many rural parishes, Nonconformists were compelled to send their children to the Church School, because it was the only public elementary school in the parish. He thought that admitted grievance might probably be lessened by that part of the Bill which encouraged the formation of the association of schools. He thought all reasonable Nonconformists would admit that the proselytising tendency, which they naturally strongly objected to, did usually occur in those Church Schools, which were under one-man management. It was precisely those schools which would be beneficially affected by the association of schools. In this Bill there seemed to him to be two great principles. The first was that the denominational schools were the only permanent security for maintaining religious teaching. ["Hear, hear!"] He admitted that at the present time they had religious teaching, and very excellent religious teaching, in the great bulk of the Board Schools in this country, but supposing a wave of infidelity, of crude feeling against religion, were to pass over the country? Then if they had none other but Board Schools in the country, in one moment the light of religious teaching might be eclipsed throughout the whole country. He did not say that was probable, but he did say it was possible, and against the possible danger of a great popular feeling of hostility to religion the denominational schools were the only security. ["Hear, hear!"] You cannot teach religion unless you are allowed to depart from that curious compromise, the Cowper-Temple Clause. It is not possible to teach it without some dogma distinctive of some particular sect. We are not all logical people in England, much more so are the people of Scotland, who had discovered that truth long ago. In many Board Schools under the Cowper-Temple Clause dogmas were taught distinctive of some particular sect or church, and only because the Cowper-Temple Clause had been interpreted in this broad fashion did it work at all. Many Wesleyans took the view that religious teaching must be maintained in Board Schools. The Rev. Hugh Price Hughes the other day made a proposal which was received with almost as much ferocity in some Nonconformist circles as any proposal emanating from a Tory Government—that the Apostles' Creed should be taught in all Board Schools, and he made that suggestion as a special compromise. Immediately there was a loud outcry. Yet it might have been thought that if there was any one common ground among all Christians as to what constituted religious teaching, that would have been found to its most limited extent in the Apostles' Creed. He believed that eventually we should follow, as we had had to follow in other respects, the example of Scotland, and that denominational teaching in all schools, Board and Voluntary, would be admitted on some such principle as was contained in the 25th or 27th Clause of the last Bill introduced by the Government. There was one other main principle at the bottom of the Bill, the principle of educational efficiency. He did not think any reasonable man would say that the prospect of abolishing the denominational system was within the range of practical politics. If at the next General Election the Liberal Party should come back with a majority equal to that of the present Government—and that was going to the extreme of conceivability—supposing them to have such a majority, even then their majority of 150 would not be large enough to abolish the denominational system, because 80 of their supporters would be pledged to maintain the denominational system. The line taken by Members from Ireland, settled once for all the impossibility of abolishing the denominational system. If you admit that denominational teaching must be part of our national system, then you are striking a blow at educational efficiency if you refuse to allow any extra grant to be given to these schools. Voluntary Schools needed more money, teachers were wretchedly underpaid in Voluntary Schools, head-masters on an average receiving 34 per cent. less than the salaries paid in Board Schools, and head-mistresses often 58 per cent. less. Pupils had spent upon them every year in Voluntary Schools, 19s. 6d. per head less than the pupils in Board Schools, and in maintenance, Voluntary School pupils had to put up with 11s. less than Board School pupils. What was the result of this? Voluntary Schools had worse buildings and worse teaching in the long run, and a blow was struck at educational efficiency, especially in country districts, by a refusal to allow this extra grant to be given. He could understand the position of hon. Members if they said the denominational system must be abolished, but they did not say that, they knew that was impossible, and yet in admitting that, and refusing to allow the Voluntary system to become efficient by this extra grant, their action could only be construed as action contrary to the interests of education. It was said this was refused in the interest of education and in the interest of religious liberty. But what was done? Because a parent preferred to have his child taught in a school of his own religion, therefore, the child of that parent was to be handicapped in his education and deprived of national advantages given to other children. This, because the father preferred to send his child to a school of his own religion, was done in the name of religious liberty! ["Hear, hear!"] The position of hon. Members who refused to give any extra grant at all to Voluntary Schools, and who were forced to admit that Voluntary Schools must be a permanent part of our national system, could not be called a position friendly to the interests of national education. ["Hear, hear!"] For his own part he would give every vote he gave on behalf of the Bill, in entire confidence that the money granted would go to the improvement of education, and would do something to relieve a grievous religious disability that parents who sent their children to Voluntary Schools had been suffering under for a very long time. [*Cheers.*]

*Mr. LLOYD MORGAN (Carmarthen, W.) said he was sorry to be obliged to oppose an Education Bill, and did not think that the amount of money expended upon education was by any means excessive. Indeed, the lesson we ought to learn from continental countries, much poorer than ourselves, seemed to be that we were well within the reasonable limits of such expenditure. From those countries we were able to see that increased grants to national educational purposes meant increase of national prosperity. This Bill, however, professed to advance education, but on such terms as made it impossible for him to give his assent to it. He could not help thinking the Bill would create very widespread disappointment and dissatisfaction in the country, beneficial as it would be to a certain class, a class anxious to propagate certain religious formularies and dogmas at the expense of their poorer brethren. No doubt it would be received with satisfaction by those who had declined to rate themselves for educational purposes. Election addresses he saw, during the last electoral campaign, not only in his own, but in other constituencies, pointed to the conclusion that all ratepayers were going to be benefited, if only a Conservative Government came into power. But what did they find? There had been a hope that a scheme would have been forthcoming that would throw on the Imperial Exchequer part of the burden of school rates, not for the purpose of assisting Voluntary Schools only, but for the relief of poor districts where school rates were high, and all poor schools would receive advantage from it. But the Bill did nothing to relieve ratepayers where rates were most heavy; nothing to relieve any district where schools were most necessitous; it did a great deal to make the load of the taxpayer heavier. The Bill was indefensible, on the ground that it did everything to assist people who had done nothing for themselves and for those who had shown themselves laggards in the march of educational progress. As regarded Voluntary Schools, how stood the case? They had always been treated by Parliament in a manner more favoured than any other. When the Act of 1870 was passed, the Liberal Government not only assisted them, but deliberately held out to them inducements and opportunities to extend, at the public expense, an educational system which at that time and ever since had loudly and repeatedly called for reform. The operation of that Act was suspended, so far as Voluntary Schools were concerned, for a period of twelve months. And what was done? Up to that time the annual number of applications for building grants for denominational schools were 150. And what happened during the period of grace which followed the passing of the Act of 1870? Applications came from 3,300 parishes in the country for the establishment of Voluntary Schools, and the House voted £268,000 for the purpose of perpetuating a system which the great mass of the people of this country believed, as they believed now, was unfair and unjust to the cause of educational progress. It was a great mistake to imagine that Voluntary Schools were as popular as some Members wished the House to believe they were. The popularity of these schools depended, not so much on the fact that the religious doctrines of certain sections were taught in them, but from the fact that there were no rates charged in those parishes where such schools were maintained. It was the dread which the farming class had of any further rates that really lay at the bottom of the popularity of those schools. It was a great mistake to suppose that the popularity was derived from the fact that they belonged to the Church of England, the Wesleyans, or any other section; the base of such popularity as they had was in the fact that they saved the ratepayers' pockets. Whenever the question arose in one of these parishes whether the Voluntary system should be continued or the broader and better system of School Boards should be introduced, the way in which parishioners were induced to decide against the School Board was by the appeal of those interested in the maintenance of Voluntary Schools to the ratepayers to save their pockets. He could not assent to the proposition of the hon. Member who had just spoken, that these denominational schools were the only schools of a really religious agency. He could not accede to the view that there was any substantial objection raised by anyone to the religious instruction given in Board Schools. He could not help thinking that the wave of infidelity which the hon. Gentleman had referred to as being possible was much more likely to be brought about by debating this question in the House of Commons and about the country than by anything else. From his point of view he did not think a day school was the right place in which to teach religion at all, or the schoolmaster the proper person to teach it, or that the State was the proper quarter from which the payment for religion in any shape or form ought to come. If religious teaching was to be taught at all, it ought to be taught by agencies outside the day school. When the hon. Gentleman said that the voluntary system of education would counteract any wave of infidelity, he seemed to have lost sight of the fact that the real religious agency in this country was not the day school at all, but the Sunday School. If hon. Members in that House who took an interest in religious and philanthropic work would devote their energies to getting agencies outside to take up this question of instructing the young in religion—and there was a wide and splendid field of work—they would be doing much more substantial good to the community than they would do by fighting over questions of sects and creeds, which would have a very bad effect on the country. What would the effect of this Bill be when passed? In the first place it would make Voluntary Schools more independent of public opinion than they were at present, and put an end to any control the parents had over the schools—if they had any—now. The claim in the past for free action on behalf of those who managed the Voluntary Schools was based on the ground that the managers had made great sacrifices in the large amount of money they had spent. But the subscriptions to the Voluntary Schools were a diminishing quantity. In 1875 they amounted to 9s. 6d. per head; in 1890 to 7s.; and at the present time they were but 6s. 8d. per head. Still this control went on. The subscriptions, it was contended, represented the religious teaching, but if they went down year by year it was clear that the control the managers had over the schools should diminish in a corresponding ratio. They now found that practically the State was paying for a system of denominational education in this country. In 1876, when an Education Bill was introduced by a Conservative Government, Lord Hartington, speaking in that House, said if that kind of thing went on the schools might be called denominational schools, but they could no longer be called Voluntary Schools. It was qute clear that a substantial case had been made out for some control on behalf of the public over such a vast amount of public money as was being expended, and he asked the Government to approach this question of control with a free and open mind. He, and those who thought with him, did not object to the teaching of dogmas in schools, but they objected to their being taught in schools which were supported almost entirely out of public money. Whatever religious doctrine was preferred might be taught in a school, so long as it was not paid for by the State. Where the State had to pay largely to the schools there ought to be some public control, and the fact that this was the principle adopted in the case of Board Schools accounted for their educational superiority over the Voluntary Schools. Those connected with the Voluntary Schools ought to see that this Bill was introduced, not for such schools in general, but principally for the Voluntary Schools of the Established Church and the Roman Catholic Church. They had heard of the "intolerable strain." Where did it come from? It had been said that a large number of Wesleyans were in favour of this Bill. That was not the case, for the view the Wesleyan body had taken was that there ought to be established within the reach of every family in this country a school which was managed on thoroughly unsectarian lines. But how did this question of intolerable strain come in? It came in simply with regard to the two classes of schools he had mentioned. Other Voluntary Schools, namely, those of the Wesleyan body and the British

Schools, which were managed on unsectarian lines, provided for the education of 480,000 children, and this intolerable strain did not appeal to that class. It did not appeal really to the very poorest class in the country, the people who provided for the education of 480,000 children, who paid for their own chapels and ministers, and who did not say one single word about the intolerable strain which hon. Members opposite said existed. If he happened to be a Churchman he should be ashamed of the attitude Churchmen took up with regard to this matter, belonging as they did to the richest and most powerful class in the community, complaining of the intolerable strain of keeping up their schools, whilst the poorest people in the country not only said nothing about any intolerable strain, but protested against this proposed unjust expenditure of money. There was one question which the right hon. Member for West Monmouthshire put the other night, and to which there had as yet been no answer, namely: why £600,000 should be given to districts which declined to rate themselves and declined to subscribe, while nothing was to be given to those districts which had made large sacrifices for the sake of education? He would suggest to hon. Members who intended to speak in that Debate that they should deal with that question, and, if it were possible to do so, give an answer to it.

*VISCOUNT CRANBORNE (Rochester) remarked that the hon. Member who had last spoken seemed to think that this Bill was hostile to the ratepayers. That was a most extraordinary delusion, because, by securing the continuance in safety of the Voluntary Schools, it would, instead of being hostile to them, save the ratepayers of this country an enormous expenditure of the ratepayers' money. ["Hear, hear!"] The hon. Member said that the whole popularity of Voluntary Schools, or, as he himself should prefer to call them, denominational schools, was a myth. He had told them that why people liked the denominational school was because it saved them expense in education. There were more places in Board than in Voluntary Schools, but many parents preferred to send their children to Voluntary Schools. Why was that? He freely admitted that the secular education in Board Schools was better. It was because they valued the religious teaching of the Voluntary Schools. The Mover of the Amendment tried to make out that the supporters of Board Schools were more to be pitied than the supporters of Voluntary Schools. He seemed to think the latter were rich people who deserved no sympathy. But take the Roman Catholic schools. They were supported by the pence of poor persons, collected with much difficulty and infinite labour. The whole contention that the ratepayer was worse off than the voluntary subscriber was simply absurd. Nothing had been more splendid than the earnestness of the religious denominations during the last 27 years in their competition to maintain their schools against the wealthy ratepaying communities which supported the Board Schools. The hon. Member was not the only one who had tried to minimise the strain that existed upon the supporters of the Voluntary Schools. The right hon. Member for Wolverhampton, on the First Reading of the Bill did so.

SIR HENRY FOWLER (Wolverhampton, E.): I said that the strain on the ratepayers was quite as great as that on the supporters of Voluntary Schools.

*VISCOUNT CRANBORNE, resuming, said he did not think the facts would bear out that contention. They found that even under the stress of the competition between Board and Voluntary Schools the expenditure of Voluntary Schools was relatively less and was yearly becoming more so. That phenomenon on one side of the account produced a coresponding phenomenon on the other, and they found that not only was the grant greater to Voluntary than Board Schools, but the difference in the grant to the two classes of schools was yearly becoming greater. Was there no "strain" on the teachers of Voluntary Schools? From their love for the schools the teachers were willing to receive lower salaries than those paid to teachers in Board Schools. The hon. Member could have no conception what a difference this made. In Birmingham Board School teachers were paid half as much again as the teachers in the Voluntary Schools; in Manchester Board School teachers received nearly half as much again as Voluntary School teachers; and in London, which was, of course, the worst and most striking instance that could be given, Board School teachers received nearly two-thirds as much again as the

Voluntary School teacher. In rich communities like these the great inequality was most acutely felt, and he hoped the Bill would do something to remedy it. [*Cheers.*] The right hon. Gentleman said the surrenders of Voluntary Schools were few. To surrender was the last resort of such schools, but he regretted to say the number of schools that had surrendered was not inconsiderable. Since 1870, 1,323 Voluntary Schools had surrendered, of which 938 were Church of England Schools. Whether they looked at the amount spent on the Voluntary Schools or earned by them, the sums paid to the teachers or the schools that had surrendered or been given up, they must come to the conclusion to which their private experience had led them—that the strain on the Voluntary Schools was great. ["Hear, hear!"] It varied as between place and place, school district and school district, locality and locality; it also varied from year to year. This was very important to bear in mind when they came to consider the policy of the present Bill. As between county and county he did not think the existence could be doubted of the great inequality which the Colonial Secretary had told Parliament it was the policy of the Bill to remedy. In Oxfordshire the difference between the expenditure of Voluntary and Board Schools was almost nil. If anything, more was spent on the Voluntary Schools. In the case of an ordinary agricultural county he believed it would be found that 5s. or 6s. marked the difference in the expenditure in Voluntary and Board Schools. But in the large centres it was different. In Manchester 14s. more per head was spent on the education of Board School than on Voluntary School children. He was quite willing to consider the ratepayer, but what he thought was of the utmost importance was that the children should receive a good education. [*Opposition cheers.*] A parent who desired that his child should receive a religious education, so far from being treated worse than the parent who cared chiefly for secular education, ought to be favoured by the State as a worthy citizen who desired that his child should be one too. In Birmingham 16s. 11½d. more was spent per head on the education of Board as compared with Voluntary School children. In London, the most crushing case of all, 22s. per head more was spent on Board School children. This showed the enormous inequality between place and place, and justified the discrimination between place and place provided for in the Bill. The Education Department were permitted to make a larger grant for urban than rural children. He hailed this with satisfaction, and trusted that when the Bill became law the Department would avail itself of the power which he hoped Parliament would confer upon it. A distinction was also to be made between school and school in the same locality. The expense of a child's education in a small school was much greater than in a large school. There were many varieties of schools, and it would be most unwise if 5s., or whatever it was, were granted to every school alike, regardless of individual necessities. ["Hear, hear!"] Consequently the Government had adopted, and he thought most wisely, a device which they had pressed upon them over and over again during the last ten years—namely, to give this money especially in order to induce schools to federate together. ["Hear, hear!"] That had been the policy of Churchmen, and, indeed, he believed, of all those who had the interests of education at heart. He recollected that in the Act of 1891 they succeeded in putting in a provision to bring about federation, but the right hon. Member for Wolverhampton discovered some musty privilege of that House which made that clause abortive; but he did not think the right hon. Gentleman, although he succeeded in destroying that clause, had ever disapproved of the principle. He was very glad that the germ of federation which they planted in the Bill of 1891 was developing into so promising a plan as that in the present Bill. That policy had been favoured always by the Churches; and the National Society, which had the supervision of more than half the schools of this country, was strongly in favour of the system of federation which the Government had consented to. ["Hear, hear!"] The distinction between urban and rural, and the federation of schools, appeared to him to be admirable points. He ought not to omit to say, with regard to the 5s., that since the last time the subject was before Parliament there was a great improvement, for which they were grateful to the Government. He had pointed out that not only were Board Schools much richer than Voluntary Schools, but every year they spent more and more, and the difference between the two classes of schools grew greater. He was sorry there was nothing in the Bill that would meet that case. This Bill, although a Measure of very great relief, could not in any way be considered as a settlement of the difficulty. [*Ministerial cheers and ironical Opposition cheers.*] There was, for example, the case of the London School Board. He thought he was not inaccurate in saying that last year the expenditure per child on the London School Board had increased to the extent of over 3s. It was quite clear that in a place where such a rapid increase had taken place, nothing in the Government Bill could be looked upon as a permanent settlement of the difficulty. This was, as his right hon. Friend had implied, an interim Measure. He did not criticise the Government for a moment for having adopted an interim Measure rather than a permanent one, but, of course, it left a good deal to be done in the future. The Bill as it stood could not meet the difficulty of the growing expenditure. He understood that the position was, that as soon as the Bill passed, schemes would be drawn under which sums of money would be allotted to the various schemes, and that these would receive the approval of the Department, together with the constitution under which these various federations would work. He was afraid that when once the sums of money had been determined on they never could be varied. They could not say, because a School Board in one district had determined to give a more expensive education, that, therefore, they must give more money to certain Voluntary Schools, and for that purpose must take some of the money hitherto granted to other Voluntary Schools. That would be an impossibility. Therefore no readjustment was possible to meet the growing expenditure, and that was sufficient to show that this Bill could not be considered permanent. He understood the position of hon. and right hon. Gentlemen opposite was that whatever was done to the Volun- Schools should be done to the Board Schools; and that, if the Voluntary Schools were placed in a better position to compete with their rivals, in this Bill, when right hon. Gentlemen opposite came into office they would put it right by increasing the sum given to the Board Schools. [*Opposition cheers.*] They probably would not have enough money to do it—[*laughter*]—but that would be absurd. Churchmen had asked the Government to treat the Board and Voluntary Schools upon the same footing as far as State money was concerned, on the express condition that the existing inequality between the two should be remedied by a measure of rate aid. To ask them to give State aid money equally to the Board and Voluntary Schools would be the most absurd thing in the world if those inequalities of which they complained were not remedied. ["Hear, hear!"] Although, as he had said, it was not of a permanent character, the Bill appeared to him to be in many ways an admirably drawn Measure. He thought that some parts of the Bill were rather vaguely expressed—[*ironical Opposition cheers*]—but it was not at all a bad plan in the case of an interim

Measure to allow the Department a free hand in making the necessary arrangements, although he was no advocate for giving too great power to the Education Department. He earnestly hoped these considerations would be borne in mind. Of what kind ought a permanent Measure to be? On that point he would like to offer a word of warning to many of his hon. Friends sitting behind the Government. Some of them had indicated a Measure of secondary education as the proper ultimate solution of the Primary Schools difficulty. He believed that to be a delusion, though he had not a word to say against the establishment of a system of secondary education. The establishment of such a system would help the solution of the difficulties of Elementary Schools, but it would not solve them. ["Hear, hear!"] They had it on the assurance of the Government themselves, in the Report of the Committee on Education, that it was the cost of elementary education which was continually rising and must continue to rise. ["Hear, hear!"] He was glad to say that the scheme which was drawn up at Church House had been commented on not at all unfavourably. He believed that in its general outlines it was an admirable scheme, and it was a scheme which would not have been in any way unpopular with Board Schools, because it would have treated Board and Voluntary Schools alike. The remedy for the inequalities which now existed would have been found in the rates, and the income of the Voluntary Schools would have been the same as the income of the Board Schools, and in that way it would have been a final settlement. He did not, however, criticise the Government because they did not find themselves able to adopt that scheme, and while the Unionist Party was making up its mind—[*Opposition cheers*]—he did not think it was at all a bad thing to have an interim Bill. But Voluntary Schools could not be saved permanently by any fixed sum. ["Hear, hear!"] There were two parties, one of whom, as had been said, had a bottomless purse, and was perpetually raising the expenditure. In consequence of public opinion not being ripe, the Government were unable to effect a settlement of this question. They had done what in them lay to meet the difficulties of Voluntary Schools, and he thanked them most heartily that in some of the provisions of this Bill they had realised and attempted to meet the conditions under which their unequal contest with Board Schools was carried on. ["Hear, hear!"] He believed the Bill would give that sufficient breathing space to Voluntary Schools which would enable them to survive until a more permanent Measure could be agreed on by Parliament and the country. [*Cheers.*]

MR. JOHN MORLEY (Montrose Burghs), who was received with cheers, said: I am sure that the whole House, however they may differ from the noble Lord on many important topics of difference, will recognise in all he said on this question, and in what he has said to-night, a tone of absolute sincerity. [*Cheers.*] But while I hope that in what I have to say I shall not say anything to wound the feelings of the noble Lord, I must say that he has made some remarks which I do not think will afford comfort to right hon. Gentlemen on the Bench opposite, or persuade the House of the expediency of the Measure which we are discussing. ["Hear, hear!"] It appears from what the noble Lord has said that this is a Measure which we are to take as an interim Measure, to last while the Unionist Party is making up its mind. [*Cheers.*] But how long are we to wait? [*Cheers.*] What is to be thought when one of the most important supporters of the Government says that this is a casual and temporary settlement which they have not thought out, and which they do not design to be a settlement, but something to amuse their own supporters for a year or two, or for whatever lapse of time is necessary to enable them to make up their minds? ["Hear, hear!"] The noble Lord said one or two things which are instructive. He flattered himself that when the time comes for the occupants of that Bench to retire those who succeed them will find no balance of revenue with which to deal either with Voluntary Schools or Board Schools. [*Cheers.*] That is a very discouraging announcement on the part of the noble Lord, which I think is very likely to come true. The prospect he is holding out to my right hon. Friends near me is certainly a gloomy one. [*Laughter.*] But all that the noble Lord could say of the Bill was that it was not a bad plan, that it was vaguely expressed and all the better for that. [*Cheers.*] That I comprehend, because, if your intentions are crude, or if you have intentions which it is not convenient to disclose, crude drafting is certainly an advantage. [*Cheers and laughter.*] In that portion of the noble Lord's speech which I heard, I did not detect once the accent of the citizen. I heard the accent of the Churchman, I heard the accent of the sectarian—[*cheers*]—but I never once heard the accent of the citizen, and I am bound to say that I did not hear the accent of a man who thinks that we are discussing the great topic of the education of our common people. I submit, with all respect for the noble Lord's sincerity and the work in which he is engaged, from his own point of view, that the fact that he does not regard this subject from a civic standpoint—

Viscount CRANBORNE: Before the right hon. Member came into the House I had said that what I cared most about was the education of the children, and that I did not regard the interests of the ratepayers as approaching in importance the interests of the children. ["Hear, hear!"]

Mr. J. MORLEY: That does not materially affect my view, because the noble Lord, perfectly conscientiously and perfectly within his rights as a citizen, regards education as Church education, and that is not what the State is concerned with. [*Cheers.*] It is a good many years since I took an active, and perhaps an aggressive, part in this controversy, following and working with my right hon. Friend the Colonial Secretary. [*Cheers.*] We are engaged in a very serious controversy, and behind all this discussion there are—I should be the last person to deny it—grave and solemn issues. As far as those things as to which it is very important that men should care are concerned, I have not changed my views since the opening of the education battle after Mr. Forster's Act was passed. But I am quite willing to admit that in some respects the movement of events, the movement of men's minds, has not gone as far as in those rather distant days the Colonial Secretary and I anticipated. I admit that, and therefore if anybody is in a humour to bring up against me utterances of an aggressive character upon education policy, made under a different set of circumstances, I do not withdraw from them as made at that time. But, as I said, a new situation has arisen, partly owing to the merits, which I will not deny, and services, and activity, and generosity of the Party which the noble Lord represents. [*Ministerial cheers.*] I should not be dealing fairly with the subject or the House if I did not make that admission at once. But we have come to a new situation, or rather we have arrived at a point where we have to recognise a new situation. The view held between 1870 and 1880 by the Colonial Secretary, myself, and others, was that the nation would desire to have what we thought and I still think most desirable that it should have—namely, a system under which there should be no recognition by the State of any educational institutions which in any way partook of a sectarian character. [*Cheers.*] I hold that view as strongly as I ever did; but in this House we must deal with the practical problem before us in a practical spirit. I do not think that the

Government do that by bringing in what the noble Lord truly calls an interim Measure, a Measure which is not a settlement, but which is in the nature of a defence hastily thrown up, and a defence of what? It is a defence of a Church endowed with privileges, and which seeks to endow itself both by interim Measures and by the permanent Measures which the noble Lord hopes some day or other to have—Measures which shall strengthen its defences and add still more to the sectarian character of these educational institutions. Now I come to the Amendment before the House. I do not think, after the extremely clear and lucid speech in which my hon. Friend below the gangway moved this Amendment, that I need labour the question of the expediency of attempting a settlement of the claims of the Voluntary Schools without also attempting a settlement of the equal claims of the Board Schools. I will not go into that question on its merits, because the Government have been slowly, reluctantly, and grudgingly driven to this position, that they feel they are bound at the earliest possible moment to bring in a Measure which shall deal with Board Schools more or less on the same principles as those on which they are now dealing with Voluntary Schools. But that was not the language used at the beginning of the Session. [*Cheers.*] The Government have had some sharp spurs applied to them. [THE FIRST LORD of the TREASURY: "That was exactly the language used."] [*Opposition cries of* "No!" *and cheers.*] I do not believe that in the speech with which the right hon. Gentleman introduced the Bill there was any serious language of that kind.

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY: That was because I was introducing one Bill and not another. [*Laughter and cheers.*]

MR. J. MORLEY: Yes, the position you now take up is that you are eager to introduce the other Bill, but you did not take up that position then. ["Hear, hear!"]

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY: The Bill was not ready. It would not have been in order.

MR. J. MORLEY: We understand perfectly well that various sharp spurs have been applied to the Government. We have had declarations from hon. Members below the gangway opposite, and there have been one or two elections. [*Cheers.*] I am sure the right hon. Gentleman cannot have overlooked what was said by the defeated candidate for Walthamstow, who belongs to the Ministerial Party. He said:—

> "If the Education Bill had been introduced three days later we should have kept Walthamstow; if three days earlier we should have lost Romford."

[*Cheers.*] Now the high-water mark of the pledges or promises of the Government on this question of bringing in a Bill dealing with School Boards, as you are now proposing to deal with Voluntary Schools, was reached by my right hon. Friend the Secretary for the Colonies, whose absence and the cause of it I am sure we all very sincerely regret. [*Cheers.*] What did my right hon. Friend say? He said:—

> "We pledge ourselves to this, that if gentlemen opposite give us reasonable time we will deal with this matter, even though it is not, as I have shown, as urgent and as pressing, in the same Session."

Speaking of the Leader of the Opposition the Colonial Secretary added:—

> "He will say, 'Oh, that is not enough for us; we are of a suspicious disposition; we do not trust you.'"

Well, we do not trust even my right hon. Friend the Secretary for the Colonies. Our confidence in him has been rudely shaken—[*laughter*]—and even his stern stability of conviction and his fidelity to the professions of a lifetime—[*laughter and cheers*]—do not entirely reassure us. When my right hon. Friend was speaking, my memory went back to the time when he was President of the National Education League—[*cheers*]—and, lo! now we have revealed to us the statesman, who was then the prime leader in the Nonconformist attack on the Act of 1870, because it was unfair to Nonconformists, turned into the valiant leader of the clerical attack on the School Boards—[*cheers*]—because they are unfair to the clerical party. We may always change our opinions; as I have said I have changed some of mine. It may be said that "men may rise on stepping-stones of their dead selves to higher things." [*Laughter.*] It is, however, a very ungraceful performance; and it is a great mistake if you lay the ghosts of your dead selves by executing exultant war dances over the graves of your dead selves. [*Laughter and cheers.*] We have a right, therefore, to be suspicious as to the intentions of the Government with regard to this companion Bill. ["Hear, hear!"] We cannot forget the well-known language of Lord Salisbury when he said:—

> "It is our business to capture the Board Schools under the present law and then to capture them under a better law."

You cannot expect us, when you blame us for not accepting your pledges that you are going to bring in a companion Bill, to take all this for granted in face of a Government which has uniformly treated School Boards and Board Schools or used language in connection with them as if they were of the nature of a scourge or a plague. [*Cheers.*] It is quite true the Government have had their lesson, but we still cannot be quite sure that you will treat the introduction of the School Board Bill as urgent and as a companion Bill. The notions of the Government that a matter is urgent are very elastic, for they told us that this Bill was urgent. We were summoned together before the usual time, and it was urgent that the Bill should pass before March 31. The Vice President of the Council, in November last, said it was urgent that a Measure dealing with Voluntary Schools should be passed; but what guarantee have we that the Board School question shall be considered urgent? The Government have promised, no doubt, to deal with the matter, but that is not going very far. We want to know how the Government is going to deal with the matter of Board Schools. [*Cheers.*] Are you going to treat the Board Schools as under this Bill you are treating Voluntary Schools, or are you going to limit the grant in the Board Schools as you do not limit it in connection with the Voluntary Schools? While you give 5s. under this Bill to the Voluntary Schools all round, are you going to give 5s., not to all Board Schools, but only to certain Board Schools? That is a point which we should be glad to have light upon. [*Cheers.*] Are you going to help subscribers on one footing and payers of school rates on another? The noble Lord clearly thinks that there is a claim on the part of Voluntary School subscribers to relief which does not exist in the case of the ratepayers. [*Ministerial cheers.*] That claim I will examine in a moment. But on this point let us know whether you intend that in cities like Newcastle, Bradford, and Leeds, where the ratepayers contribute most to the great cost of education, this cost is to be continued while you are to reserve your bounty for places where the rates are light and the Voluntary subscriptions are inadequate. Take the case of Newcastle. There is about an equal number of children in the Board and the Voluntary Schools—about 12,000 in each of those classes of schools. Under this Bill the Voluntary Schools will get something like £3,000 or £4,000 and the Board Schools are to receive nothing at all. [*Ministerial cheers.*] Now we know. It will interest that constituency to know that the most zealous supporters of the Government think it a perfectly fair, equitable, and just thing that, though the same number of children are in the Board Schools and in the Voluntary Schools of Newcastle, the latter are to receive all this money and the Board

Schools are to receive nothing at all. [" Hear, hear ! "] Of course, I could go through an endless list, but I only mention one other place, the circumstances of which are different, and that is the case of Nottingham. In Nottingham there are 12,000 children in the Voluntary Schools and 25,000 in the Board Schools, and the rate is 13d. in the pound. The Voluntary Schools of Nottingham will receive, amid the plaudits of hon. Gentlemen, £3,000, and the ratepayers, instead of being relieved as they ought to be to the tune of £6,000, will not receive a farthing from this so-called interim settlement. [*Cheers.*] I say you tell us nothing unless you tell us you are going to treat those two classes of schools on the same footing. I was very much impressed by the fervour with which the Colonial Secretary brought forward the case of Birmingham. "The case of the Board Schools," he said,

> "is not the same as the case of the Voluntary Schools. The Board School has its grant and it has in addition the bottomless purse of the ratepayer."

[*Laughter.*] I do not know what our ratepaying constituents will say to the proposition that you may do anything with rates because the purse of the ratepayer is bottomless. [" Hear, hear ! "] I do not know even what the Vice President of the Council thinks of that, because last year he cited rather striking figures. He showed that every rural School Board, or almost every rural School Board, is as necessitous as any Voluntary School or set of Voluntary Schools in the country. [*Cheers.*] The purse of the ratepayers in those poor country parishes is bottomless, according to the argument of the Colonial Secretary, but the argument will not hold water. I do not think the noble Lord to-night quite fairly appreciated the situation. He said the State has stiffened the conditions on which education is carried on and has raised its demands as to the quality of the education, and the result is a strain on the Voluntary Schools which it is not fair they should have imposed upon them. He forgets that there is a real difference of opinion as to what a voluntary subscription is, and what is the meaning of the claim which a voluntary subscription gives on the purse of the State. What the State says to the local community is that they are to provide their fair share in making provision for education in the locality. The State stands perfectly neutral between the two sources of local contribution. [" No ! "] Who says " No " ? Surely, theoretically—I wish it were practically—the State stands neutral. No hon. Gentleman who is at all acquainted with the matter will deny that proposition. It is a matter of indifference to us, says the State, whether you raise the funds by local contributions or by rates. The two sources of local contribution stand on precisely the same footing in respect of a claim for a Parliamentary grant of any kind whatever. The obligation on the ratepayers is one imposed by Parliament. Why, then, should Parliament, in giving to schools a relief, made necessary by a Parliamentary demand as to the character and quality of education—why should the State deal differently with the two classes of local contributions, and why should the ratepayers be placed at a disadvantage as compared with voluntary subscribers ? [" Hear, hear ! "] What is the argument of the Colonial Secretary ? It is a most remarkable argument ; and I invite the attention of the noble Lords the Members for Rochester, Greenwich, and South Kensington to the consideration of the point of this argument. The Colonial Secretary said at Birmingham—and the argument will be used all over the country—

> "If you allow the Voluntary Schools to be extinguished, your rate will rise from 1s. to 1s. 9d."

[*Ministerial cheers.*] I see the Attorney General enthusiastic over those words. [*Laughter.*] But they are not an argument at all ; they are a prediction. [*Cheers.*] The argument is that if you do not deal liberally with the Voluntary Schools you will have to provide for all the work that those Voluntary Schools now do. [*Ministerial cheers.*] But what does that presuppose? Why, that the existing religious communions, although receiving out of moneys voted by this House 30s. per head rough, and though themselves only contributing 6s. or 7s. per head, yet care so little for their educational denominational institutions, are so little in earnest about them, are so insincere—[*cheers*]—in their professions as to the deep value of this denominational instruction, that they are willing to throw it all to the winds, and falsify all their professions because terms are to be made as to a 5s. grant. [*Cheers.*] I wonder what the noble Lord and his friends would have said of me if I had imputed to him and his friends such shallowness in their deep convictions. [*Cheers.*] The prediction of the Colonial Secretary is one that is very likely to tell, and it is one which—if there is any force in it whatever—proves what I do not myself believe, that all this talk about the earnestness of Churchmen and others for their denominational instruction is not sincere. [*Cheers, and cries of* "No!"] Mind, it is not I who say it is insincere. I cannot forget this fact—that the communion which is poorest, which is most hard-pressed in this country, in which a shilling is harder to get than a sovereign is in the Anglican communion—I mean the Roman Catholic communion—they have not transferred one single school. [*Cheers.*] Therefore, do not let hon. Gentlemen opposite be angry with me because I do not accept this argument based on the prediction that rates will go up if you do not deal generously with the Voluntary Schools. I know that at this day it is impossible to assume assent to a system extinguishing the Voluntary Schools. But do not let us be frightened out of being just to the Board Schools by this empty threat that if you do not concede what the extreme partisans of the Voluntary Schools demand you will have those schools extinguished and an enormous burden cast on the rates. There is no evidence of such a thing, and I do not believe it. Now, as to the Bill, hitherto I have been dealing with our contention that it ought to be attended by a companion Bill, and that without it a grievous injustice will be done. This is not a Bill. It is the skeleton of a Bill. [*Cheers.*] The First Lord has spoken of the simplicity of the Bill; but, as my right hon. Friend observed, the simplicity is rather in the authors of the Bill than in the Bill itself. Before the Session is over a good many reasons will be given for the contention that this Bill is too simple a Bill. ["Hear, hear!"] I doubt whether there has ever been such an abdication of legislative function on the part of this House before as that which the Government rashly and in their simplicity ask the House to consent to now. [*Cheers.*] This Bill creates unknown bodies. It does not tell us on what principle they are to be created, or how large they are to be; it does not pacify the right hon. Member for Bodmin by saying whether or not there will be proportional representation on them. [*Laughter.*] They are created under conditions of which this House knows nothing whatever, and they are to be invested, under certain conditions, with important statutory rights. The Education Department, without a hint or a glimpse of the intention of this House, or of what is called "the wisdom of Parliament," is to form associations as it likes. [*Cries of* "No!"] Who says "No?"

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY: I do.

MR. J. MORLEY: This is what the Bill says:—

> "If associations of schools are constituted in such manner, in such areas, and with such governing bodies representative of the managers as are approved by the Education Department."

[*Cheers.*] I say there is not a hint there, there is no principle whatever by which the Department is to be guided in forming, or approving of the formation, of these bodies, their areas, or any particulars concerning them. [*Cheers.*] Second, the Education Department is to distribute grants and amounts as it likes. Third, it is to exclude from participation in the grants all schools whose refusal to associate themselves does not satisfy the Department as reasonable. [*Cheers.*] Fourth, it is to fix a discriminating scale between rural and urban schools, if it likes and as it likes. [*Cheers.*] Fifth, it is to decide as it likes, whether due regard is or is not being paid to the maintenance of Voluntary Schools. I say there is no precaution taken to secure that what the wisdom of Parliament desires the Department to do in regard to any of these cardinal principles shall be done. We talk very often of the necessity for devolution and delegation; but this is devolution and delegation with a vengeance. [*Cheers.*] This may be crude drafting. It hides either a crude intention, or an intention it is not thought desirable to make clear. ["Hear, hear!"] I now come to a couple of minor points indicating the spirit in which this Bill has been framed and showing that it is worse than the Bill of last year. Audit is one of the most important things if we are going to have real control over these schools. In the present Bill the Department may require an audit if they are so minded. In the Bill of last year you declared that the accounts of every school should be audited, not by the inspectors of the Department, but by the inspectors of the County Councils. I do not believe the Vice President of the Council would deny that the present system of audit is very much in the nature of a sham. Last year you said the audit must be undertaken by an independent public officer. Now, the audit is optional and the auditor is a less responsible officer. [*Cheers.*] Then there is another small point. The First Lord of the Treasury said this was a very simple Bill; that the Second Reading would be got rid of in two-and-a-half days' discussion, and that we would have a short Committee stage. But does the right hon. Gentleman know how many questions are lying in wait amid the complex machinery which has been invented? ["Hear, hear!"] You propose that the Voluntary Schools shall pay no rates. I do not see anything objectionable in that. [*Ministerial cheers.*] Yes, but why do you not extend it to the Board Schools? [*Cheers.*] I know you will say:—

> "Oh, what is the use of taking the trouble to free the Board Schools from rates—that would simply be taking money out of one pocket to put it into another?"

[*Ministerial cheers.*] That is not so at all. All Board Schools will pay rates, not for themselves, but for the whole union in which they are situated; and if there is a Voluntary School in any parish in the union it will not contribute one penny to the rates. [*Cheers.*] In most towns the School Board is in a union which is much larger than the area of the town itself. The town of Luton, in Bedfordshire, has 30,000 inhabitants, but it belongs to a union with 45,000 inhabitants. Therefore Luton will pay rates on its own schools for the benefit of 15,000 people—that is, the difference between the 45,000 population of the union and the 30,000 population of the Luton School Board area—the 15,000 being outside the town in rural parishes with Voluntary Schools which will make no contribution in relief of the union rate. [*Cheers.*] And yet this is a Bill which the right hon. Gentleman describes as a simple Bill and hopes will pass quickly. [*Laughter.*] Again, we were told, I think by the Solicitor General in the Debate on the Resolution, that if adequate safeguards were a point upon which we wanted light, why did we not reserve our criticisms until we saw the Bill? We all know that that is a common argument when a Bill is introduced or when there is a preliminary Resolution. It is first said: "When you see the Bill you can better raise your points." Then you are warned they are Committee points, and you must wait for the Committee; and then, when you raise these points in Committee you are ruled out of order. [*Cheers and laughter.*] There were three points upon which we said that safeguards were necessary. They were popular control, that this additional grant should be expended in promoting efficiency, and that the level of private subscriptions should not be lowered. As to efficiency, I discern no safeguard whatever. ["Hear, hear!"] The Bill says the Department shall distribute the aid grant as they "think best for the purpose of helping necessitous schools and increasing their efficiency." That is all. Last year you enumerated what you meant by efficiency, but in this Bill you substitute a single phrase for what in the Bill of last year was an elaborate and detailed account of what efficiency was and what the conditions were which the local authority was to require. The substitution of an indefinite phrase for definite and detailed language will certainly not tend to make the Department regard increased efficiency in proportion to the expenditure as a vital object. We have to take care by definite enactments —[*cheers*]—which we shall, at all events, try to insert in the Bill, that this increased grant shall go to increased efficiency, and that no portion of it shall find its way to such matters as structural alterations, or paying off debts—["Hear, hear!"]— which, I am told, is a possible use to which the balance of this money may be devoted. As to the maintenance of subscriptions, what are the words of the Bill? "Due regard being had to the maintenance of voluntary subscriptions." Surely that is a very weak phrase in regard to what, in our view, ought to be an obligation of the very first order. What is "due regard to the maintenance of voluntary subscriptions?" Do you mean the maintenance of the present rate? There are 1,000 Voluntary Schools which have no subscriptions, and there are 3,000 whose voluntary subscriptions are under 5s. Are you going to stereotype that for all time? Is the Department, having due regard to the maintenance of subscriptions, to insist upon their maintenance at that level? Subscriptions went up during 1894-95. That, however, was a special effort. Will you, for instance, insist upon the subscriptions being kept up to the level of a five-years' average? Then there is the question of local popular control, which many of us regard as the most important point of all. Where is the safeguard for that? Last year you recognised the principle; but I find no recognition whatever of it in this Bill. There is no provision introducing any sort of popular control either on the board of managers of the schools or on the management of the associations; and you are going to hand over these large sums of public money to bodies of persons who will distribute it in absolute irresponsibility of public opinion and public feeling in the localities concerned; so you are aggravating what is a well-recognised, established anomaly in our educational system. Our view on this point was well stated in 1885 by my right hon. Friend the present Colonial Secretary. The right hon. Gentleman then said:—

> "The existence of sectarian schools supported by State grant is no doubt a very serious question, and one which some day or another ought to receive consideration. Whenever the time comes for its discussion, I for one shall not hesitate to express my opinions that contribution of Government money, whether great or small, ought in all cases to be accompanied by some form of representative control." [*Opposition cheers.*] "To my mind the spectacle of a so-called national school turned into a private preserve by clerical managers, and used for exclusive purposes of politics or religion, is one which the law ought not to tolerate."

The right hon. Gentleman laid it down the other night that the consistency of one of its prominent Members was one of the priceless possessions of the House. [*Laughter.*] Now, the Bill directs that the Education Department might, if it likes, take into account differences that exist between schools in the towns and schools in the country. The First Lord of the Treasury has said that the argument for this discrimination between town and country rested upon a broad fact. What was that fact? That which the right hon. Gentleman alleged to be a fact I do not believe to be a fact at all. I think he made a mistake—that he was misinformed when he said that the cost of education is lower in the country than in the towns. [The FIRST LORD of the TREASURY: "Hear, hear!"] The House will readily understand that this is a very important matter, and that it will greatly interest the constituencies, especially those in the urban districts. Well, a distinction may be drawn between urban and rural schools, because, as the First Lord of the Treasury says, the urban schools are more costly than the rural schools, and by a rural county I mean a county where the majority of the population live under rural circumstances and are engaged in rural pursuits. ["Hear, hear!"] Well, taking the most recent figures that are accessible, I will compare Durham and Staffordshire, which are obviously urban counties, with Dorsetshire, Herefordshire, and Shropshire. In Durham the cost of education per head is 34s., and in Staffordshire 32s. 6d.

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY: Does that apply to all schools, or only to Voluntary Schools?

MR. J. MORLEY: To all schools.

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY: Including Board Schools?

MR. J. MORLEY: I think so, but I will see in a moment. [The right hon. Gentleman having consulted a paper, said] No, I beg pardon; I was in error. The figures apply to Voluntary Schools. Well, to proceed; I find that while in the two urban counties I have named the cost of education per head is only 34s. and 32s. 6d. per head respectively, in Dorsetshire the cost is 37s. 6d. per head, in Herefordshire 42s. per head, and in Shropshire 38s. per head. [*Cheers.*] Those figures, therefore, do not bear out the statement of the right hon. Gentleman. ["Hear, hear!"] I would call the right hon. Gentleman's attention to another fact. The proposal is that urban schools should have more than rural schools. Why? I have shown they do not spend more on education, but less. Then as to subscriptions—this, at all events, concerns Voluntary Schools only. In Durham the subscription is 5s. 8d. per head and 4s. in Staffordshire. Yes, but in Dorsetshire it is 9s., in Herefordshire it is 10s. 3d., and in Shropshire 9s. So you come to this, that where the subscription is highest, and where the cost per child is highest, there, according to the intention of the Treasury, there is going to be the least appropriation of this grant. [*Cheers.*] Of course, it is perfectly obvious why rural schools cost more than urban schools. It is because they have a smaller attendance, and therefore the cost is divided over a smaller area. ["Hear, hear!"] I have, I think, given some reasons why the Members for urban constituencies should be somewhat concerned in this Bill. I think this is a reason why the Members for rural constituencies, too, should think they are not very fairly dealt with. I come now to the matter of the associations. The proposal of the associations is the kernel of the Bill. [The First Lord of the Treasury: "Hear, hear!"] What does this association mean? It means that, instead of allowing the Department directly to distribute this 5s. per head in the same way as it distributes the capitation grant—instead of dealing with it in that simple way—the ingenious mind of the author of the Bill has invented machinery which, to those who realise the conditions under which the associations are to work, is as cumbrous and as unworkable as any machinery that has ever been invented. The right hon. Gentleman interrupted me on the point of the hypothetical character of the formation of these associations. I do not know that there has ever been before an organic part of a Bill introduced by such a word as "if"—"if" these associations come into existence. It is very peculiar, at all events. If they do not come into existence, if they do not offer to create themselves in some way or another, then I suppose the Education Department will distribute this grant as it thinks fit through its inspectors. But it is not your intention that these associations shall not come into existence. On the contrary, your whole hope—and the right hon. Gentleman did not conceal it—[The First Lord of the Treasury: "Hear, hear!"]—is that these associations will form themselves. I will not give any opinion of my own of what these associations are likely to be, but I will quote the words of *The Times* this morning in a well-informed article, of what the Government undoubtedly expect:—

> "We may take it for granted that they will be for large areas, possibly one for each diocese"—[*cheers*]—"working through sub-associations for archdeaconries or rural deaneries, and that at first they will be no more than bodies representing the managers of the associated schools, with the duty of drawing up a scheme of distribution of the aid grant among them—the said grant, when confirmed by the Education Department, being paid, not to the association(as contemplated in some schemes of federation), but direct to the schools."

To put it shortly: if that is the true meaning of what is in contemplation by the Government of what the Department will do, if the right hon. Gentleman continues to administer the Department under the direction of the Government, you are going to give this money to the Bishops and to Cardinal Vaughan to distribute as they think best. [*Cheers.*] That is the plain interpretation of it. Of course, there may be, for all I know, some other interpretation; but if there is, you had better tell us plainly what it is that you do mean. ["Hear, hear!"] I am not sure, so far as my information goes, that this device will be very acceptable. I rather think that when the proposal was made some time last year, either at the Church House or some such gathering, it was received very frigidly indeed, and for a very good reason—because the local clergy, the clerical managers, felt that any step of this kind, any diocesan centralisation, would stop the interest of local subscribers and the flow of subscriptions. I want to ask this question, which perhaps the Solicitor General will presently answer. Suppose that a clergyman, a clerical manager, or any manager, says, "Oh, no; I think that by joining this diocesan association I shall be checking local interest in the school, and therefore I cannot agree to pool"—I use a profane word—"my grant." Is that to be, or is it not to be, a reasonable ground of refusal? ["Hear, hear!"] Depend upon it, it is one of which you will hear a great deal. ["Hear, hear!"] Take another case. I am told that British schools and many Wesleyan schools have posts of their own foundation, but I take such an instance as this. A clergyman, say, in the town of Blackburn, where are excellent Voluntary Schools, this clergyman has this 5s. grant warm in his pocket. Will he, do you think, be happy to hand this grant over to the diocesan centre and receive back perhaps some 2s. or 3s. as his share? Well, if he refuses to associate and pool his money, is that to be treated as unreasonable? ["Hear!"] There are hundreds of illustrations I could give, but I will not at this hour labour the point. My own impression is, and hon. Gentlemen opposite know more about this than I do, but I suspect they will share my impression, that these local managers, clergymen, and others, would far rather trust the Education Department to distribute the fund than they would under compulsion—for it is a kind of compulsion—enter into one of these associations where everyone will be ready to make a fight for his own hand under circumstances far more disadvantageous than if he had to do with the Department itself. Let us picture to ourselves what will be the position of the Department in the face of these associations. There will be two attitudes, either the Department will be energetic, vigilant, and with a will of its own, or it will see with the eyes and hear with the ears of the association. If the latter, the Department sees with association eyes and hears with association ears, then these diocesan associations will be left completely masters of the field, which I do not think is contemplated by the House of Commons. If the Department does not surrender itself, if it stands fast and exercises its judgment as to the local fitness and fairness of schemes submitted to it, if it satisfies itself that the schemes are properly carried out then why should not the Department, if it is going to undertake all the work of supervision, do the thing itself direct and at once without this intervening body? The right hon. Gentleman the Vice President of the Council last year gave us instances of the overwork of the Department. It was a striking account, and I want to know what in the view of the Government is going to be added to the burden of this already overworked Department. Then there is the question of the administrative cost of the machinery you have chosen. These associations will, I presume, have to sit permanently with a secretary and offices. Who is to pay? I do not know whether the cost is to come out of the £620,000. ["No, no!"] Then it will come out of a charge on the Department? [The FIRST LORD of the TREASURY: "No!"] It must come out of one or the other, or where is it to come from? I gather it is not to be an extra charge on the Department? [The FIRST LORD of the TREASURY: "Hear, hear!"] Then we have this position—here is this unknown, unconstituted body to be paid out of some unknown fund. [*Opposition cheers.*] Then, besides this local charge, there will eventually be, as everyone must see, an enormous extension of the central staff; there must be in such a system as this. Have you realised how much that will be? The Department will have to exercise supervision over all the refusals, to consult with the diocesan body as to schemes, and will have most unenviable functions. Many have been the trials of the Department before now, but nothing to compare with this. Under the Bill it will be a sort of Court of Appeal to which will come complaints of all kinds as to the appropriation of funds and other wranglings, all of which the Department will have to decide. I do not wish to say anything uncharitable about the clergymen and these diocesan centres, but I presume they are not exempt from the ordinary infirmities of human nature where money is concerned, and nobody can doubt that the Department will have to settle endless complaints and contentions arising out of this business. I should like to know whether any estimate has been made of the cost of all this. The First Lord of the Treasury said one reason against giving 5s. all round to all schools alike in addition to the capitation grant—a scheme of which before this Bill leaves the House we shall hear more—was that it would involve enormous waste. ["Hear, hear!"] Quite so. He meant, I suppose, you would give the grant to schools that did not need it. Has the right hon. Gentleman attempted to estimate how much extravagance and waste will be involved by this costly and cumbrous machinery which will be set up? I beg him to think of that. ["Hear, hear!"] Meanwhile, I have a strong objection to the Bill as it stands. The noble Lord opposite was right in calling this an interim Bill. If you had meant to proceed to a final and full settlement you never would have devised all this unworkable machinery. You know perfectly well, and Members for urban constituencies must know, that you will not be able to pass separately a Board School Bill.

AN HON. MEMBER: Why not?

MR. MORLEY: Of course it is only promised on condition that there is abundance of time. You will see from the few points I have stated against the Bill as it now stands, as fairly as I could, what by fair consideration and fair examination of all the points that you have raised, and which you must have known you would raise whenever you touched this complex and intricate educational question—you will see what time there will be to consider another Measure. ["Hear, hear!"] It would have been a far greater economy of time, and you would have arrived far more rapidly at the object you profess, if you had united the two Bills. [*Cheers.*] At any rate your own skeleton will have to be clothed. I hope I have said nothing in the remarks I have made to make Gentlemen below the Gangway suppose I am for a moment in conflict with what I think is good in their aims. But, as I began by saying, I do not feel in this Bill there is a true recognition of the great principle of civil equality. I think there is an attempt—a clumsy and cumbrous attempt—to do what the noble Lord desired to have done—namely, provide a sort of defence hastily thrown up. I think the noble Lord accurately described it, and it is because it is in the nature of a defence, not for a great public object, but for a sectarian object, and because it is hastily thrown up and not deliberately conceived and maturely planned, that I, for one, shall cordially vote for the Amendment of my hon. Friend. [*Cheers.*]

*MR. GRIFFITH-BOSCAWEN (Kent, Tunbridge) thought if the Government wanted any justification for their policy in dividing the two Bills it was furnished by the speech of the right hon. Gentleman, who, only raising a few points on one of the Bills, had spoken for an hour and a half. How many hours would have been taken up if the two schemes had been included in this Bill? The Government were to be sincerely congratulated on their policy, and if what the right hon. Gentleman had urged was the worst that could be said about the Bill they might proceed with it with a very light heart. The right hon. Gentleman had asked them why, in the case of Newcastle and other places, they were going to give a large sum of money to the subscribers of Voluntary Schools and not going to give an equal sum of money to the ratepayers who supported the Board Schools? The right hon. Gentleman seemed to forget that the people who, by their subscriptions, supported the Voluntary Schools in Newcastle, also by payment of the rates, supported the Board Schools. They were the people who were now contributing to both sets of schools, and in relieving them the Government were not only relieving the voluntary subscribers but those ratepayers who were now paying doubly for the education of the people. The right hon. Gentleman asked them the old question, "Why is there to be no popular control?" But in the last year's Bill there was popular control, and hon. and right hon. Gentlemen opposite would not have that popular control, although they now taunted the Government with not having put it into this year's Bill. The answer to the right hon. Gentleman's question was that for this particular proposal local popular control was unnecessary, because, as the funds were provided entirely by the taxpayer, all that was necessary was to see that the taxpayers' money and interests were properly safeguarded, and that was effectually done by the inspection of the Education Department. The right hon. Gentleman waxed very indignant over the fact that the associations of schools in the Bill were so very vague. It was complained that no exact process was laid down by which the associations were to be formed. Elasticity in the formation of the associations was of the greatest importance, and he submitted that a great deal of harm would have been done, and this provision rendered nugatory, if, instead of allowing localities to form associations in the way that seemed best to them, elaborate instructions were laid down exactly how the associations were to be formed. He attached the greatest importance to the associations, and could not imagine anything better or more calculated to relieve distress in connection with the schools. More or less distress existed among the Voluntary Schools all over the country. But the distress varied. In his own constituency were schools which did not want any aid; to others, from 5s. to 10s. would be barely sufficient. By means of the associations the help given could be made suitable to the amount of distress existing in each particular school. He would rather have the associations with no grant at all than any grant likely to be given without association. Nothing was more likely to effect a permanent settlement of the question than the association of schools. By association Voluntary Schools would not only be able to make the pecuniary grant go further, but, with good management, they would be able to stand up against the Board Schools which were competing hostilely against them. The right hon. Member for Montrose asked why such vague words were used as to maintaining voluntary subscriptions? He himself contended that the best way had been adopted of maintaining the subscriptions. If a school ceased to raise subscriptions, trusting to get this aid grant, the Education Department would have an absolute right to refuse it. The power of the Department to refuse would have the best effect in maintaining the subscriptions. The right hon. Member for Montrose gave fallacious figures to disprove the position of the First Lord of the Treasury that larger grants ought to go to urban than to rural schools. The right hon. Member for Montrose in his figures had only referred to Voluntary Schools. Voluntary Schools in urban districts had to compete with the Board Schools, which had the unlimited purse of the rates, and it was in the urban districts that this competition was most severe. There was no point whatever in simply taking the Voluntary Schools. The friends of Voluntary Schools were all in favour of educational efficiency, but they held strongly that there could not be educational efficiency in the proper sense without definite religious instruction. That was a most serious matter, which the citizens of this country had to consider. They had to consider the future of the nation, and it would be a very serious thing to turn out on the country children who, in the future, would have votes and be our governors, who had not been brought up with any definite instruction in religion. The Opposition had undoubtedly brought forward many different arguments against the Bill. They had complained that the Voluntary Schools were all to get grants and that all the Board Schools were not to. He did not believe in the sincerity of these arguments. He believed that the real reason for the opposition to this Bill, and to the Bill of last year, was that right hon. and hon. Gentlemen opposite were determined to get rid of religious instruction in the schools altogether. The right hon. Member for Montrose had said that in former years that was his position. The Party opposite had been in alliance with what was called the Educational Progressive Party on the London School Board, whose programme in 1891 was to do away entirely with religious instruction in the schools. He submitted that that was the real issue, and there could be no agreement between those who wished to get this Bill pushed through and those who were determined, not only to stop this Bill if they could, but to stop any Education Bill brought in in the interests of the Voluntary Schools. The Board Schools had the rates to depend on, but the Voluntary Schools had only the voluntary subscription—[*Opposition laughter*]—as compared with the rates. [*Cheers.*] Partly owing to the competition of the Board Schools, partly owing to the increased cost of education, it was almost impossible now to keep the Voluntary Schools alive. It had been said that the talk of an intolerable strain was all nonsense, and that they were proposing an excessive remedy for a very small grievance. But since 1870 the cost of education per child per annum had increased by no less than a sovereign each. So far from asking for an excessive remedy they were asking for a minimum, and the Government in this Bill were proposing a minimum. If the Bill were rejected, in a great many places the Voluntary Schools would cease to exist, and, in his opinion, that was the object of hon. Members opposite, who hated religious instruction. [*Cries of* "No!"] Well, who hated definite religious instruction. [*Cries of* "No!"] They were content, at all events, with the sort of religious instruction they got in the Board Schools, which meant that they might have no religious instruction at all, because it was left absolutely to the members of the Board to decide whether they would have religious instruction or not. That sort of religious instruction would not satisfy hon. Members on that side of the House. He quite believed the time would come when the Cowper-Temple Clause would be repealed, and when all schools alike would be supported out of the rates or by Government money, and all would be denominational; but if the country were not yet ripe for that, they must, at all hazards, save the Voluntary Schools. As a temporary Measure this was an exceedingly good one, and this grant would be of the very greatest use to the Voluntary Schools. He believed in the abolition of the 17s. 6d. limit, which worked most unfairly. He thanked the Government most emphatically for this Bill. He would only like to make one criticism. There had undoubtedly been some disappointment among the friends of Voluntary Schools at the postponement of the share which they thought they were promised last year. A great many schools had been counting upon getting this grant soon, and getting it in the present year; and he earnestly hoped that, when the Bill was through, the Government would be able to make arrangements whereby at all events a portion of the grant should be paid as soon as possible—that was to say, that they should not have to wait until the end of the financial year 1897-98. He would only repeat that while not accepting this as a final settlement of the question, he thought that it was an exceedingly useful Measure, that it would render a great deal of help to schools which were seriously in need of help, and that it would tend to the maintenance of the dual system in education which had been going on now for 27 years. For these reasons he thanked the Government for having introduced it, and he hoped they would put it through as quickly as possible. ["Hear, hear!"]

Debate adjourned till Monday next.

MILITARY WORKS (MONEY) BILL.

Second Reading deferred till To-morrow.

BERRIEW SCHOOL BILL.

Second Reading deferred till Thursday next.

PUBLIC HEALTH (SCOTLAND) BILL.

Adjourned Debate on Second Reading [5th February] further adjourned till To-morrow.

MILITARY LANDS ACT (1892) AMENDMENT BILL.

Order for Second Reading read.

Motion made, and Question proposed "That the Bill be now read a Second time."

Mr. T. LOUGH said that before the Bill was read a Second time, he thought that the House ought at least to have some explanation of its purpose.

***Mr. J. SAMUEL** said this was a very important Bill, and ought to be debated in the early hours of the evening. In the first place, it proposed, with the consent of the local authorities, to transfer the cost of the maintenance of Volunteer establishments, such as drill sheds and other permanent works, to Corporations and Town Councils, and other public bodies. He thought that the principle of the Measure was entirely wrong, because, if the Volunteer force was to be maintained, it ought to be maintained out of the National Exchequer, and not out of local taxation. [" Hear, hear! "] In the borough he represented the rates were at present exceedingly high, but there was a proposition on foot in the town to build a drill shed at a cost of £7,000 or £8,000. Under this Measure the Corporation might be asked to build and maintain that shed. The Government were adopting a wrong course entirely with reference to Imperial and local expenditure. [" Hear, hear! "] There should be a proper and marked line between the two. At present the Imperial Exchequer were sending to local authorities something like £12,000,000 or £13,000,000 a year in aid of local expenditure, and a large amount of that money was actually wasted. Anyone who had experience of local authorities must admit that grants in aid were to a great extent mere waste. [" Hear, hear! "] There was a great outcry now coming from the Port Sanitary authorities that the expenditure placed upon them ought to be national expenditure; but what would local authorities say if they were asked to build and maintain drill sheds and rifle butts and other permanent works? This Measure was constructed entirely upon wrong principles, and the House ought not to agree to it. [" Hear, hear! "] The Under Secretary had said the other day that he was quite prepared to limit the expenditure under the Bill to a rate of 3d. in the pound. In the borough he represented a 3d. rate would raise close on £2,000 a year to be handed over to the Volunteers.

The hon. Member was speaking at midnight, when the Debate stood adjourned.

Debate to be resumed To-morrow.

TRUSTS (SCOTLAND) BILL.

Second Reading deferred till To-morrow.

LAW OF EVIDENCE (CRIMINAL CASES) BILL.

Second Reading deferred till To-morrow.

POOR LAW OFFICERS' SUPERANNUATION (IRELAND) BILL.

Second Reading deferred till Monday next.

SHOP ASSISTANTS (HALF-HOLIDAY) BILL.

Second Reading deferred till Wednesday next.

House Adjourned at Five minutes after Twelve o'clock.

HOUSE OF LORDS.

Friday, 12th February 1897.

EARL OF CLONMELL—EARL OF LIMERICK.

CLAIMS TO VOTE FOR REPRESENTATIVE PEERS FOR IRELAND.

Ordered and directed, That a Certificate be sent by the Clerk of the Parliaments to the Clerk of the Crown in Ireland, stating that the Lord Chancellor of the United Kingdom has reported to the House of Lords that the right of the Earl of Clonmell and the Earl of Limerick to vote at the elections of Representative Peers for Ireland has been established to the satisfaction of him the said Lord Chancellor; and that the House of Lords has ordered such reports to be sent to the said Clerk of the Crown in Ireland; and it is hereby also Ordered, That the said Reports of the said Lord Chancellor be sent to the Clerk of the Crown in Ireland.

SPEECH AT CAHIR (MR. W. O'BRIEN).

*THE MARQUESS OF LONDONDERRY rose to ask Her Majesty's Government whether their attention had been drawn to a speech delivered by Mr. William O'Brien at Cahir, Aughamore, county Mayo, on Sunday, January 31st, in which he denounced "landgrabbing" and advocated the boycotting of those persons who availed themselves of their just rights; whether such speech was not a breach of the existing law; and, if so, having regard to the serious consequences that had resulted from such speeches in the past, whether Her Majesty's Government were taking any steps in connection with the above-mentioned speech. He said he had hoped, until he entered the House that evening, that he should receive affirmative answers to the questions he had put upon the Paper; but from a conversation he had had with the Lord Chancellor of Ireland, he now feared that the answers would be in the negative. He could not say that he felt great surprise at this, for they had seen during the past few months such a curious policy pursued in Ireland that they could hardly be astonished by anything that might occur there. His questions would certainly have been answered in the affirmative by the Government of 1886, when he was Lord Lieutenant of Ireland. When in that position he never allowed such a speech as the one to which he was calling attention to be made with impunity. Subsequently, when the Unionists were out of office, he had always acted consistently, and had never lost any opportunity of drawing attention in their Lordships' House to speeches of a similar character to that of which he now complained, and of pressing upon the then existing Government the necessity of taking steps to prevent their recurrence. Mr. O'Brien's speech was exceptionally violent in its denunciation of those whom he termed "landgrabbers" and in its advocacy of boycotting. The meeting at which the speech was made was summoned by placard, which announced that the demonstration was to be held "to denounce the recent cases of eviction and landgrabbing at Cahir," and invited Nationalists to attend in order "to show their detestation of the landgrabber who is the only support of the evicting landlord." He wished to know whether this meeting was held on an evicted farm, or, if not, at what distance from it; also whether the local police had sworn information that the meeting was calculated to cause intimidation, and by whose authority the district inspector handed to Mr. O'Brien the letter prohibiting him to hold the meeting. In his speech Mr. O'Brien said that they had assembled "upon the good old business of the Land League." Their Lordships knew what that meant. Then the speaker said:—

> "And I may promise you that we will manage to make the voice of public opinion heard by the grabbers, even if they stood a thousand miles away, and even if they were as deaf as Dublin Castle."

Proceeding he said:—

> "The county Inspector's letter informed me that your principal object here to-day was to put down land grabbing. (Voices: 'Down with it.') Well, I am glad to learn that he was right, and as I always like to come straight to the point, I tell you it will depend upon yourselves altogether, and not upon the forces of Dublin Castle, whether men will find it profitable to

grab an evicted farm. It is all very well to groan grabbers here, but it is not groaning or a public meeting alone that will make the grabber feel the weight of public opinion. It is in his own daily life amongst you that you have got to make him feel it. It is when he goes to the fair of Ballyhaunis, or Claremorris, or Ballaghaderreen, or of Kiltinagh, and when he finds his beast is left on his hands—when he meets his neighbour on the road and finds that every decent man avoids him as he would avoid the plague; when his children, wherever they may be scattered, in England or America, find that he is a disgrace to his family, and that their cheeks redden with shame when his name is mentioned. It is no use saying the grabber is the only means of keeping the life in Irish landlordism. That is quite true. But you have got to show him in a practical way that you would as soon choose your friends from a gang of pickpockets as open your lips to the grabber, or buy from or sell to him, or cut, shuffle, or deal with him, until he makes penance for his sins. If every decent man in the community only treats the grabbers to a course of education like that for six months or so to come, I promise you that they will give up the evicted farms very quickly, because, when men find that landgrabbing does not pay, that it involves misery for themselves and for their children, believe you me the same selfish instincts that prompt these men to grab their neighbours' land will prompt them also to drop evicted lands like a hot potato. Now, that is no new doctrine, that is the good old doctrine of the Land League days. It is as true to-day as ever it was. [*Cheers.*] And what is more, I venture to tell you that in spite of the county Inspector's police battalions, that is a doctrine that can be practised as successfully to-day as ever it was. If at the next fair anybody should give a wink to the neighbours not to touch the cattle of an evicted farm, he can no longer be hauled in before two Removables for giving a 'humbugging sort of smile.' He will have to be tried before a jury of his fellow-countrymen in the county of Mayo that would not return any other verdict except, 'More power to you. God reward you.'"

Surely speeches of this kind ought not to be allowed. His noble and learned Friend knew well what results had followed such speeches in the past. Before September, 1880, the county of Clare was in a peaceful and normal condition, but directly Mr. Parnell made his famous speech advising that anyone taking an evicted farm should be "shunned like a leper"—words not very unlike those used on this occasion by Mr. O'Brien—many serious crimes were committed. Within five months there were 22 murders or attempted murders; in the following year there were 32, and in 1882, 64. In the same way the famous speech made by Mr. Dillon at Nenagh, when he declared that it was easy to keep an evicted farm empty, was followed within a fortnight by the brutal

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murder of Donovan, the Earl of Cork's caretaker. He hoped their lordships would see the danger to which honest and innocent people would be exposed if a *non possumus* attitude were taken up and if speeches of this wicked character were allowed to be made with impunity. Was not a speech like Mr. O'Brien's a breach of the law, and, if it was, why was he not prosecuted? When he was Lord Lieutenant speeches of a far less violent character led to prosecutions. The present First Lord of the Treasury was then Chief Secretary. Mr. O'Brien himself in 1887 was prosecuted for delivering a speech of a much less violent character, and was sentenced to three months' imprisonment. Similarly, Mr. Finucane and Mr. Sheehy were prosecuted for less violent speeches in 1889, and were sentenced to four and five months' imprisonment respectively. If the present Chief Secretary held that Mr. O'Brien's speech was not illegal, then the prosecutions and convictions for less violent speeches which took place when Mr. Arthur Balfour was Chief Secretary could not have been legal. He would leave Mr. Gerald Balfour to settle that point with his brother. But his noble and learned Friend (Lord Ashbourne) was Lord Chancellor when Mr. Arthur Balfour was Chief Secretary, and he was Lord Chancellor now, and he wanted the noble and learned lord to tell him which of the two brothers had acted legally. If the speech to which he had called attention was not a breach of the law, then Mr. Arthur Balfour must have acted illegally in prosecuting and imprisoning men for making speeches which were not nearly so violent as that. It might, perhaps, be said that the condition of Ireland was so peaceful at the present time, that the people were so law-abiding in all parts, that the Government did not wish to prosecute any individual person for making a solitary speech. But if those speeches were to be made with impunity, remembering the consequences of such speeches in the past, he should like to ask the Government how long this peaceful condition of Ireland would continue. The condition of Clare was peaceful until "shun the leper" speech was made in 1880, and no one knew better than his noble and learned Friend what was the condition of the country when they undertook its government in 1886. There existed in Ireland at that time a state of anarchy amounting almost to rebellion; and they had to appeal for powers to cope with the disaffection due to the speeches of the leaders of the Nationalist party in advocating the Plan of Campaign, which brought in its train boycotting and all its attendant miseries. He maintained that it was futile and childish to argue that a man like Mr. O'Brien was justified in making a speech of this violent character because Ireland was in a calm and peaceful condition. What were the laws made for? Were they made to be broken one day and not to be recognised as having been broken the next? Were they made only to be administered according to the condition of the country or the mood in which the Executive found itself? If speeches of this kind were to be permitted the Government might find in one part of Ireland either that farms were left absolutely derelict at Mr. O'Brien's bidding or that derelict farms were only taken by law-abiding citizens at the risk not only of the loss of their property, but of their lives. ["Hear, hear!"] If he were asked what was the opinion of the supporters of the Government in Ireland with regard to the policy which has been adopted, he should have no difficulty in answering the question. He should say that the line taken was in pursuance of the motto assumed and the policy followed by the Chief Secretary. The followers of the Prime Minister in Ireland would not contradict him when he said that they believed the motto of the present Chief Secretary was "Give peace in our time, O Lord"—with an emphasis on the "our"—and "I am utterly regardless of the future." The Chief Secretary's policy was to conciliate at any cost his political opponents, even at the sacrifice and expense of his political friends. When the present Chief Secretary undertook the responsible duties connected with his office, the right hon. Gentleman entered upon them with a prospect which was second to none. He could boast that he was the bearer of a name which was respected by all classes in Ireland—the name of the most able and most brilliant Chief Secretary who had ever discharged responsible duties in a most critical time. But the present Chief Secretary in addressing his constituents held out to the Unionists of Ireland great hopes; he was going to "kill Home Rule by kindness." He assured his right hon. friend that never were words more warmly welcomed, but they imagined that "killing Home Rule by kindness" meant the bringing forward of remedial measures for Ireland, in assisting the Irish people to develop the resources of their country, and in enabling the occupier and owner to come to terms by facilitating purchase on terms agreeable to both. They believed, in short, that there was about to dawn for Ireland a millennium; but they had been disappointed. They had found out that "killing Home Rule by kindness" had meant the killing of the landowning interests; and if speeches like the speech delivered by Mr. O'Brien were to be continued, not only would they mean the killing of some of the agricultural classes, but of the poorer classes as well. He trusted that the noble Marquess at the head of the Government would investigate and examine for himself the question he had raised. He assured the noble Marquess that if he would only consult his own supporters in Ireland they would tell him almost unanimously, that never had a Conservative Chief Secretary initiated a policy so ruinous to Irish interests as the so-called method of the present Chief Secretary to "kill Home Rule by kindness."

*THE LORD CHANCELLOR OF IRELAND (Lord ASHBOURNE) said he had listened to his noble Friend with close attention. The candour of his noble Friend had even exceeded the usual candour of a candid friend. The Chief Secretary, to whose motives he thought the noble Lord had done very great injustice, had, of course, his attention drawn to this question; but, the Executive having considered all the circumstances of the case, having considered, as any Executive would consider, the condition of the country, the position of the county, the state of the locality, and all the surrounding circumstances, it arrived at the conclusion that it was not wise or expedient or necessary that he should stop the meeting; but the Chief Secretary gave the most distinct and full directions that police protection of the most ample character should be given to those who had taken evicted farms in the neighbourhood, so as to protect them against all possibility of danger or intimidation—a course which he would steadily and consistently follow, being determined to insure that everyone in Ireland should be permitted to exercise his rights and follow his affairs in a state of security and peace. In answer to his noble Friend's question as to whether it was an evicted farm, he had to say that he had no minute knowledge of the place, but he believed that the meeting was not held on the evicted farm, but near it. His noble Friend also asked by whose authority a letter was handed from a police officer to the chairman of the meeting. He believed that there was a misconception as to the intentions in reference to this meeting on behalf of the police authorities. After information was sworn, and acting on his own misconception, the police officer did hand to Mr. O'Brien a letter; but at no time did the Irish Executive entertain the intention to interfere with the meeting, and the handing of the letter was a misconception entirely local on the part of the police. It had also to be borne in mind as to a prosecution that there was no shorthand note taken of the proceedings at this meeting. ["Why not?"] There being thus no means of bringing home to Mr. O'Brien responsibility for the report in the *Freeman's Journal*, it was obvious that the position was different from that which prevailed when his noble Friend was Viceroy. At the meeting three Resolutions were drawn up to be passed. One was an expression of renewed confidence in the Irish party under the leadership of Mr. Dillon, and pledging the meeting to the moral and material support necessary to successfully fight the battle in Parliament; another condemned land-grabbing, and expressed a determination by all legitimate means to stamp out dishonest practices; while the third demanded the release of the political prisoners whose only crime was love for Ireland. He had read the speech complained of, and he found that the larger part of it was taken up with a criticism of the present divisions in Mr. O'Brien's party, while there was a great deal of very free, frank, and candid criticism of the action of Mr. Healy. [*Laughter.*] The Chief Secretary, of course, disapproved the language which had been quoted by his noble Friend, and everyone who had heard the language must disapprove it; but, fortunately, on reading the speech one did not find that any parties were named, or that any specified individuals were pointed out. Mr. O'Brien pointed out that neither in that parish nor in the adjoining parish, nor for miles near the place at which he was speaking, was there any faction in support of land-grabbing. As far as he knew, everything was quiet at the meeting; and he was disposed to think that but for the publicity given to the speech by his noble Friend, the matter would probably have been entirely forgotten by this time. It was his duty, privilege, and pleasure to read the Irish newspapers closely, and he had not found a leading article or a paragraph with reference to this speech; and he had not heard that a report of it had appeared in the local papers. Necessarily the discussion now going on in this House would bring notice again to the matter. In the circumstances it was not intended to take any proceedings. In the absence of any report of the speech it was difficult to see how the proceedings could be taken. He had to remind his noble Friend who referred with legitimate pride to the time when he filled the great position of Lord Lieutenant and the prosecutions then instituted, that at that time the machinery of the Crimes Act was in operation and shorthand writers' notes were always available, whereas now the appliances of the ordinary law had to be considered, and there being no notes taken and no way of bringing the report home the position was entirely different. The Irish Government took the entire responsibility for permitting the meeting and for not prosecuting. In all cases and under every Administration it was necessary to exercise a prudent and a wise discrimination in these matters, and in the present case all the circumstances of position, neighbourhood, place, and time were taken into consideration by the Irish Executive. Ireland was now in a very peaceful state, for which they should all be very thankful. There was a decrease of general crime and a large decrease of agrarian crime, and his noble Friend might rest assured that the present Irish Executive would steadily apply themselves to maintaining law and order, to prevent any form of intimidation or danger to any of Her Majesty's subjects, and to protect every class of the community in the enjoyment of their property and the exercise of their legal rights.

THE EARL OF ARRAN, as Lord Lieutenant of the county of Mayo, could not condemn too strongly the words made use of by Mr. W. O'Brien, in the speech he was reported to have made. It was a speech of the most dangerous character, and to show the effect it might have in the district he should like to read a telegram which he had received from a gentleman in the county, whose authority, he thought, all their lordships would accept, though, as permission had not been given, he would not give the name: "The county of Mayo generally satisfactory, one limited area, parish Aughamore, causing anxiety presently." That in itself showed how dangerous it was to allow a speech of the sort to be made. But at the same time, having said that, he could not help thinking that this debate was to be regretted. He did not think the speech had had any wide currency in Ireland at all, and certainly not in the county. He had in his hand three papers which were published directly after the speech was made—that was to say on the 4th and 6th of the month, the speech having been made on the 31st ult.—and in none of them, representing as they did all shades of politics, was there any mention made of the speech. Therefore, this was somewhat of a storm in a tea-cup—["Hear, hear!"]—and if the speech had been allowed to die a natural death, it would be less dangerous than it might now become.

COMPANIES BILL [H.L.].

Select Committee on: The Lords following were named of the Committee:

L. Chancellor.
E. Leven and Melville.
E. Vane.
(*M. Londonderry.*)
E. Dudley.
E. Kimberley.
L. Belper.
L. Wolverton.
L. Hillingdon.
L. Macnaghten.
L. Monckton.
(*V. Galway.*)
L. Farrer.
L. Davey.
L. James.
L. Aldenham.

The Committee to appoint their own chairman.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ELECTIONS) BILL.

Read 3^a (according to order), and passed.

House adjourned at five minutes past Five o'clock to Monday next a quarter past Four o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

Friday, 12th February 1897.

QUESTIONS.

IMPORT DUTY ON SCOTCH HERRINGS.

MR. J. G. WEIR (Ross and Cromarty): I beg to ask the Lord Advocate if he will state the circumstances under which the Secretary for Scotland advised the Foreign Office that it was undesirable to act on the recommendation contained in the last Report of the Fishery Board for Scotland, in which it is urged that an application should be made to the Governments of Russia and Austria with a view to a reduction of the heavy duty on herrings imported from Scotland into those countries?

*THE LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. GRAHAM MURRAY, Buteshire): It is not accurate to say that the Secretary for Scotland advised the Foreign Office, but after due consideration and in consultation with the Foreign Office, he arrived at the conclusion that it would bring about no useful result to approach the Russian and Austrian Governments on the subject.

NATIONAL SCHOOL TEACHERS (IRELAND).

Mr. J. C. FLYNN (Cork, N.): On behalf of the hon. Member for North Leitrim (Mr. PATRICK M'HUGH), I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland (1) on what grounds do the Commissioners of Irish National Education require managers of schools to furnish as often as four times every year certificates of character of teachers, male and female, under their charge; (2) is he aware that since the establishment of the National Board, over 60 years ago, not a single bad character has been noted on these returns; and (3) will he give instructions to have this character query eliminated from the quarterly returns, implying as it does a stigma on a most exemplary body of public servants to the State.

THE CHIEF SECRETARY FOR IRELAND (Mr. GERALD BALFOUR, Leeds, Central): The salaries of teachers and the amounts accruing to them from the School Grant are payable quarterly on a Return furnished by the manager, who reports, amongst other things, as to the character of the teacher. The fact is not as stated in the second paragraph; and, as regards the third paragraph, the Commissioners consider that it would be inadvisable, in the public interests, to discontinue the use of the query as to character in the School Returns furnished by the managers. I may add, as I have over and over again pointed out, that I have no power to give instructions to the Commissioners, even if I had the desire to do so.

Mr. FLYNN: On behalf of the hon. Member for North Leitrim (Mr. PATRICK M'HUGH), I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland (1) if his attention has been drawn to the fact that Irish national school teachers have frequently complained of the inconvenience caused them in not getting their salaries direct from the Education Office after the orders have been duly signed by the managers, and that the present system of sending the teachers' money orders through the managers imposes on the latter an unnecessary duty; and (2) will he give instructions to the Board of Irish National Education to insert in future quarterly returns a query leaving it optional with the managers to have the teachers' salaries forwarded to themselves or sent direct to the teachers?

Mr. GERALD BALFOUR: Representations have been made from time to time of the nature indicated in the first paragraph, and the question of direct payment to the teachers is now receiving the consideration of the Commissioners.

ARTILLERY HORSES.

***Sir CHARLES DILKE** (Gloucester, Forest of Dean): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for War what is the effective strength of horses on the British establishment of the Royal Horse Artillery and the Royal Artillery together; and what were the corresponding numbers in 1876, 1877, and 1878?

***THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR WAR** (Mr. BRODRICK, Surrey, Guildford): The effective strength of horses on the British Establishment of the Royal Horse Artillery and Royal Artillery is at present 4,486. In 1876 it was 5,964; and in 1877 it was 5,950, remaining the same in 1878. The causes for the difference in numbers is the reduction of the Horse Artillery batteries, which accounts for about 730 of the reduction, and in 1879-80 a reduction of about 700 wagon horses was made in the field batteries. There is now a reserve of horses, which did not exist in the earlier years named.

ARMENIAN REFUGEES (CYPRUS).

Mr. BRYN ROBERTS (Carnarvonshire, Eifion): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether any and what number of Armenian refugees have been admitted to Cyprus; whether any such refugees have been prevented from landing in Cyprus; if so, to what extent and for what reasons; and whether, in the event of fresh troubles arising in Asia Minor, Armenian refugees will be permitted to land in Cyprus?

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS (Mr. G. CURZON, Lancashire, Southport): The High Commissioner reported in September last that 80 Armenian refugees had arrived at Larnaca, of which number one-half left immediately for other destinations; and early in October he reported the arrival of 40 more. Since then no definite information has been received, but there appears to have been no immigration on any large scale. In addition to those mentioned above, a small number of Armenian widows and children, about 20 persons, have been received in Cyprus by a private agency. Some of these have since been sent to Egypt. No refugees have hitherto been prevented from landing in Cyprus, but, with regard to the future, I may say that the Government of Cyprus have no funds at their disposal for the relief of distress nor for the construction of works on which it would be possible to employ Armenian immigrants. Nor is there any probability of such immigrants being able to obtain private employment; and in these circumstances, if any large influx of destitute refugees were likely to take place, it would be probable that Her Majesty's Government would have great pressure put upon them by the local authorities in the interests of the island community, to authorise the High Commissioner to exercise the powers vested in him by statute, for preventing the landing of destitute immigrants.

BRIGADE OF GUARDS.

GENERAL LAURIE (Pembroke and Haverfordwest): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for War whether the Brigade of Foot Guards and the Garrison Artillery are severally complete in numbers or below the establishment; and, if the latter, what is the actual deficiency in numbers, and what is the present standard for recruits in those two Corps respectively; how many specially enlisted men (*i.e.* men deficient in one or more of the prescribed qualifications) have been permitted to join these two Corps during the years 1895 and 1896; and how many men, enlisted for three years with the Colours and nine in the Reserve, are now serving in the Brigade of Guards?

*MR. BRODRICK: On February 1st the Brigade of Foot Guards was 26, and the Garrison Artillery 176, below establishment. The standard for recruits is 5ft. 8½in. for the Foot Guards and 5ft. 7in. for the Garrison Artillery. The special enlistments for the Guards were 267 in 1895, and 316 in 1896. Those for the Garrison Artillery were 439 in 1895, and 491 in 1896. On February 1st there were serving in the Foot Guards 1,603 men enlisted for three years with the Colours.

CAPTAIN BAGOT (Westmorland, Kendal): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for War whether in view of the fact that the barrack accommodation of the Guards' recruit depôt at Caterham is now only barely sufficient for the number of recruits stationed there, it is proposed to enlarge it to receive the large number of extra recruits which will be required if two more battalions are to be added to the Guards?

*MR. BRODRICK: Some enlargement of the barracks at Caterham will be necessary.

SIR HOWARD VINCENT (Sheffield, Central): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for War if he can inform the House how long has been the average station at Gibraltar of Regiments of the Line; if they have been generally reported on as insufficient or unfit to fight after service at Gibraltar; how many nights a week privates are as a rule on guard, and if more or less than the Foot Guards at Wellington or Chelsea Barracks; and if regiments suffer in greater proportion there from disease than at home?

*MR. BRODRICK: The average stay of the last 11 battalions at Gibraltar has been three years. The reports on regiments leaving Gibraltar have not been such as are indicated in the Question; the Foot Guards in London as a rule have one night out of bed on guard in every eight nights, and the guard duty at Gibraltar is about the same. The health statistics show that in the last ten years the admissions to hospital at Gibraltar were 39 per 1,000 less than in the United Kingdom, the number of men discharged as invalids were 8·71 per 1,000 at Gibraltar, while those discharged in the United Kingdom were 16·34 per 1,000, and the number of deaths at Gibraltar were 4·90 per 1,000, against 5·20 in the United Kingdom.

COLONEL LOCKWOOD (Essex, Epping) asked if the right hon. Gentleman meant that the proportion all the year round was seven nights in bed to one night out?

*MR. BRODRICK said such was the information supplied to him, 7·28 nights to one night out of bed.

DUKE OF YORK'S MILITARY SCHOOL.

Mr. STRACHEY (Somerset, S.): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for War whether any proposal has been made to the War Office to sell the Duke of York's Royal Military School at Chelsea?

*Mr. BRODRICK: No proposal has been made to the War Office to sell the Duke of York's Royal Military School at Chelsea.

ILLEGAL TRAWLING (BANTRY BAY).

Mr. JAMES GILHOOLY (Cork Co., W.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that a number of steam and sailing trawl boats fish continuously in Bantry Bay, and seriously injure the fishing grounds; and, whether in view of the fact that hundreds of the families of trammel net fishermen are mainly dependent for their livelihood on the fishing industry, he will prohibit steam trawling within the headlands of Bantry Bay, and the time for sailing trawl boat fishing limited to a period from 1st January to 1st August in each year?

Mr. GERALD BALFOUR: Steam and sailing trawlers do fish Bantry Bay occasionally, but the Inspectors of Fisheries have no reason to believe that there is any systematic violation of the existing by-laws regulating this mode of fishing. The Inspectors propose, as soon as the business of their department will permit, to hold an inquiry into the general state of the fisheries in Bantry Bay.

CONVICTION FOR DRUNKENNESS (SCOTLAND).

Mr. JOHN WILSON (Lanark, Govan): I beg to ask the Lord Advocate (1) whether his attention has been called to the small proportion which the proceedings against licence holders in Scotland for supplying intoxicating liquors to intoxicated persons bear to the number of persons convicted of drunkenness; and (2) whether he will call the attention of the police and the magistrates to the desirability of vigilantly enforcing the law in that respect?

*The LORD ADVOCATE: To the strict terms of the question the answer would be that there can be no normal numerical relation between the two classes of offenders mentioned. But if the hon. Member means to point to a disproportion between the number of holders of licensed premises and the number of people charged with intoxication who became drunk in licensed premises, then the answer is that there are available statistics, because drunkenness in a licensed house is not a recognised and separate form of the crime of drunkenness. With regard to the last part of the question, I cannot undertake to admonish magistrates and police to be vigilant, unless I have reason to believe that they are negligent.

CROFTERS' COMMISSION.

Mr. WEIR: I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury whether, having regard to the fact that he has recently promised a Return showing the cost of the Crofters' Commission up to the present time, he will also arrange to grant a Return showing the number of holdings the Crofters' Commission have visited in the counties of Argyll, Inverness, Ross and Cromarty, Caithness, and Orkney and Shetland respectively, the number of cases upon which they have adjudicated, the total amount of deductions they have made, and the total amount of arrears they have cancelled?

*The LORD ADVOCATE: The Secretary for Scotland is willing to grant a Return of the nature indicated, but I must ask the hon. Member to consult the Scottish Office as to the exact form in which the Return shall be moved for, before giving his Notice of Motion.

SLAUGHTER OF CATTLE (IRELAND).

Mr. FLYNN: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland what are the regulations observed by the Veterinary Department in Ireland in regard to the slaughter of cattle alleged to be suffering from contagious disease. In case of doubt or differences of opinion is outside expert opinion availed of; and in regard to the proposed slaughter of a fine herd of cattle, the property of Thomas Ryan, Lackandarra, Mallow, will the order be carried into effect, notwithstanding the opinion of Dr. Sandford, Kilshannig district, who certifies the cattle as free from pleuro-pneumonia or any other contagious disease?

Mr. GERALD BALFOUR: This question was answered by me by anticipation yesterday when, in reply to a somewhat similar question of the hon. Member concerning an analogous case from another district, I detailed very fully the powers possessed by the Veterinary Department in regard to the slaughter of cattle under the circumstances indicated. I have nothing to add to my reply of yesterday, except to accentuate the fact that the cattle, belonging to Mr. Ryan, have been ascertained to have been in association with the animals which have been slaughtered as diseased in London.

TRADE DISPUTE (MANCHESTER).

Mr. G. W. WOLFF (Belfast, E.): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade whether a dispute has arisen between the Linotype Company of Manchester and their workmen, likely to result in a strike of the latter; whether the Linotype Company has asked the Board of Trade to intervene under the Conciliation Act, and try to arrange the matter in dispute as conciliators or as arbitrators; whether the Board of Trade sent Mr. John Burnett to Manchester for this purpose; and whether the workmen have absolutely refused to leave the matter in dispute either to the conciliation or the arbitration of the Board of Trade?

Mr. C. E. SCHWANN (Manchester, N.) asked whether it was the fact that the Board of Trade had approached the Amalgamated Society of Engineers with reference to the Linotype Company; whether the officers of the society were actually having an interview with the manager of the Linotype Company when a telegram came from the directors to refer the matter to the Board of Trade; and whether the directors and secretary of the company had since visited Manchester and an amicable and satisfactory settlement had been come to, and that it only remained to sign the agreement as soon as the document could be prepared, so that the action of the men and the directors was quite unlike that of Lord Penrhyn? [*Cries of* "Oh."]

*The PRESIDENT of the BOARD of TRADE (Mr. C. T. Ritchie, Croydon): I do not desire to introduce into this particular subject any other dispute—["hear, hear!"], and perhaps the hon. Member for Manchester will excuse me answering his question. No doubt the hon. Member will hear what he desires in the answer I am going to give to the question on the Paper. With regard to one point I think the hon. Member is inaccurate, viz., in saying that the men received an intimation about the reference to the Board of Trade while the meeting was taking place between the men and the manager. I should say also, that that meeting resulted in the settlement of the dispute. ["Hear, hear!."] In answer to my hon. Friend the member for Belfast I have to say that in consequence of a communication addressed by the Linotype Company to the Board of Trade, asking the Department to intervene under the Conciliation Act, Mr. John Burnett was sent down to Manchester, and commuications were held between the officers of the Board of Trade and representatives of the employers. The object of these communications was, in accordance with the policy which is invariably pursued by the Board of Trade in such circumstances, to bring about a conference between the employers and employed. In the result I am happy to state that, after a conference between the representatives of the employers and the men, an arrangement satisfactory to both parties has been arrived at without any stoppage of work, and the parties separated on the best of terms. [*Cheers.*]

Mr. WOLFF asked whether the satisfactory arrangement between the employers and workmen was arrived at with or without conciliation on the part of the Board of Trade?

*Mr. RITCHIE: I do not quite know what my hon. Friend means by conciliation. Mr. John Burnett was sent down to Manchester by me upon two occasions —one I think on Friday, and the other on Tuesday. He was sent down with the view of seeing the men. He did see the men. There was no question of offering either to arbitrate or to conciliate by the Board of Trade. As I have said, the whole of Mr. Burnett's efforts were directed towards bringing about a meeting between the men and the employers.

The day upon which Mr. Burnett went first to Manchester, some of the directors, whom I saw myself in London, also went down to Manchester; they had an interview with the men and the settlement took place.

MR. JAMES LOWTHER (Kent, Isle of Thanet) asked if there was any representative of the Board of Trade present at the meeting between the directors and the men, or, if the directors asked that a representative should be present?

*MR. RITCHIE: No representative of the Board of Trade was present, neither has it been the habit of the Board of Trade to ask that a representative should be present. As a matter of fact, in nine cases out of ten the representative of the Board of Trade is present because he is invited to be present by both parties. On this occasion there was no necessity for the intervention of the representative of the Board of Trade, because the masters and men agreed between themselves without any intervention such as that suggested by the hon. Memher.

MR. JAMES BRYCE (Aberdeen, S.) said he should like to ask the right hon. Gentleman whether it was not the case that the action taken in this instance and also Mr. Burnett's presence was fully within the scope of the Conciliation Act just as much as if he had acted as referee?

*MR. RITCHIE: An appeal was made to the Board of Trade by the directors of the Linotype Company. In consequence of that, we considered that we were acting within the powers given to us by the Conciliation Act in sending down Mr. Burnett to Manchester, with a view to interviewing the men.

HIGH SHERIFFS.

MR. BRYN ROBERTS: I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury on what basis or principle payments are made by the Treasury in relief of the expenditure that high sheriffs are put to in the discharge of their duties; and, whether he will grant a Return of such payments made to each county during the last five years?

THE SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY (Mr. R. W. HANBURY, Preston): The payments referred to have been made according to long-standing custom dating back at least to the commencement of the 18th century. There is a good deal of information on the subject in the evidence taken by the Lords Committees of 1888 and 1893 on Sheriffs. A statement of the amount paid in each county in 1894–5 will be found on page 225 of the last volume of Civil Judicial Statistics, and perhaps these figures will serve the hon. Member's purpose.

SALE OF CATTLE (STIRLING).

MR. J. McKILLOP (Stirlingshire): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Agriculture whether he is aware that a numerously signed petition has been addressed by the Kippen Farmers' Club to the proprietors of the auction mart at Stirling, asking them to make arrangements for the sale of cattle there by live weight, and that no satisfactory reply to this request has been received; whether trade has in consequence been diverted elsewhere; and whether he will take steps to secure that the wishes of the club should be carried out at the mart in question?

*THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF AGRICULTURE (Mr. WALTER LONG, Liverpool, West Derby): I am aware that a petition asking that arrangements may be made for the sale of cattle by live weight at the auction at Stirling has recently been addressed by the Kippen Farmers' Club to the proprietors of the mart, but I am informed by those gentlemen that they have received representations in the contrary direction from a large number of their principal consigners, and that so far from their trade being diverted elsewhere, their business in fat cattle has been steadily increasing. It is, of course, incumbent upon the auctioneers to provide and maintain sufficient and suitable accommodation for weighing cattle, but I have no power to compel them to conduct their sales in any particular manner, and in the circumstances I am afraid I cannot be of any assistance to my hon. Friend.

TRUNK TELEPHONE LINES (SCOTLAND).

MR. A. ASHER (Elgin Burghs): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury, as representing the Postmaster General, whether the Postmaster General is proposing to abandon the scheme of establishing the trunk telephone between Aberdeen and Elgin by a line viâ the important fishing towns on the coast, and to substitute therefor an inland line viâ Keith; and, if so, whether, before finally deciding on such change, the Postmaster General will afford the various towns on the coast route an opportunity of showing how important it is in the interests of the fishing industry that the original proposal should be adhered to?

MR. HANBURY: The Postmaster General is not proposing to abandon the scheme of carrying the trunk telephone line from Aberdeen to Elgin through Peterhead and Banff. The engineers of the Post Office proposed to carry the line by a shorter and more direct route, but the Postmaster General has decided to adhere to the route originally selected.

BELFAST POLICE.

MR. D. MACALEESE (Monaghan, N.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland how many constables in the Belfast police force have been promoted to the rank of acting sergeant since the present Commissioner took over charge of the city force, and what was the length of the service of each; at the present time, how many constables in Belfast of over 20 years' service are recommended for promotion by the respective district inspectors of the city force; and, in view of the fact that the Inspector General recently, in reviewing the Belfast force, stated in the hearing of the men that constables were eligible for promotion till they had reached 22 years' service, will he advise the Inspector General to give effect to the statement by at once promoting a number of constables of long service to the rank of acting sergeant to fill up existing vacancies in the Belfast police force?

MR. GERALD BALFOUR: Twelve constables have been promoted since the present Commissioner's appointment. Of these, two had eight years' service, one 14, one 15, four 16, one 18, one 19, and two 20 years' service. Twelve constables of upwards of 20 years' service are at present recommended for promotion by their district inspectors. The Inspector General is quite prepared to consider the candidature for promotion of well-qualified constables who have over 20 years' service if well recommended by their officers, but he observes there are, at present, no vacancies, and promotions cannot, of course, be made till there are vacancies to fill.

WATER TRUSTEES.

MR. MACALEESE: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he can state the number and the location of the public boards in the three Kingdoms, respectively, that are elected by the ratepayers to administer exclusively the offices and duties of water trustees?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE HOME DEPARTMENT (Sir MATTHEW WHITE RIDLEY, Lancashire, Blackpool): I do not quite understand what is the nature of the information which the hon. Member desires, but I shall be glad if he will communicate with me on the subject.

CRETE.

MR. FLYNN: I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (1) whether his attention has been called to the statement of M. Dalyanni, Greek Minister in France, in which he said that the Christian Governor of Crete, Georgi Pasha Berovitch, is an able and excellent man, but that the Sultan had sent after him a military commander with secret orders to thwart his action, and to excite the Mahomedan population of Crete against the reforms; (2) whether the Foreign Office are in a position to confirm this statement; and (3) whether the Governor General is at this moment not at Canea but at Halepa, protected at the Greek Consulate by armed Christians, Montenegrin gendarmes, and a force of Greek marines?

***MR. CURZON**: We have received no confirmation of the statement in the first paragraph, and are not in a position to confirm it; and we have no reason to believe that the Governor General is in the Greek Consulate at Halepa.

MR. F. S. STEVENSON (Suffolk, Eye): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether he is able to furnish any fresh information with regard to the condition of affairs in Crete?

*Mr. CURZON: The latest information is to the effect that Christians are attacking Mussulmans in villages near Sitia. It is reported that many of the latter have been killed and that 13 villages have been burnt. In the district of Amari most Mussulman families had returned to Rethymo, and the Consuls had sent a messenger with letters to persuade the Christians to allow the departure of the remaining Mussulman families and soldiers.

Mr. JOHN DILLON (Mayo, E.): Can the Under Secretary say when Papers in relation to the affairs of Crete will be laid upon the Table?

*Mr. CURZON: I have been hoping that the Blue-book would be ready for some time past. I inquired yesterday and heard that the Dispatches which had been referred to the French Government, and which were the last to be submitted for revision, have just been returned. I hope, therefore, the book will be ready in a few days.

SANITARY ARRANGEMENTS (CLONES, CO. MONAGHAN).

Mr. MACALEESE: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland if the gentleman sent down from Dublin to examine into the alleged insanitary condition of certain dwelling houses in the town of Clones has furnished a report of his visit; was he accompanied in his inspection by the local sanitary sub-officer, or by any other official of the sanitary authority from whom he could obtain such information as he might deem of value in furtherance of his investigations; was his inspection exhaustive enough to embrace every dwelling in Clones not sufficiently equipped with proper sanitary accommodation, and, if not, will another inspection be ordered so that this important matter may be settled on a basis satisfactory to the public at Clones; and will the Local Government Board insist upon the recommendation of their inspector being carried into effect?

Mr. GERALD BALFOUR: A report has been made by the medical inspector of the Local Government Board relative to the general sanitary condition of Clones. The inspector was not accompanied in the course of his inspection by the sanitary sub-officer, though that officer was invited to be present. The inspector's report discloses the result of his inspection and deals very fully with the general sanitary condition of the town, and the Local Government Board do not consider it necessary that further inspection should take place at present. The Board will direct the attention of the sanitary authority to the several matters referred to by the inspector which require to be remedied.

TURKISH REFORMS.

Mr. STEVENSON: I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs when it is expected that the Joint Note containing the Scheme of Reforms agreed upon by the six Great Powers will be presented to the Sultan?

*Mr. CURZON: The Scheme of Reforms has not so far been agreed to by the Great Powers, but only by their representatives at Constantinople. It has not yet been received in final form from the latter, and it is therefore impossible to say at present when any communications arising therefrom may be made to the Sultan.

MEMBERS OF PARLIAMENT (FREE RAILWAY PASSES).

Mr. W. FIELD (Dublin, St. Patrick): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade whether he is aware that in many constitutionally governed countries the Members of the Legislature are entitled to free passes on railways; and whether the Government will consider the utility of such facilities, and bring in a Measure to provide them for the Members of this House?

*Mr. RITCHIE: This identical question was put to me last year by the hon. Member. However, I do not mind answering it annually. I am aware that in some countries passes over railways are given to Members of the Legislature, but I cannot hold out any hope to the hon. Member that the system is likely to be introduced into this country.

EDUCATION (IRELAND).

Mr. FIELD: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, whether a Measure to amend the Irish Education Act of 1892 will be introduced this Session by the Government?

MR. GERALD BALFOUR: I stated yesterday the conditions under which I was prepared to introduce this Session a Measure to amend the Act of 1892.

LOAN FUND SOCIETIES (IRELAND).

MR. DILLON: On behalf of the hon. Member for South Donegal (Mr. SWIFT MACNEILL), I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether his attention has been directed to the case of the Ballinamallard (County Fermanagh) Loan Fund Society against James M'Gee and others under the Loan Fund Act (6 and 7 Vict., c. 91), heard at last Irvinestown Petty Sessions, where Mr. Jones, Resident Magistrate, calculated that the borrower (M'Gee) had paid in interest and fines £7 odd on a £3 loan that had been out for 10 years; and, whether any steps will be taken to protect borrowers like M'Gee from the excessive charges of these Loan Societies constituted under the Charitable Act aforesaid?

MR. GERALD BALFOUR: I have received through the Loan Fund Board a Report from the Clerk to the Society mentioned in this Question, but the Report is so incomplete that I have called for further particulars before I can answer the Question.

MR. DILLON: On behalf of the hon. Member for South Donegal (Mr. MACNEILL), I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland (1) whether he is aware that William Creighton, a member of the committee of the Ballinamallard (County Fermanagh) Loan Fund Society, attends the office during working hours, and on his own behalf, and independent of the Society, lends money to borrowers; and (2) whether, as this was proved in evidence and admitted by Creighton before Mr. Jones, R.M., and the Justices at Irvinestown Petty Sessions on Friday last, 5th instant, such conduct is sanctioned by 6 and 7 Vict., c. 91, which is a charitable Act?

MR. GERALD BALFOUR: I am informed that the statements in the first paragraph as to the course pursued by Mr. Creighton are correct. I am not aware of any provision in the Act which forbids such action, but it is certainly most undesirable that it should be allowed to continue.

MR. DILLON: On behalf of the hon. Member for South Donegal (Mr. MACNEILL), I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that, in order to convert renewals into new loans, it is the custom at the Ballyshannon Loan Fund Society (County Donegal), to have a member of the committee stationed at the door of the office, or adjacent thereto, who hands the amount to the borrower as he enters and takes it back again as he emerges from the office with the proceeds of the new loan; and whether, as this practice on the part of the Society is an evasion of the Act (6 and 7 Vict., cap. 91), the Government are prepared to take any steps in the matter?

MR. GERALD BALFOUR: The Loan Fund Board are informed by the clerk of the Ballyshannon Society that there is no foundation for the allegation contained in this Question.

MR. DILLON: On behalf of the hon. Member for South Donegal (Mr. MACNEILL), I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland (1) whether his attention has been directed to the large number of summonses issued under the Loan Fund Act (6 and 7 Vict., cap. 91) and entered for hearing at last Petty Sessions Courts at Ballyshannon (County Donegal), Kesh (County Fermanagh), and Irvinestown (County Fermanagh); and (2) whether any and what steps will be taken to prevent local Petty Sessions Courts from being inundated with loan fund summonses pending the Report of the Commission recently appointed to inquire into the Loan Fund Societies in Ireland?

MR. GERALD BALFOUR: I am informed that a considerable number of summonses under the Loan Fund Act have been entered for hearing at the Petty Sessions mentioned in the Question. As to the second paragraph, the Loan Fund Board are anxiously considering the result of the recent inquiry, and, as a matter of fact, a meeting of the body is being held to-day for the purpose of considering the Report. The Government has no power to interfere with the issue of summonses as suggested at the end of the Question.

FINANCIAL RELATIONS (GREAT BRITAIN AND IRELAND).

MR. PATRICK O'BRIEN (Kilkenny): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether the terms of reference laid down for the guidance of the proposed Royal Commission on the Financial Relations between Great Britain and Ireland empowers the Commission to inquire into the amount and application of the secret service fund used in connection with the Government of Ireland since the Union?

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR, Manchester, E.): It is for the Commission to put its own interpretation on the terms of reference, but I may say that we do not contemplate an inquiry such as the hon. Member suggests would form part of the duty of the Commission.

MR. PATRICK O'BRIEN: In the event of the Commissioners holding a different opinion, will the Government offer all facilities for such an inquiry being made?

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY: Well, that is a hypothetical question, the answer to which I will reserve until the case arises.

ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS (RATING).

MR. ELLIS GRIFFITH (Anglesey): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury what is the sum total of rates paid in respect of elementary schools other than board schools, distinguishing counties and boroughs, in the last year for which such returns are available?

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY: I have not been able to obtain for the hon. Gentleman all the figures he desires, but I have made inquiries in respect to certain representative districts in England, excluding London, the result of which is as follows:—The inquiries were in regard to boroughs and unions, some of which were purely rural and others partly rural and partly urban. Taking 41 cases, in 19 of which three are large boroughs, the rates paid are nominal or amount to nothing; in seven cases, of which two are large boroughs, the rates are very low; in ten, of which five are large boroughs, the rates are moderate; and in five, of which three are large boroughs, the rating is up to the full estimated rateable value. I find, from such information as I can collect in regard to London, that the actual amount payable in such rates is a little over £10,000 a year.

In reply to Mr. T. LOUGH (Islington, W.),

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY said he would inquire whether, without enormous labour and expense, further statistics could be given.

MOTIONS.

JUSTICES OF THE PEACE.

Bill to amend the Law in regard to the qualification of Justices of the Peace, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Luttrell, Mr. Courtney, Mr. Seale-Hayne, Mr. Hare, Mr. Jolliffe, Sir Joseph Leese, and Mr. Logan; presented, and Read the First time; to be Read a Second time upon Friday next, and to be printed.—[Bill 132.]

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (COUNTY COUNCIL CLERKS).

Bill to amend the Law with respect to future appointments to the office of Clerk of the County Council in administrative counties in England and Wales, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Luttrell, Sir Alexander Acland-Hood, Mr. Lambert, Mr. Jeffreys, Mr. Stephens, and Mr. Warner; presented, and Read the First time; to be Read a Second time upon Friday next, and to be printed.—[Bill 133.]

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

SUPPLY COMMITTEE (ARMY ESTIMATES).

BRIGADE OF GUARDS.

Order read, for resuming Adjourned Debate on Main Question [8th February], "That Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair."

Question again proposed:—Debate resumed.

*SIR A. ACLAND-HOOD (Somerset, Wellington) said he had always been a consistent supporter of the Government, and it was with great regret that he felt it his duty to oppose their proposals with regard to the Brigade of Guards. He desired to assure the House most emphatically that the officers and men of the Guards had no objection to foreign service as foreign service. [*Cheers.*] That was sufficiently proved by the large number of officers and men who always volunteered for active service. When, recently, a detachment of men was required for service in Ashanti the whole of one battalion of the Guards came and volunteered. [*Cheers.*] The Guards objected to the scheme of the Government on one ground only—that of efficiency. The first difficulty he would deal with was that of recruiting. It would not be a case of raising two battalions, but nearly three. There were to be two new battalions of a strength each of 744 rank and file, and there were in addition the extra men for the Brigade at Gibraltar, which would total up to three battalions. The establishment of the Guards now was 5,208 rank and file, and to keep that establishment going the number of recruits raised each year, taking the average of the last five years, had been 1,361. The future establishment would be 7,227 rank and file, and, on the basis of the average of the recruits for the last five years, the number required annually for the Guards would be nearly 1,900 men. Even if he took the figures for 1896, when the number of recruits was 1,250, the future number required under this scheme would be 1,730 annually. There were three ways of getting the recruits. The first was to raise the pay, which the Government did not desire to do. The second was to issue an order that every man enlisted for general service who was 5ft. 8½in. in height could be transferred to the Guards. That would be most unjust to the Line regiments, would meet with strong opposition from the officers commanding Line regiments, and would accentuate, possibly, any jealousy which might now exist between the Line and the Guards. There was only, therefore, one way of raising the increased number of 480 a year, and that was by permanently lowering the standard of the Guards. If they once permanently lowered the standard of the Guards they would undeniably lower their efficiency. Recruiting depended very much upon trade. When trade was good recruiting was slack, and when trade was slack recruiting was brisk. It had been necessary frequently when trade was good to temporarily reduce the standard so as to get the number of men required. But if they permanently reduced the standard they left themselves no margin whatever for good trade and a slack time in recruiting. He would like to point out that the standard was now lowered. In 1896, out of 1,250 recruits no less than one-third were what were called specially enlisted men—that was, men below the standard, whom it was hoped by good feeding and good treatment might at some period or other grow up to the standard. [*Laughter.*] At this very moment they were drawing to the extent of one-third on the class for which they depended for the increased number of men. What was the inevitable result? The battalions must be kept up to the very greatest strength of 921 rank and file, but if recruiting fell off every battalion at home would have to be depleted till it was much below the establishment, or else would have to take men far below the present guardsmen in physique and efficiency. He proposed to deal with the question of the efficiency of the Guards under this scheme in times of peace and war. Suppose the system in full swing in time of peace, and they had a regiment composed of three battalions—A, B, C. The A battalion was at Gibraltar with a strength of 921; and B and C at home with a strength of 744 rank and file. A battalion came home in due course, and B battalion had to go out. Before B battalion could start a certain number of time-expired men, a certain number of sick, who could not be removed, and a certain number of bandsmen would have to be left behind. Thus B battalion, of a total strength of 744, would have to leave behind something like 220 men, therefore, to make up the strength of 921 rank and file B battalion required 397 men. He begged to point out that these men must come from the C battalion, and not, as Lord Lansdowne stated, from A and C. In other words there was only one battalion to draw upon and not two. Why? They could not come from the A battalion which was returning from Gibraltar, for two very good reasons. In the first place there would be a number of time-expired men the moment the battalion came home. These men would be discharged or transferred to the Reserves, and the A battalion would at once come below its strength. Another reason was this. Supposing that an order was issued that the A battalion was to leave behind at Gibraltar 200 men to reinforce the B battalion what was the result? Say these men remained enlisted for three years. They had already spent 18 months at Gibraltar, a place where, as everybody knew, a soldier could not be properly trained. Did the Government propose to give them 18 months more at Gibraltar, and make them even more inefficient than they were? If so, these men at the end of the three years could come home, be transferred to the Reserves, could serve nine years in the Reserves, and if they chose to do so could then serve four more, so that for thirteen years they would be drawing the money of the taxpayers after only three years' training at Gibraltar. Take the case of Battalion C. Battalion C had, say, to hand over to Battalion B, 397, or in round figures 400 men, and Battalion C received from B, 220 men—time-expired, sick, and recruits. That reduced the strength of C at once to 564 men, many of whom were recruits. What would be the first result? It would be that the duties in London would be so absolutely heavy as to become intolerable slavery. Was it likely service in the Guards would remain popular when the men had less than three nights a week in bed? Lord Lansdowne said in the House of Lords that this was a loan. In 1882 and 1885 brigades of Guards went abroad on active service, and in both years received drafts. But it was a very different thing to give a draft in time of emergency and make these loans a permanent system. It had only been done twice in 30 years. The official idea of a battalion was rather curious. It seemed to be thought it consisted of a certain number of officers and men who might not know each other, but all wore the same scarlet coats and regimentals. No idea can be more erroneous. The Commander-in-Chief acknowledged that the Guards were more efficient than the Line regiments. The reason for this was that while men in the Line regiments were constantly being transferred to regiments abroad Guardsmen, except in cases of rare emergency, served in one battalion during the whole of three, five, or seven years of their service, and officers and men became well known to each other. But if, every 18 months, one-third to one-half of the men of a battalion were to be transferred from one battalion to another the Brigade of Guards must soon lose its efficiency. [" Hear, hear! "] This frequency of transfer would lead to the non-commissioned officers refusing to re-engage to complete their 21 years' service. They would join the Auxiliary forces, and officers in the Guards would lose the service of men to whom they owed much. If a European war broke out we should have three battalions of Guards at Gibraltar. They would, for months, have had no military training, and not one man could be removed until relieved from home. Our Navy would be looking after the enemy's fleet, and it would be impossible to find ships of war to escort troops from Gibraltar. Even if they could be relieved a not unimportant fortress would be left to be defended by troops absolutely ignorant of defending our position at Gibraltar. Now, we had four battalions of Guards ready for active service, and behind them an ample reserve which they were told drew their pay with commendable zeal and punctuality from the Post Office four times a year. [*Laughter.*] Under the scheme we should have three battalions at Gibraltar who had had no military training while there, and could not be moved, and three battalions composed chiefly of Reserves at home who had chiefly distinguished themselves by the regularity with which they had drawn their pay. The Commander-in-Chief called the scheme of the Government the greatest step in advance that the Army had taken for years. It reminded himself of the balance step without gaining ground. [*Laughter and* " Hear, hear! "] There were two questions he would like to ask the Secretary for War. The first was whether the scheme before the House was the scheme originally proposed by the Army Board, or did they propose a much larger, wider, and more efficient scheme of which he believed the House and the country would gladly approve? Or did the Army Board, in default of their scheme being accepted, accept this from the Government on the ground that half a loaf was better than no bread? It was only fair to the Army Board that these questions should be answered, and it was not fair that the responsibility for the present scheme should be fixed on the Army Board when it really rested on the Government. He wished to ask the Under

Secretary who were the authorities connected with the Brigade of Guards whom Lord Lansdowne had consulted? Who were the Guards' Committee? He owned he felt considerable alarm at the idea of some secret body which officers who had been in the Brigade for many years had never heard of, and he pictured to himself a secret society, with masonic signs perhaps, going to the Secretary of State for War in the middle of the night and revealing all sorts of secrets. [*Laughter.*] He thought, however, that he could track them to their lair—[*laughter*]—they consisted of the three honorary colonels of the Guards, and the commanding officer of the Brigade—His Royal Highness the Duke of Cambridge, His Royal Highness the Duke of Connaught, General Sir Frederick Stephenson, and Lord Methuen. He had nothing whatever to say against those Gentlemen, but two of them had had no regimental experience of the Guards, although they were looked on with general esteem and affection. He would not say one word against Lord Methuen, who was a thorough good soldier—["hear, hear!"]—but he had done less than ten years' regimental duty. Were those the people to go to for information as to the views of the Guards? Why did not the Government go to those officers who were responsible for the recruiting and drill of their regiments—he meant the lieutenant-colonels in command? Was not their opinion worth having? If it was not, why were they given these commands, and why were they not got rid of? He feared they were not consulted lest they should prophesy not good but evil of this scheme. They were told that this was only an experiment, and Lord Lansdowne had said that, if these changes resulted otherwise than was expected, the Government would certainly consider themselves bound to reconsider the matter. No one doubted for a moment the sincerity of Lord Lansdowne, but he could not give a pledge that would be binding upon his successors or upon the military advisers of future Secretaries of State, and he himself protested in the strongest way against experiments of this kind being made with the only troops at home who were highly efficient. The Commander-in-Chief had said that the Brigade of Guards were never more efficient than they were now. To what was that due? It was due to the unflagging zeal and energy and enthusiasm of all ranks, but especially to the officers and non-commissioned officers of Brigade. They were asked to apply to that magnificent force a modified form of a scheme which had already ruined the rest of the Army—["hear, hear!"]—and he earnestly pressed the Government to consider the matter further before they committed themselves to a scheme so crude, so dangerous, and so destructive to the efficiency of the Brigade of Guards.

COLONEL KENYON-SLANEY (Shropshire, Newport) said he should like to explode two misconceptions which were rather widely prevalent. It was considered by some that they who opposed this particular section of the Government scheme were opposing the general proposals of the Government. That was not so in the least. ["Hear, hear!"] They were strong and hearty supporters of the Government as regarded the whole of the scheme with the exception of this one point. They deemed it their duty to point out the manifest defects in the scheme. They were supposed also to be opposed to this scheme because they wished to bolster up and support certain imaginary privileges belonging to the Guards. But the only privilege they wished to see maintained was that of being ready to go immediately on war service, if the need arose, without any preliminary or delay in putting them on board ship. He was ready to accept the Government proposal provided that when war was declared the battalions of the Guards should be the first to move forward to the seat of war. He would accept it, however, with four essential postulates—(1) that nothing they did should interfere with the spirit that animated the Brigade of Guards at present; (2) that the step taken did not interfere with the class and stamp of recruits who now came into the Brigade—["hear, hear!"]—(3) that they should be most careful to secure absolute efficiency for the battalions in Gibraltar or any other foreign station; and (4) that they guaranteed the absolute efficiency also of that portion of the Brigade which remained at home, and undertook to see that that portion was not one whit less ready to embark for foreign service than was the Brigade as now constituted. If the Government could not show that under their scheme they could put on board ship at Portsmouth a Brigade as efficient, and in as short a time as at present, they would have broken faith with them, and, on their own showing, would have to cancel and reconstruct their scheme. The Guards to a certain extent merged their regimental in their Brigade feeling, and service in the Brigade created a feeling of loyalty and devotion. Those who said "We do not want the swagger of the Guards," did not remember that this swagger might be an exceedingly valuable article on the battle-field. He asserted that it was a mistaken and misguided idea to think that they would obtain for the Guards recruits of the same stamp and quality as at present if the enthusiasm which at present prevailed among them died out. He wished to refer to another point of intense importance. They knew that their brethren in Line regiments thought no hardship greater than that which occasionally extracted an additional year of service out of them beyong that for which they had enlisted, because they happened to be in India. They would have to be most careful that in any arrangement that was now being made, they did not bring the same rather sharp practice to bear. Once the idea got abroad that while they nominally enlisted men for three years they intended to extract four years' service out of them, they would find that recruiting would dwindle even more rapidly than under other circumstances. Passing to the important point of efficiency, he said it was acknowledged on all hands that the Guards were efficient now. He need not point out that it might make the whole difference in a campaign, whether they were able to seize rapidly and immediately on some point of vantage, or whether they had to hesitate while they created a corps good enough to seize that point. The force at present might not be very large, but as far as it went it was thoroughly good. They had also the certainty of that strong self-reliance which animated all the battalions as they were now constituted. But if this scheme was carried out they would strike at the root of that feeling and destroy the thread of confidence that ran from the colonel down to the young man in the ranks. He was not quite sure that enough stress had been laid on the miserable condition in which the battalion at home would be after the first time of relief—that was when two out of the three battalions had done or were doing their turn of foreign service. He hoped the Under Secretary would not seek to put the House off with general assertions in reference to that matter, but would give a clear and explicit statement of the view of the War Office on the point. The present Commander in Chief, Lord Wolseley, had laid down as a paramount importance for the training of the Army, that every individual man of every single company should be trained from first to last under the immediate supervision of those non-commissioned officers and officers who would go with him into the field. Yet by this scheme they would absolutely destroy the possibility of any continuity in such training. They used the men as though they were shuttlecocks, and battledoored them about from one officer to another, from one company to another, and from one battalion to another, until it would be absolutely impossible for any large number of men in any battalion to maintain that sort of feeling towards those who had to lead it, which in the opinion of the Commander in Chief was inseparable from an efficient and trustworthy Army. If there was one point which could be compared with the necessity of this constant touch it was that the men should be well trained in musketry and in firing drill of all sorts. By the proposed change they would secure, that, supposing the battalion from Gibraltar had to be moved at the end of six months to face a European foe, they would conduct into the field men who had hardly learned what it was to go through two courses of musketry, whose discipline would not have been created by sufficiency of manœuvres or of company training, men who had not been made efficient riflemen by practice at the target, or with the weapon on which they would have to depend. He thought he had shown conclusively that under the scheme, as it stood, efficiency at Gibraltar could not be really and thoroughly maintained. As to the question of efficiency at home, the effect of the scheme had been pretty well demonstrated by the figures that had been given. The Under Secretary would no doubt say they relied on the expert advice of the highest military authorities—Lord Wolseley, Sir Redvers Butler, and Sir Evelyn Wood. He allowed that in that trio they had three out of the four best officers in the Army, and that they were entitled to attach very great weight to the opinions of these three officers. But would the right hon. Gentleman venture to say that this was a scheme which, in the opinion of these three officers, was sufficient to bring the Army into the state in which they would like to see it? He felt pretty certain that if he was in their position he would say: "I must do the best I can. Here I have one Government after another starving and ill-treating the Army. Here I have one miserable dole after another offered. I must make the best of it; I must get as much as I can." He could understand these officers saying: "This may lead to better things in the future; at all events we get something we want;" and he could imagine them reasoning thus: "This experiment will fall utterly and hopelessly to the ground after it has been tried, and then we shall have secured an addition to the Brigade of Guards which is not likely to be dispersed again. We shall, at all events, be on stronger ground for the future in demanding other additions to the Army, which, in our opinion, are vitally necessary to make the Army efficient and real." Supposing the result of this scheme was that in future they should find this addition to the Brigade of Guards made it into a division with one brigade constantly at Aldershot, and constantly in a state of immediate readiness for service, he could understand that that would not be an unpleasing possibility to these military experts, who would think that a step in the direction of greater efficiency had been permanently taken. Lord Methuen was referred to as one of the authorities whose opinion had bolstered up the Government in taking this step. He had no access to the private communications that might have passed between the noble Lord and those whom he was said to have advised, but he listened to every word of the noble Lord's speech in the House of Lords, and could say that it was an absolute condemnation of the scheme. He said:—

> "The whole pith and essence of this scheme of yours depended on your not tearing out the vitals of the battalions at home in order to give life and substance to the battalions abroad."

He could not but regret that no alternative Measure could be tried. Was it impossible to carry out the object in view by some scheme in the direction of longer service—providing they could maintain recruiting under longer service—or by substituting for the system of deferred pay, which many of them thought mistaken and unwise, a differential scale, under which men could get increased pay according to the length of service. Those were experiments in which the Government would have been supported —experiments which they might have made without rousing any of the grave anticipations and fears which they had roused in military minds by their present suggestions. This was no Guards' question; it was not a question in which the Guards were fighting for their own hands alone. There was not a distinguished soldier in the House, no matter to what branch of the Service he belonged, who would not re-echo and emphasise every word, or, at any rate, the spirit of what he had said. If the Government were to poll the Army through they would not find any practical men who had not seen the hollowness and misfortune of the present proposal. He had another reason for trusting that the Government would listen to the moderate request now made. Many of the hon. Members who agreed with him were strong and consistent supporters of the Government, and they did not wish to see the Government embark on an experiment which was foredoomed to failure. They preferred to see the failure. If he might venture to whisper in the ear of the Government —[*laughter; the hon. and gallant Gentleman having spoken throughout in a loud tone*]—he would say, "Don't take up another scheme and fail." They preferred to see the Government's experiments successes. Considering their opportunities, the Government might have had rather more emphatically the courage of their opinions. With the expansion of the Empire, it was absolutely necessary there should be expansion of the Army. Would it not, therefore, have been bolder and more genuine for the Government to have come to the country and said:—

> "We have increased responsibility, we have increased places of danger, and we call upon the country to provide the means adequate to

defend those spots of danger, and to carry out that responsibility"?

They wanted an increase of 11 battalions. Conjure as they liked, they could not, by adding three battalions, get the fighting strength of 11 battalions. He had heard it said the Government had some hope that the course of events would enable them to bring home two battalions from Africa. The recent speeches of the Chancellor of the Exchequer, the Prime Minister, and the Colonial Secretary—which he had heard with delight—certainly did not point in the direction of the withdrawal of any troops from Africa. Would it not have been far wiser and more courageous to have faced the real necessity than to have put the present petty and inconsiderable scheme before the country? He asked the authorities—not in the name of the Guards, but on the broad ground that by the present proposal they would decrease the efficiency of the Army—to reconsider the matter in the direction of, at all events, maintaining that amount of efficiency which there was at present.

*THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR WAR (Mr. BRODRICK, Surrey, Guildford), who was received with cheers, said: My hon. and gallant Friend who has just sat down began his speech by telling us that the House was not to suppose that because he found himself unable to join the Government in this particular Measure he was, therefore, in any way opposed to their general Army programme. Now, I can go further than that towards meeting him. I perfectly recognise the feelings which have animated hon. and gallant Members behind me who have spoken so strongly on behalf of that part of the Army with which they have been associated, but I can assure them that the Government have proposed these additions, not merely from the consideration of the Army at large, but from the consideration also of the efficiency of the Brigade of Guards. I perfectly recognise the right of my hon. and gallant Friend who introduced this subject to raise the question of the efficiency of the Guards as affected by this scheme. It is a question on which I have the less difficulty in meeting him, because the scheme has been already considered from that standpoint by the Commander-in-Chief and the Secretary of State. A first and main object of this scheme is to improve the existing military organisation of the Brigade of Guards. We wish to improve that organisation, not merely in reference to great European wars, but also in respect to small wars, and, in order to make that good, let me ask the House to consider for a moment what is the present organisation of the Brigade of Guards. It is well known to nearly every Member of the House that there are three regiments with seven battalions, one regiment with three battalions, and two regiments with two battalions each. That makes an organisation which does not specially commend itself to any military system. If it is better for a regiment to have three battalions than to have two, or *vice versa*, obviously the Guards' organisation is not in itself ideal, and my hon. and gallant Friend who spoke with such force to-night, the Member for West Somerset, himself admitted that when he said we had at present through the Guards, with their reservists, the power to send, out of seven battalions, only four battalions in case of a European war. The amount that we can send from the Guards is smaller proportionally that we can send from any other regiments in the Army. [Sir A. ACLAND-HOOD: "I said without reservists."] I think he said four battalions with reservists, and then proceeded to discuss the subject afterwards on the system of three battalions without reservists.

*SIR A. ACLAND-HOOD: I said four battalions, with reservists behind them to fill up casualties in the field.

*MR. BRODRICK: My hon. and gallant Friend has now made his meaning plain, but I am afraid if I were to dissect that figure I should have to show, on the authority of the Adjutant General that, even including a fair proportion of reservists, it would be impossible with the present Guards' organisation to send more than four battalions out of the country at the same time. That in itself is a serious matter, and I think that the House will agree that if you are to have a *corps d'élite* at all—and we attach the greatest importance to the influence of a *corps d'élite* on the Army—that body of troops ought to bear some proportion to the size of the Army you can send abroad. Now, the four battalions of Guards is in itself a very small proportion, and it is a strong desire of the Commander-in-Chief that in case of war it should be possible, as it ought to be possible, to send abroad, not four battalions, but six battalions of Guards, so that you might employ a whole division of Guards in support of the two army corps, or in the two army corps, which this country can provide. Therefore, as the first point in the organisation of the Guards, we take as a cardinal condition of the efficiency of those regiments that we should be able to increase the strength at which they would go abroad by one-half. Then we come to the question of small wars. Again, I think my hon. and gallant Friend the Member for Somerset admitted a good deal more in his speech than he himself is aware of. There is a general belief in the country that every battalion of Guards is at this moment fit to go abroad in its present condition. That is not the case. I am very sorry to dispel the belief that prevails, because any belief in Army efficiency on the part of the public is very useful at the present moment when that belief is not too liberally bestowed. [*A laugh.*] But my hon. and gallant Friend alluded to the campaigns of 1882 and 1885, and I see around me more than one officer who took part in those campaigns in the ranks of the Guards. What were we able to do for the small war in 1882 by the seven battalions of Guards? The best we were able to do was this. Out of the seven battalions we were able to send three abroad. At what strength were we able to send them? We could not send them at the full strength of 1,000 men, at which battalions should be sent on foreign service, but we sent them at the following strength:—The 2nd Battalion of Grenadier Guards, 761 strong; 2nd Battalion of Coldstream Guards, 760; 1st Battalion of Scots Guards, 764. How were these battalions made up? They were made up by draining in the most remorseless manner the other battalions at home. [Hon. MEMBERS: "No, no!" *and laughter.*] Allow me. The 2nd Battalion of Coldstream Guards had in its ranks 217 men out of 760 belonging to the 1st Battalion. The 1st Battalion of the Scots Guards had in its ranks 213 of the 2nd Battalion which was left at home. The 2nd Battalion of the Grenadier Guards had in its ranks 250 men furnished by the 1st and 3rd Battalions.

MR. ARNOLD-FORSTER (Belfast, W.): Will the right hon. Gentleman give the corresponding figures for the Line battalions?

*MR. BRODRICK: I am not on that point, and I am afraid I cannot do that now.

*SIR A. ACLAND-HOOD: What was the average service of these men? Is the right hon. Gentleman aware it was over five years?

*MR. BRODRICK: I cannot tell the average service, but I believe the men were over 20 years of age, and that over one year's service was the test.

*SIR A. ACLAND-HOOD: Was the average five years' service?

*MR. BRODRICK: I am very glad if the average was five years' service, but that was not the test applied, as the Adjutant General informs me. The question was that the Guards should provide as full a brigade as could be provided, and in doing so—I do not say it by way of reproach—["Hear, hear!"]—I am only speaking of the system as we found it—the military authorities were compelled to take the numbers I have given from the battalions remaining behind. What was the experience of the Suakin expedition in 1885? In respect of that I should like to tell the House at once that I have reason to think that in the figures I have to give are included the men who served in the Camel Corps on the Nile. The 3rd Battalion of the Grenadier Guards had 804 men, and of these 346, or nearly one-half, were provided by the 1st and 2nd Battalions. The 1st Battalion of the Coldstream Guards took 808 men to Egypt; of these 290 were taken from the 2nd Battalion. The 2nd Battalion of the Scots Guards took 812 men, and of these 360 men were from the 1st Battalion. These figures speak for themselves. They prove beyond doubt that, if for a small war you require to send a brigade of Guards at this moment, the best you can do is to send three battalions out of the seven at a strength 200 below the fighting strength of a battalion; and you can only arrive at that strength by deducting from 200 to 300 men from the battalions at home, whose efficiency is thereby seriously impaired.

My first point is, therefore, that by placing three battalions at Gibraltar on a high establishment, we shall mitigate that evil. We shall, as far as these battalions are concerned, have a nucleus in the case of a small war from which we may hope to get a brigade of Guards of fairly high strength without unduly depleting the battalions at home. All my hon. and gallant Friends have urged that the battalions at Gibraltar will be inefficient because they cannot be trained —[*cheers*]—and that the battalions at home will become inefficient because they will be so depleted and will to a large extent consist of recruits. It has been boldly asserted over and over again by officers who have served there, that a regiment on a Mediterranean station is quite unfit to take the field. Let me investigate these facts, if they are facts—not on my own authority, but on the information drawn from the men who have the best right to advise us on these matters. In the first place, although the whole of this discussion has had reference to Gibraltar, it must be remembered that the Secretary of State the other night, in the House of Lords, spoke of the Mediterranean; and, although I am quite ready to discuss this question from the point of view of Gibraltar alone, it must not be supposed that I am tying the Government down to Gibraltar as the only station to which the Guards may be sent. As to the service of the men in the Guards, the majority of them are not three-years men. Two-thirds of them are on seven years' engagements. But what is the position as to training at Gibraltar? I dare say that most of my hon. and gallant Friends have been there, and I candidly admit that I have not. Really, from the picture given, the House would assume that there was no place for drill, target practice, or manœuvres, and that nothing but sentry-go and such like duties was attempted. ["Hear, hear!"] I have had the advantage of seeing maps of Gibraltar and of having them expounded to me by officers who have served there many years. They inform me that there is ample room for all the ordinary company and battalion drill. As to target practice, there is target practice at 800 yards; and a young soldier trained to shoot up to 800 yards cannot be said to lose the whole of his military training. It has been stated that there is no field-firing at Gibraltar. It is not the fact. The Quartermaster-General informs me that there are ranges properly laid out for field-firing, with targets for shooting down hill—which is the best practice for young soldiers—up to 1,400 and 1,800 yards. I am told that there are no manœuvres. Has it been the practice of the Guards to go to manœuvres every year? I have taken down the occasions during the last three years on which battalions of the Guards have attended manœuvres. In 1894 four battalions of the Guards joined the field column at Aldershot. In 1895 three battalions went to the manœvres in the New Forest, and in 1896 three battalions attended the small manœuvres at Aldershot. Therefore it follows that three battalions of Guards went to manœuvres twice in three years and missed one year, while four battalions went once in three years and missed two years. Will anyone tell me that it is not a strained view of the situation as to Gibraltar to say that a battalion going there for one year will lose the efficiency which it had gained in the preceding two years, because of the loss of manœuvres for that one year—manœuvres which it might not have attended had it been in England? I must say that, speaking as we are of some of the choicest troops in the Army, that is a strange and unwarrantable conclusion. As to efficiency for war after a period of service in the Mediterranean, it appears from statistics, which I gave in reply to a question this afternoon, that there is less sickness, less invaliding, and less death at Gibraltar than at home stations, taking them all round. As to the fitness of those battalions for war, I would appeal to the evidence given by the Adjutant-General before the Wantage Committee six or seven years ago, without any reference to this scheme. He was asked, "On what regiments would you rely for active service to go first into the field?" He said, "The battalions on the Mediterranean stations are those best suited both by their character and geographical position to be the first employed for the purpose of an expeditionary force." The last 11 battalions that have served on those stations have served there on an average three years each—a much longer period than is proposed for the Guards.

COLONEL KENYON-SLANEY: Does that opinion of the Adjutant-General refer to soldiers of three years' service or longer?

*MR. BRODRICK: They are men recruited, no doubt, for seven years—["hear, hear!"]—but they were also men who had spent three or four years at Gibraltar, and who, if the argument of the hon. and gallant Member for Somerset held good, being largely drafted from the Home Battalion, had not the advantage of knowing their officers. We propose in the allotment of drafts to the various battalions to avoid that difficulty. I wish to make it perfectly clear that if the results of the Gibraltar training had been such as my hon. and gallant Friends imagine, there are no two men who would have been more adverse to proposing such a station for the Guards than the Adjutant-General and the Commander-in-Chief. The next point of hon. Gentlemen is that the battalions at home become inefficient from depletion. What are the facts? A Line battalion goes abroad for 15 or 16 years. During the whole of that time 720 men in the battalion at home have to find drafts for the 1,000 men abroad—that is, to keep 280 men abroad above the strength of the home battalion. The Guards are going out for one year, or little more; therefore there would be, taking the establishments as they now stand, 744 men on the establishment at home, and abroad 920; and the difference between these two is only 180. To make that up you have two battalions to draw from instead of one. Therefore, at the worst, the drain on the home battalions ought not to be more than one-third of that on the Line battalions at home. I cannot follow my hon. and gallant Friend through all his figures for this reason, that his assumption is fundamentally different from the assumption made at the War Office. Nearly a month ago, if not more, the authorities at the War Office put themselves into touch with the officers commanding the various regiments of the Guards in order to obtain from them what, in their opinion, were the difficulties that were required to be met in the working out of the scheme. These opinions are being most carefully considered at the present moment with the view—which I hope will be successful—of meeting the objections made by the officers commanding these regiments. But every figure upon which my hon. and gallant Friend has gone has been based on the assumption that in a certain October or April we are suddenly to raise the battalion's home strength of 744 to the Gibraltar strength of 921. That, we think, would be a very crude way of going to work. ["Hear, hear!"] We have no idea that it would be desirable to face the obvious difficulties of transferring men of the Guards by any such rapid change as would be involved in that proposal. ["Hear, hear!"] Our suggestion and the lines on which we are working are these. When a battalion goes to Gibraltar on full strength in a certain October, we shall bring the next battalion which goes out 12 or 18 months later up to an intermediate strength between the strength of the home battalion and the strength of the Gibraltar battalion. There will then be only half the difference between 744 and 921 to make up. We propose to give the Guards what they have never had hitherto, a depôt—that is, a depôt outside the strength of the regiment. ["Hear, hear!"] At present, if a man is measured for the Guards and is passed by the doctor he is immediately held to be on the strength of the regiment. We propose to have a depôt in the case of the Line regiments, which will enable us to keep a pool of recruits from which we can gradually strengthen the battalion which stands next for foreign service. ["Hear, hear!"] Beyond that there was pressed on the War Office by the Wantage Committee and by some colonels who had been consulted that it would not only be a great advantage to the Guards themselves, but a great advantage to the Reserve, if a certain number of the very large force of Reservists who belong to the Guards were encouraged to serve rather longer in that force. ["Hear, hear!"] At the present time, a man, when he comes to three years, has to say down whether he will serve for seven years; and if he does not he goes to the Reserve for nine years, a process which does not tend to his more effective training. We think it probable that, either by allowing men who have gone from the battalion to come back, if of good character and accepted by the colonel, or by allowing men to serve for an additional number of years, if unwilling to serve for the full term, we shall obtain for service in the Mediterranean a number of trained men who will have given one or two years' more service in the ranks and less in the Reserve. ["Hear, hear!"] That will at least give a stimulus to recruiting. A man who enlists in the Guards will know that from the day he leaves the regiment he is free at any time, if he fails in obtaining employment, and if his conduct is good, to return to the colours and serve another portion of his time. [*Cheers.*] We look to that and to a considerable rise in the establishment of the battalion next for service and to the depôt to relieve us from the difficulties to which hon. Gentlemen behind have referred. I have been asked to state whether, having enlisted men for three years with the right to keep them on a fourth year if they are on service abroad, we shall take advantage of it by sending these men to Gibraltar towards the end of the third year, and detain them for a fourth on the plea that they are serving abroad. We do not intend to do that. ["Hear, hear!"] It would be, if not an actual breach of faith, a straining of the relations, at all events, with the men who had already joined. ["Hear, hear!"] We propose to rely on the fact—on which we think we have every reason to expect we can rely—that a very considerable number of Volunteers would be ready to complete their services abroad, and come home with the regiment, which gives them a very much better chance of employment. ["Hear, hear!"] The case of the married non-commissioned officers has been referred to. I can promise that their case will be carefully considered. ["Hear, hear!"] We know very well that they are an immense stay and backbone to the regiment—[*cheers*]—and in carrying out our proposals it is our desire, as much as any military man in the House, to keep all the battalions in an efficient condition by giving a careful consideration to the position of the married non-commissioned officers. ["Hear, hear!"] I can only say, speaking generally, that, although, to adopt the phrase used by the Secretary of State for War in another place, we cannot admit the battalions of the same regiment are actually to be kept in "water-tight compartments," we fully recognise the undesirability from a military standpoint of constant transfers of men and officers from one battalion to another; and consequently, without giving absolute figures, which must be, to some extent, problematical, we can assure the House of Commons that the principle and substratum of the whole scheme is to preserve the individuality of battalions and to secure that if we have to send battalions to Gibraltar, there should still be two efficient battalions at home. ["Hear, hear!"] We come next to the very important question of recruiting. My hon. and gallant Friend has said that we cannot possibly get the recruits we want for the Guards without greatly lowering the standard of height. In touching the recruiting for the Guards we are touching, not the weakest, but the strongest point in our recruiting system. If you look to the Line, it is an extraordinary thing that the recruiting for the line under a voluntary system has been for many years as consistently good as it has been, seeing that our Line standard is higher than the standard in any foreign country. ["Hear, hear!"] But, at the same time, evidence is not wanting that if we were to strain the recruiting for the Line we would have either to lower the standard or to increase the attraction of the service. In the course of the last nine years we have had to take under the standard a certain number of special enlistments; although, as the late Secretary for State will bear me out, we have succeeded in turning those men into excellent soldiers after a year's training. But we cannot strain the recruiting of the Line too far. In 1889, we took 4,200 men, specially enlisted under the standard; in 1890, 7,900; in 1891, 11,600; in 1892, 12,100; in 1893, 7,700; in 1894, 8,400; in 1895, 5,700; and in 1896, 5,000. Therefore, the House will see that for the last five years there has been a progressive improvement. Now, what has been the experience in the Guards? Fifteen years ago the standard for the Guards was 5ft. 7in. That was the standard when the Guards accomplished some of their best deeds abroad—["hear, hear!"]—and it is a higher standard than the standard of the Guards of any foreign Power. In 1882 the standard was still 5ft. 7in. During the last 15 years it has been gradually raised to 5ft. 9in., at which figure it stood for four years up to two months ago. Consequently there has been such an increase in the supply of recruits for the Guards over the demand that we have been able to raise the standard by two inches during the last 15 years. The Adjutant-General says, on that point:—

> "The average annual number of recruits taken for the Foot Guards during the last four years has been 1,142. We estimate that after the two new battalions are raised and the three foreign battalions raised to the foreign establishment, and the extra men so raised kept up, we shall, during a period of eight years from the commencement, have required 4,867 more recruits than are now considered necessary to keep up the existing seven battalions. Our average annual requirements during eight years will, therefore, be 1,142 plus 608, or 1,750 recruits per year for the Guards. Now, in 1883, with the standard at 5ft. 7in., we raised 1,727 recruits; in 1884, with 5ft. 7in., 1,712 recruits; in 1887, with 5ft. 8in., 1,266 recruits; in 1891, with 5ft. 8in., 1,604 recruits; and in 1892, with 5ft. 8in., 1,832 recruits. In 1891 and 1892 men under 20 years of age were taken at 5ft. 8in. In September 1892, the standard was raised to 5ft. 8in. for all; in October 1892, to 5ft. 8½in.; and in December, 1892, to 5ft. 9in., at which it remained till January 1897. These figures seem to justify our belief that we shall raise and keep up the extra men for the Guards without an undue reduction of standard."

Of course, in the matter of recruiting it is impossible to dogmatise. It all depends on the state of trade. ["Hear, hear!"] To-morrow 100 men may come in, and for a fortnight after we may not get a single man. But it will be said, all this depends on the popularity of the service, and your proposals will decrease the popularity of recruiting in the Guards. Well, I should like to read to the House the views of the Recruiting Department on this point. The report from the recruiting officer says:—

> "With regard to recruiting for the Guards it appears that a large proportion of men from London or its immediate neighbourhood have a preference for other corps. These men have been frequently questioned as to why they prefer other corps, and the usual answer is desire for change; either a wish for foreign service or a desire to see the world, places where the conditions of life are very different to what they are in England, and places where they may hope to earn war medals."

The report further stated that

> "about half the men, more or less, who are of the Guards' standard and come up to enlist do not take the Guards because they want to see foreign service."

That is not an opinion written to order or asked for, but the opinion volunteered before even the question was raised, and I think we have a right to hope that the popularity of recruiting will not be reduced, but may be stimulated, by the prospect of some foreign service, especially in the face of figures showing that for some time past we have been raising the standard and that we do not require a larger number of recruits than we have been able to raise during some past years. ["Hear, hear!"] I have, I fear, burdened the House with many details—[*cheers*]—but I have been anxious to show to those who disagree with our proposals that, at all events, these proposals have not been lightly taken up, but that the whole matter, with many criticisms offered, has been fully considered by the Government. ["Hear, hear!"] Now, having said so much about the efficiency of the Guards, I will refer to the manner in which the Government proposal will affect the efficiency of the Line. We have had 141 Line battalions forced to perform a great deal more work than it was ever the intention of Parliament that they should be called upon to do. The principle laid down at the time of short service was that there should be a battalion at home for every battalion sent abroad. But since 1874 there has not been a single year in which that intention has been realised—["hear, hear!"]—and the consequence has been that the drafts to maintain that principle have been an immense strain on the efficiency of the regiments at home. Every man and officer in the Line at present has to do from 12 to 15 months' service abroad out of every 24 months he serves the Queen. That enormous strain is one which was never contemplated in our Army system. The question we have to face is, how is that strain to be relieved? ["Hear, hear!"] The hon. and gallant Member for Shropshire (Colonel Kenyon-Slaney) said the proposal of the Government was a miserable dole. But this so-called dole involves an addition of nearly 8,000 men to the Army at an ultimate cost of £450,000 a year. [" Hear, hear! "]

Sir HENRY CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN (Stirling Burghs): This particular scheme?

*Mr. BRODRICK: No, not this particular scheme. My hon. and gallant Friend was speaking of the whole Government proposal as a miserable dole, and he argued that it was desirable to add 11 battalions to the Army. [" Hear, hear! "] Now, by sending out three Guards' battalions we are avoiding the necessity of raising six new Line battalions, and by doing that we avoid the necessity of raising and of expending £200,000 a year permanently, making our £450,000 up to £650,000. We also avoid the initial expenditure which would raise our requirements for military works from £5,500,000 to £6,000,000. That is not all, because you could not be sure of getting the number of Line recruits you want unless you grant an increase of pay. If you gave 3d. a day extra pay I do not think that that would have the least effect on recruiting, and yet 3d. a day would add nearly a million sterling to the annual Estimates. Therefore, you are asking us to embark in a very dangerous and difficult operation if you call upon us to substitute for our present proposal the much greater proposal which finds so much force in the minds of my hon. and gallant Friends. I have been asked to say whether the present scheme is the scheme of the Army Board or of the Government. The sending of the three battalions abroad has unquestionably been commended to the Secretary of State by the Commander-in-Chief and by the Army Board, and the Commander-in-Chief considers that the scheme will tend to the military efficiency of the Guards. [" Hear, hear! "] The question of what addition should be made to the Army was one which the Commander-in-Chief and the Army Board had to consider in relation to the number of regiments that the Government deemed it necessary at a given time to keep abroad. The Cabinet must be masters of the situation. They have the key of matters abroad by which they can decide what force may be needed; at all events, what operations it may be necessary to carry out. [" Hear, hear! "] In the present year the Government have accepted from the Army Board and from the Commander-in-Chief the suggestion that an equivalent number of battalions should be kept at home to those which are to be kept abroad. Therefore, the scheme is a military proposal and not merely a Government proposal. [" Hear, hear! "] Let the House consider how we are placed. We have to decide how to meet this difficulty. We have on the one hand a proposal to send the Guards to the Mediterranean, and on the other hand we have a proposal that we should make a large addition to the Army at a great cost, which would become an enormous cost, if we found we could not get the men under the present regulations without increasing the pay. But having got the men we should only have, according to the Adjutant General, troops outside the organisation of our Army Corps, and maintained merely to keep up foreign relief. There is a third course, that of leaving matters alone, but I do not think the House would take this third course, as it would, in the opinion of every military authority in the country, result in the inefficiency, through overstraining, of certain Line battalions. [" Hear, hear! "] We have adopted the first alternative. We have taken the advice of those who will have to work the system, and who will be responsible for carrying it out. If we adopted the second we should be taking the advice of men who certainly have a right to speak on the matter, but who, after all, are not responsible for finding a remedy for the difficulty we have to provide against. [" Hear, hear! "] I must say here that I cannot help feeling impressed by the fact that a feeling has been experienced that this scheme has been adopted hastily, in order to meet a recognised and a difficult problem, but at the risk of spoiling what is almost best in our military organisation. This is not the first time the scheme has been brought forward. It was first proposed by the Duke of Cambridge, the late Commander-in-Chief, who desired to add battalions to the Guards and to send Guard Battalions to the Mediterranean. I am sure that the House will agree that there is no man in this country who is less willing to suggest a change for the sake of change than the late Commander-in-Chief.

["Hear, hear!" *and laughter.*] The scheme was not carried out by the Governmen of that day because an increase in the Army was not decided upon. It was proposed again in 1891 by Lord Wantage's Committee. Lord Wantage was himself a distinguished Guardsman; he served in peace and war with the Guards, and while with them won the Victoria Cross at Inkermann—[*cheers*]—and as to this proposal he had the support not only of General Fielding, himself a Guardsman, who was then Inspector General of recruiting, and therefore conversant with the whole question, but of all the four selected colonels of Line regiments, every one of whom must have been cognisant of the conditions of Mediterranena service. ["Hear, hear!"] It was again proposed by the military authorities in the present year. Complaint has been made that the officers who are themselves commanding the Brigade of Guards have not been consulted in this matter, and it has been asked, why did we go to the Duke of Cambridge, the Duke of Connaught, and Sir F. Stephenson? Reference was made to them only because, by the Queen's regulations, these three officers are, as I understand, the officers specially charged with considering any proposal out of the ordinary routine which may affect the Brigade of Guards. Lord Wolseley has also been cited. May I read the opinion of Lord Wolseley? ["Hear, hear!"] He has, unfortunately, been prevented by illness from attending in the House of Lords, where he would have desired to express his views, but he wrote me this under date of yesterday and authorised me to read it to Parliament:—

> "Gibraltar always was a popular station with the Army, and I believe that an experience of foreign service will be beneficial to the Brigade of Guards. Nothing has reached me which makes me think that it will be otherwise than popular with the men. Bearing in mind the condition of Line battalions that have spent several years in the Mediterranean, I see no reason to fear that the tour of service proposed will impair the efficiency of the Brigade. On the other hand, as a matter of military organisation, by a careful arrangement of the recruiting as between the battalions, we shall insure six battalions of Guards being fit for service in case of a big war, instead of four as at present, which will be a great improvement upon our existing organisation."

That is Lord Wolseley's opinion. [*Cheers.*] I have said so much as to what soldiers feel that I should like to say a word as to what civilians feel on this subject. I know how little the opinion of any civilian is worth on a military question, but this is not merely a question of military organisation. It is to some extent a question of military sentiment, and in a sentiment which concerns the Guards civilians have as much right to share as military men. I say this—that there is not a man on this Bench who would have raised one finger in this work if he had believed he was doing anything to impair the efficiency of the Brigade of Guards. ["Hear, hear!"] I know I can say for Lord Lansdowne and for myself that there are no men in this country who are more conscious than we are of the services which the Guards have rendered to the country in the past, and, whether they have been called upon to serve in the Peninsula or the Crimea, of the devoted manner in which they had performed every duty which the country has laid upon them. [*Cheers.*] But we have in this matter, when every patriotic sentiment and every military instinct urges us to consider the efficiency of the Brigade of Guards, also to consider the responsibility which we owe to the Army. We are working a difficult system—["hear, hear!"]—a system which is necessarily complicated by all the various needs of the Empire at home and abroad, and we have adopted the course now before us as being, upon the whole, the best military solution of a most difficult military problem. We have against us the suggestion that we should, at a moment when every nation in Europe is spending every farthing it can scrape together for the most effective national defence, spend a large sum of money in raising more Line battalions to do that which, it is represented to us, with increased efficiency can be done by the Guards. My hon. and gallant Friend who moved the Motion asked that we would give this matter further serious consideration. I can assure him that nothing shall be wanting on our part of close scrutiny to see that nothing in the course of the changes occurs to impair either the character or the status, the physique or the efficiency of the Guards regiments. [*Cheers.*] On the other hand, I urge the House not to stand between the Government and a proposal which will add 2,000 choice troops to the British Army, and will give to the Guards, as well as to the Army, that which in the opinion of our highest military advisers is the best military organisation for the country. [*Cheers.*]

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: I am sure there will only be one opinion in the House—that the right hon. Gentleman has laid before us the case for this particular proposal of the Government with very great ability and clearness. ["Hear, hear!"] But there were two qualities in his observations which, I think, were conspicuous above all others. He was courageous and he was sedative —[*laughter and cheers*]—two qualities which were very much required at the moment he rose. [*Laughter.*] I think there was, in particular, considerable necessity for the latter quality. We had a series of speeches from hon. and gallant officers opposite which rose in crescendo scale until they culminated in the remarks of my hon. and gallant Friend the Member for Shropshire. [*Laughter.*] I was sometimes on the point of appealing to Mr. Speaker as to whether an hon. Member was justified in using language of menace to another Member within the walls of this House. [*Laughter.*] He spoke, it is true, as he told us, in a whisper—[*loud laughter*]—but it is well for the equanimity of the right hon. Gentleman opposite that he was not sitting on this side of the House. If he had seen my hon. and gallant Friend as well as heard him, I am afraid his equanimity would have been disturbed. [*Laughter.*] But besides being sedative, the right hon. Gentleman was courageous, and this again was wanted. We have had a report in the newspapers, emanating, I presume, from those purlieus of the Press where there is so much more intimate knowledge of our motives and intentions than we ourselves possess, that the Government intended to treat any action contrary to this proposal of theirs as a want of confidence. The fault up to that point I had to find with the Government was that they exhibited a want of confidence in themselves and in their proposal. ["Hear, hear!"] The right hon. Gentleman has supplied that lack by making a bold and clear and well-reasoned and well-considered defence of what they propose. The Secretary of State for War, on the other hand, having arranged apparently an artificial opportunity for making a statement on this subject in another place, and thereby anticipating, I think, the action of this House and almost the right of this House—["hear, hear!"]—in a way which I think we ought, at all events, to comment upon if we do not protest against it, delivered a speech and explained these proposals as being of a hypothetical, tentative character, and spoke in a tone which was apologetic and almost penitential. That is not the way in which the confidence of the country will be gained for a considerable change of this nature. ["Hear, hear!"] Therefore I am very glad that now we have from the right hon. Gentleman a fuller and more perfect explanation. The right hon. Gentleman has, however, put it on somewhat different grounds than those on which it was put in the House of Lords. The right hon. Gentleman, though he referred at the end of his speech to the necessity of dealing with the evils arising from the inequality of the regiments at home and abroad, founded, I think I am right in saying, the case for the proposal on the interest of the Brigade of Guards itself—that it was a desirable thing in itself, and then he proceeded to bring in Gibraltar and the other considerations as secondary matters, although important in themselves. That rather takes us by surprise, because we had not been led to regard the proposal from that point of view. It is not a matter on which I should like to give any strong opinion. My tendency is certainly to the belief that in all cases efficiency is increased by having at least three battalions *en cadre* helping each other. On the merits of the proposal, apart altogether from this question of equalising battalions, we are to have 2,000 men added to the British infantry. The question I think will arise first of all whether that is in itself necessary, because, if I am not wrong, we have added 20,000 within the last 20 years to the strength of the British infantry; and, secondly, the next point is whether any such addition of infantry is required for the duties of the Army. Ought it to be given to the Guards, or would it not be better to give it to some of the regiments of the Line? I think it is a matter certainly worthy of consideration whether this is the best form and whether there is the most urgent necessity for this increase of the infantry force. As to the Guards themselves, I think they have every reason to feel proud of and satisfied with the manner in which their case has been put before the House. [*Cheers.*] I say that for this reason. The Guards have indiscreet and foolish friends, in the Press and elsewhere, who on an occasion such as this raise the question of privilege and the question of breach of faith as to service and the questions of the irksome duties of garrison life. None of those questions have been raised on their behalf by any officer who has served with them—["Hear, hear!"]—and I feel perfectly sure that no such considerations would be urged by anyone of any rank connected with the Guards. ["Hear, hear!"] Their whole history goes to disprove the probability of any such line being taken, because they have always been ready, as has been said to-day, to thrust themselves forward into any difficult or unpleasant position in order to save possibly some of their comrades in the Army. [*Cheers.*] At the same time I do not enter into the technical arguments that were urged by many hon. and gallant Gentlemen. With some things that they said I could largely sympathise. There were others which I think were a little overstrained, but they were all arguments based on the real necessity of the efficiency of the Brigade. It does appear to me that the Guards are not likely to suffer, but rather to gain, from a certain share in foreign service. We have had some experience of it. Everyone knows the high pitch of efficiency to which the Brigade of Guards has risen at the present moment. The energy and the zeal of the officers, and the devotion of the men—who can say how much that is due to the experience they had in Egypt and in the Soudan, by being taken out of the ordinary routine of their home duties and employed on work of that kind, even where that work is not that of actual warfare? I remember two or three years ago, when I had some small responsibility in the matter, we were hard pressed for a battalion, and it was almost arranged that a battalion of the Guards should be sent to Egypt, or sent in the first place to Gibraltar, with a view to their being moved afterwards; but that was a very different thing—it would have been giving them the benefit and variety of a little foreign service; that was a very different thing from the proposal now before us, which, in the crude form first presented—though considerably modified now—meant the relegation in perpetuity of three battalions of the Guards to fortress duty at Gibraltar. Now, I am not going to depreciate Gibraltar or say a word that might hurt the feelings of anyone interested in that place. It may be the most healthful and pleasant place a battalion could be stationed at; but at the same time anyone can see that a regiment stationed there does not obtain the same variety of experience and instruction that the Guards obtain even at home. I confess I regard with great—I will not say an absolute or insuperable objection—but certainly with great dislike the idea, as I have said, of constituting Gibraltar a Guards' station, with three battalions of Guards always there, and I think it would be very injurious probably in its effects to the discipline and efficiency of what may well be said to be among the most efficient part of the Army. Therefore I should hope that there will not be on the part of the Government any absolute committal of themselves to that destination of the Guards. The right hon. Gentleman has raised, not probably a new question, but he has adopted a new way of looking at the question—namely, with the addition of three battalions, a desirable thing. At the same time it is all in the future; there is very little provision for it.

*MR. BRODRICK: It will be provided for as we get recruits.

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: Quite so, but I do not know whether this will be proceeded with as rapidly as possible with a view to secure two battalions as soon as possible, or whether it will be proceeded with by a tentative process; we certainly gathered from a statement made in another place that the process would be exceedingly tentative. I do not know in these circumstances that I can add anything to what has already been said. The right hon. Gentleman has made out a strong case from his point of view, and the hon. and gallant Gentleman who spoke on behalf of the Guards has made what in many respects was a well-founded protest against what we believe to be the intentions of the Government, and we are in the position that we cannot divide and by actual vote express our opinion, and therefore it will be convenient to many Members not to commit themselves too hard on one side or the other. But I trust, and many Members will agree with me, especially after the exhibition on Monday and to-day of the sentiments of Guards officers towards the Brigade and their devotion to its interests, with their willingness to listen to anything which is likely, in the opinion of high authorities, to benefit those interests—after that, I say, I hope that we shall have some certainty that the views of those who represent the Guards will be considered to some extent, and if, on full consideration, it appears to the Government, as it appears to some of us, that to carry out the original proposal would be detrimental to the Guards, it will not be persevered in.

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY: The right hon. Gentleman in the closing sentences of his brief speech indicated his view that Members of the House had better be cautious before committing themselves to one side or the other on this controverted question, and I am bound to say I never heard a speaker more carefully carry out in his own conduct the advice he gave. ["Hear, hear!"] I declare that, after listening to the right hon. Gentleman with all the attention I invariably give to his speeches, I have not the slightest idea whether he approves or disapproves of the policy so ably expounded by my right hon. Friend near me. ["Hear, hear!"] Indeed, I should almost conjecture that the right hon. Gentleman had come to the House prepared with a speech which after my right hon. Friend's remarks he did not think it expedient to deliver—that he found the enemy too strongly posted, and was not prepared to bring up his forces in the way of serious attack. ["Hear, hear!"] The right hon. Gentleman, under these circumstances, took refuge in the ancient Parliamentary manœuvre of trying to draw a distinction between the utterances of the Government in this House and the utterances of the Government in another place, between the view of the Secretary of State expressed in the House of Lords and the view expressed by the Under Secretary in the House of Commons, and he went the length, I think, of describing the difference between the statements as amounting to a change of front.

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: No, I did not say a change of front. I said totally different reasons were given, as has happened once or twice before in statements from the present Government.

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY: To those who do not come down with a speech cut and dried it must necessarily occur that the arguments they may think it expedient to put forward on any occasion of this kind are determined by the nature of the attack. Lord Lansdowne was the first to open the scheme, and did not and could not foresee the extent and nature of the criticisms that would be offered against it. In consequence of that he dwelt more upon one than upon another aspect of the question, and in explaining the views of the Government doubtless he did not insist to the same length as my hon. Friend on certain points on which subsequent experience has shown the strongest feeling is entertained by those who have expressed and have a right to express the feeling of the Brigade of Guards in a matter so nearly affecting their interests. When the right hon. Gentleman said the Secretary of State wanted confidence and expressed no belief in his own scheme I directly traverse that statement. ["Hear, hear!"] Not a word can be extracted from the noble Lord's speech which is fairly open to that interpretation. The noble Lord did say that if the design was found to have different consequences to those he anticipated, of course, a change of policy would have to occur. Did he express any anticipation that evil results would be experienced?

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: Yes.

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY: Quote the sentence. ["Hear, hear!"] I do not press the right hon. Gentleman. He is not bound to have the noble Lord's speech with him, nor am I justified in requiring corroboration of every word said; but this I can say—that after reading that speech I derive from it a very different impression, and I have had the opportunity, which the right hon. Gentleman does not possess, of a great deal of personal conversation with the noble Lord, and I can in the most explicit terms contradict the impression which the right hon. Gentleman has himself derived from the speech and has sought to convey to the House. The explanations given by the Secretary of State and the Under Secretary are consistent with each other in the positive statements they contain, and the general impression they were intended to convey as to the future of the scheme now initiated. I do not think it is necessary, after what has not fallen from the right hon. Gentleman and what has fallen from my right hon. Friend, that I should occupy the time of the House in going over again the ground so ably traversed by the Under Secretary. A more able, vigorous, temperate, and lucid defence of Government policy was never delivered at this box by any Minister of this or previous Governments. [" Hear ! "] He traversed the whole ground and proved to every man who listened to him how carefully the subject had been thought out, and it would be mere impertinence on my part if I pretended to the House that I could add to the weight and value of what my right hon. Friend has said. Before I sit down it is only necessary for me to say that I appreciate the spirit which has been shown by those Gentlemen who, having themselves served in the Brigade of Guards, have a special right to take up the defence of the interests of the Brigade in this House. Neither I nor my colleagues complain of the line they have taken. If regimental officers cease to have pride in the history of their regiment, and to interest themselves in its present condition and future prospects, it will be a bad day for the Army. The course they have pursued is one that requires no apology, however much we may have felt that the criticisms directed against us were criticisms necessarily delivered under this disadvantage, that they could not be fully acquainted with the whole view of the Government in regard to this matter. Let me simply summarise what my right hon. Friend has said. We not only do not desire to do anything that may lead to the injury of the Guards, we desire to do everything to improve their position and importance. We do not desire to make the home battalions weaker than the home battalions are at present; on the contrary, we believe the strength of these battalions will be greater than at present. In addition to these home battalions thus increased in strength we give to the Guards three battalions, all of higher strength than the Guards have ever had before. All this we mean to do without interfering with that traditional character which has marked out the Guards as a special branch of the Army. If our anticipations are fulfilled, as I doubt not they will be, I am sure my hon. and gallant Friends will agree that the Government instead of injuring the Guards have done them good service. If, on the other hand, our confident anticipations prove to be ill-founded, then, of course, the Government will be obliged to retrace the step they have taken. If that be to regard this as an experiment, then an experiment I admit it is, as everything in the nature of a change must be an experiment, but it is an experiment of which we do not doubt the results, results beneficial to the Guards and to the whole Army. The right hon. Gentleman complained that my right hon. Friend did not dwell at greater length on the question of the inequality between the home and foreign battalions, and he contrasted his speech in this particular with the speech of Lord Lansdowne. My right hon. Friend said quite enough on that subject to indicate how important in the view of our military advisers it is to diminish as far as possible that inequality. If you want your Army to be efficient you ought not to throw this undue burden upon the foreign battalions alone. That being so, I would appeal to my hon. and gallant Friends behind me, and the House at large, to support the Government in the only practicable method of really dealing with this difficulty. [" Hear, hear !"] The Under Secretary has shown that if you take the only other solution—that of raising six new battalions of the line—you would be met by two difficulties, each of a formidable character. You would be met with the recruiting difficulty, which might be great in the new battalions for the Guards, but which would be still greater in an attempt to raise six battalions of the Line. You would also be met by the financial difficulty, which is, indeed, not present to the mind of many irresponsible military advisers of the Government, but which, I am sure, will have due weight with all my hon. and gallant Friends behind me. [" Hear, hear !"] They know already that impatience is constantly expressed at the immense cost of the British Army. [" Hear, hear!"] They know that in the country at large the expenditure on the Army is not of so popular a character as expenditure upon the Navy—[" hear, hear!"]—and they also know that we are at this moment, and under this scheme, actually proposing a considerable permanent addition to the Army Estimates. I would put it to all those who, like my hon. and gallant Friends, are interested in the efficiency and in the reform of the Army, whether it would not be very bad policy on our part if we were to ask for a scheme which would impose a far heavier charge upon the taxpayers than the one which we are actually proposing? I am convinced that it would not be to the interest of the Army as a whole—even apart from the difficulty of recruiting and the financial difficulty I have referred to, and which was developed by my hon. Friend—and that alone would be enough in my opinion to serve as a real reason why we should adopt the more economical rather than the more costly scheme. These are the broad grounds upon which I think we are justified in asking the supporters of the Government to back us up, not on party grounds, and in asking the House at large to support us in carrying out what we believe to be a real step in Army reform. [*Cheers.*] There are no greater enemies to Army reform, in my judgment, than those extreme Army reformers like the right hon. Gentleman the Member for the Forest of Dean, who sneer at every change that is made, and are content with nothing but advocating revolutionary schemes by which the whole existing Army system would be upset. [*Cheers.*] Those who ask for so much never end. The only true friends of reform are the moderate reformers, and it is because this is a moderate and practical reform—a reform within the financial capacities of the State, a reform which will not bring behind it a public reaction against Army expenditure, but which will carry out a great improvement in our Army organisation—that I appeal both to the ordinary supporters of the Government and the House at large, and not least and not last, and not with the less confidence, to my hon. and gallant Friends who have, in this Debate, shown so much ability, and have with such justifiable warmth defended the interest of that great brigade of which they have been members. [*Cheers.*]

First Lord of the Treasury.

SIR JAMES FERGUSSON (Manchester, N.E.) thought the Under Secretary and the First Lord of the Treasury had done no more than justice to the hon. and gallant officers who had spoken in the interests of the brigade in stating that in their opposition to the scheme of the Government they had been actuated by no selfish considerations. [" Hear, hear!"] He did not think that those who had objected to the proposals in connection with the Brigade of Guards would have had their objections altogether removed by what had been said by the Under Secretary. They would still doubt whether the efficiency of the Guards would be affected by stationing certain battalions in the Mediterranean with the inevitable drafts which would have to be made from one battalion to another, and the consequent disturbance of the military training of the men. It would also be very unfortunate if the conditions and standard of the brigade which had kept so high, should manifestly fall off. He was bound to say he thought those who had been connected with the Brigade of Guards would recognise that the Under Secretary of State had shown that very grave consideration had been given to the objections expressed in the interests of the Guards, and there had been certain modifications of the scheme as it was originally understood. His right hon. Friend had stated that there would be a depôt for the service of the battalions maintained at home so as to act as a feeder. That was an important point which had often been recommended by more than one officer, so that other battalions might not be unduly drawn upon. He also approved of giving to men who would naturally pass into the Reserves, inducements to remain longer with their regiments so as to strengthen the battalions. He was thankful that this modification, which had often been suggested by every branch of the Army and resisted by the military authorities, was to be introduced into the general system of short service and the Reserves, and would be brought into force to obviate from the Guards the mischiefs which it was feared would be caused by the scheme of the Government as at first indicated.

He felt sure that the statement of the First Lord of the Treasury would give satisfaction. He had renewed the assurances of the Secretary for War, and had not diminished the effect of anything his colleague had said. If the scheme as regarded the Guards did not work well it was to be reconsidered. His right hon. Friend did not merely not say things he did not mean, but he found he generally meant more than he said, and he was sure he would carry out all he had promised. The Government that had done so much for the Army as well as the Navy would do something more than was proposed. Our military weakness was known to all the world. Only a few days ago an eminent Frenchman told him he wondered we did not increase our military forces. It was said that the Army had been increased in recent years by 20,000 men.

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: Infantry.

SIR J. FERGUSSON did not think we had added a single column or battalion to the Army during the last 20 years. With the enormous increase of territory we had brought under British sway and in the present state of political trouble and unrest in the world, it was very necessary our military should be increased that we need not be afraid of our enemies, and the safety of the country might be assured. The way in which the Government had met the objections that had been raised would, he hoped, induce hon. Friends who had been connected with the Brigade of Guards not to offer any further opposition to the scheme. Without an efficient Army our diplomacy could hardly be successful. We could not obtain the respect and attention which such a Power as Great Britain ought to obtain in the world, and, above all, if unwelcome war should come we should not be able to meet it fairly. [" Hear, hear! "]

*COLONEL BLUNDELL (Lancashire, Ince) said that the Brigade of Guards, unlike other regiments which had left one station for a foreign war and returned to another, had, by their duties about the Sovereign, been localised in London. They had returned to London with untarnished colours from their engagements, small and great. [" Hear, hear! "] The strongest sympathy existed between the London population and the Brigade of Guards, and he believed that on an emergency it would be possible, on the training basis of the Brigade of Guards, to raise rapidly a large and admirable force. On public occasions of great assemblies of people in London the Guards were accepted by the people in the remarkable way in which they accepted the police. That tended to the preservation of order without the exercise of force. If they failed to recruit either their men or their officers as they were then recruited, the Guards would not fulfil their duties in war and peace as they then did. He was satisfied with the assurance of the first Lord of the Treasury that the new scheme would not be persevered in if it were found not to work well. [" Hear, hear! "]

DR. FARQUHARSON (Aberdeenshire, W.) repeated the inquiries he made last June as to whether anything had been done by the War Office to remedy the grievances of the Army Medical Department and attract candidates for appointment under it, who were lamentably deficient in number. There were 60 vacant appointments and only 25 or 30 candidates for them. With the prospective increase in the Army still more appointments would be available. The competition between the young men to obtain commissions in the Army was eager, and it was formerly so to obtain Army Medical appointments. The Army Medical Staff was much undermanned, and civilians had to be appointed at many military stations to fill up the gaps. It had been proposed to lower the standard of the examinations and to give the "chronics" a chance of allowing those to enter who had been three times "plucked." He hoped this would not be the case. Field-Marshal Lord Roberts said the Army needed as doctors the best medical schools could turn out. But, under the circumstances indicated, there seemed little chance at present of that ideal being realised.

*THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY TO THE WAR OFFICE (Mr. J. POWELL-WILLIAMS, Birmingham, S.), in the absence of the Under Secretary for War, replied that the grievances of the Army Medical Department had been carefully considered in detail by the Secretary of State. The representations made had commended themselves to him, but he himself was not in a position to say at present that any distinct or specific step would be taken to remedy what was complained of. He suggested that the subject might be raised on the Estimates when the Under Secretary for War was in his place.

Question put, and agreed to.

Supply considered in Committee:—

[The CHAIRMAN of WAYS and MEANS, Mr. J. W. LOWTHER, in the Chair.]

ARMY ESTIMATES, 1897-98.

LAND FORCES.

Motion made, and Question proposed—

> "That a number of Land Forces, not exceeding 158,774, all ranks, be maintained for the Service of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland at Home and Abroad, excluding Her Majesty's Indian Possessions, during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1898."

*MR. BRODRICK: I rise to move that a number of land forces not exceeding 158,774 be granted to Her Majesty for the service of the Army during the ensuing year. During the two nights of discussion to which we have listened respecting the proposals which I am now about to lay before the House, it is a memorable fact that every speech or suggestion from every quarter has, so far as I am aware, been directed to a criticism of the smallness of the proposals which we submit. This is an experience as unprecedented as it is pleasurable. And it is the more remarkable because in a time of peace we are asking for the largest number of men which has ever been voted since 1815, except in one year of the Crimean war. We are moving Parliament to allow us to raise three new British battalions, two colonial battalions, one battery field artillery, and 3,500 garrison artillery. We have been asked repeatedly why we did not ask for six more battalions, and have been assured that if we had put a bold face on it we should have got the money. Well, that is a great inducement to a War Minister. It is more, it is a great temptation. If we have resisted it, it is not in the least from a want of keenness for national defence. To have 10,000 surplus men at Aldershot fit to go anywhere and fit to do anything, without calling out reserves or manipulating battalions, would be an ideal condition of affairs, and would be the greatest relief to the mind of a War Minister. Some of our friends have said to me, and much has been said in the Press to a similar effect in the last few days, "You are neglecting your opportunities; ask for all you can get; you will never get such a chance again." That advice, seductive as it is, however, carries with it its own refutation. It means this—that the country will ask and Parliament will vote for large additions, but by the time the Bill comes in the hot fit will be over, and the reckoning will then come, as it has come often before. It is worth asking hon. Members to notice what have been these spurts and set-backs in the last 50 years, and how often this see-saw has occurred. In 1847 our military strength had sunk to a condition of perilous weakness. Lord Palmerston said in that year, "We have some 50,000 or 60,000 men on paper in the United Kingdom, including depôts, skeleton battalions, recruits just raised, and invalids about to be discharged. We could not out of this motley mass collect an army of 20,000 either in England or Ireland. We cannot increase our Regular Army to the requisite amount, because it would be too expensive to do so." This was the policy which led to the disastrous condition of the Army in the early part of the Crimean war. Every Englishman knows how our Army by its bravery compensated for the national neglect. In 1856 Parliament voted 246,000 troops, but on the declaration of peace, and even after the early indications of the Sepoy mutiny had taken place, Parliament reduced the forces in 1857 from 236,000 to 126,000, or little more than half those voted in the previous year. In 1864 Lord Palmerston, in the temporary access of fervour on behalf of national defence which then seized the country, added 6,000 men to the establishment, but two years afterwards this excess was rectified by reducing two companies from each battalion in the Army. In 1870 Lord Cardwell carried this further by reducing the Army to 113,000 men, besides reducing stores and material, and within a year the panic caused by the Franco-German war involved us in a hasty increase of 20,000 troops, with all the accompaniments of panic expenditure. Eight years later, in 1880-81, despite the fact that we were at war in Afghanistan and had difficulties in South Africa, the Army was reduced again by 4,000 men. Thus the see-saw system was carried on with admirable regularity, but to the great disadvantage of the service, there having been five separate changes of policy between 1856 and 1886. It has been carried on despite the fact that our possessions, and therefore our responsibilities have been steadily increasing, and that foreign nations one and all have been doubling and trebling their armaments during the same period, and it has had the worst possible effect on our Army organisation and on our national defence. ["Hear, hear!"] In the last ten years, I am glad to say, there has been a progressive increase, and with the measures now proposed the Army will be 16,000 stronger than it was in 1887, besides having 40,000 more men in the Army Reserve. And be it remembered that these increases have been accompanied by a rigid overhaul of every branch of our equipment for war; so that, even if the Secretary of State and the Army Board are not asking for the full numbers for which use could be found, a deliberate defined policy has been pursued. I told the Committee last year that we could not shrink from asking for what we thought absolutely necessary for the Army as for the Navy. I submit that we have had the courage of our opinions. We have not yet been in office 20 months. During that period we have proposed to the House on Army services alone a loan of £5,500,000; we have asked for an increase of close upon 8,000 men to the Army, which will cost us when complete £600,000 a year; we have by Supplementary Estimates given the Volunteers £250,000, and spent large sums to equip the infantry with ammunition and the artillery with guns. By these means we propose to provide a sister battalion at home for every battalion which it is intended to keep permanently abroad. If we have gone no further, it is, as I have shown above, because, if we asked for anything which is not essential, we know by experience it will not be permanent. We have, moreover, in the matter of men, asked for as many as we believe we can recruit at this time on existing terms. If we raise questions which will cause a general reconsideration of the pay of the Army, we must be prepared to show not merely that the occasion justifies the sacrifice, but that it is a sacrifice which the country is prepared to maintain. ["Hear, hear."] I look upon permanence as being the basis on which the Army system should be dealt with if it is truly and usefully to look after the needs of the country. ["Hear, hear!"] Now some criticisms have been expended in this and in preceding years on the gross total of the Estimates, and the heavy dead weight of non-effective pay which we have to carry. And first let me assure the Committee that, considerable as are the increases in expenditure for which it has become our duty to ask Parliament, we have not lost sight of economy in our pursuit of efficiency. Last year I endeavoured to present to the House some comparison between our expenditure and that of foreign countries and the results achieved, and, taking army corps against army corps, the comparison, making due allowance for the cost of a conscript as against a voluntary soldier, worked out not unfavourably. But I then pointed out that while we have a short-service Army under pay stronger by nearly 100,000 men than the long-service Army which preceded it, we are still cumbered with all the pensions of the long-service Army, and that we have to meet a scale of pensions and retiring allowances to officers granted in 1877 and 1881 in pursuance of the recommendations of Lord Penzance's Commission, which were calculated on an excessive scale, but on which we are bound to keep faith with the officers concerned. ["Hear, hear!"] What this burden is I can best make clear to the Committee by reading the successive columns of one item alone. The retired pay of regimental officers in 1887 was £567,000; in 1888, £623,000; in 1889, £651,000; in 1890, £694,000; in 1891, £726,000; in 1892, £760,000; in 1893, £794,000; in 1894, £821,000; in 1895, £857,000; and in 1896, £886,000. Thus we have a rise of 56 per cent. in ten years—a rise which would have been far higher but for the continuous efforts made since 1886 to check it. ["Hear, hear!"] That is an item over which we have no control except in the way which I will explain to the Committee—namely, by raising the age of compulsory retirement for captains to 45 from the absurdly low age of 40, at which it stood in 1886, when nearly half the officers of the Army were compulsorily cast at that age; by raising the colonels' retirement age from 55 to 57; by decreasing the general officers' list, and by denying the privileges of retirement in certain ranks to officers who had not yet reached those ranks, or to officers who had not then entered the Army. By these means a decisive check has been put, or will be put as warrants take effect, to this great burden. ["Hear, hear."] It is due to these efforts that the total vote for non-effective pay of officers has only increased £83,500 in the last ten years, and has now, I hope, practically reached its maximum. ["Hear, hear!"] But meantime the nation has annually to bear a charge of £3,000,000, over which we have no control, and to which I may here observe that, in my experience of the War Office, which is now of ten years' standing, with one small exception, the only addition which has been made is the compassionate allowances, granted, with the full assent of this House, to Indian Mutiny and Crimean veterans, which have cost us £30,500 a year—an expenditure which will, we believe, be satisfactory to the House—[*cheers*]—and which we look upon as one of the most justifiable items of expenditure to which a nation can be asked to contribute. [*Cheers.*] We have, therefore, to look for our economies to the effective services, and of this item of £15,000,000, large as it looks, when pay and similar obligatory charges are deducted, we have only £5,336,400 to play upon. It is on the heads of warlike stores, transport, clothing, and miscellaneous charges that we have to concentrate our attention; and although I am far from saying that fresh economies may not yet be introduced in every department, yet our contracts are constantly and scrupulously overhauled, our prices for all necessaries are the lowest obtainable, and the output of our factories constitutes the cheapest, and, I may add, the most rapid and punctually delivered supply of the Army. ["Hear, hear!"] If the amount that we can give for our money does not, as we know is the case, satisfy all our critics, it is not for want of energy at headquarters. ["Hear, hear!"] Leaving now this question of economy, upon which I have dwelt merely for the purpose of satisfying the Committee that we have not had it out of our sight, I would observe that the past year has been one of exceptional activity in the War Department. Early in the year we dealt promptly, and, I hope, to the satisfaction of Parliament, with the pressing needs of the field artillery in respect of the guns, of the infantry in regard to ammunition, and of the Volunteers in respect of capitation grant. ["Hear, hear!"] But beyond the provision of an increase to the Army and of the military works which have been already explained to Parliament, the military authorities have brought before the Secretary of State proposals for the reorganisation of the cavalry—[*cheers*]—and of reconsidering to some extent the service of officers in the different branches of the artillery. The organisation of our cavalry has for a long time given disssatisfaction. Hitherto we have had what one General called no organisation at all in the cavalry. It may be described as an organisation of separate units, none of which, excluding those in India, are in themselves large enough for independent action, and none of which have behind them any arrangement to prepare them for such action, while it may be said that there is absolutely no existing organisation for the use of cavalry in war. Convenience has laid down the establishment of cavalry regiments in India, and similarly convenience has prescribed the establishment for the cavalry regiments at home as best calculated to provide for the preparation of each regiment in turn for its Indian tour. Before proceeding to detail the present proposals, it must be stated that some years ago the cavalry were divided for this purpose into four corps—viz., Household Cavalry, three regiments; Dragoons, ten regiments; Lancers, five regiments; and Hussars, 13 regiments. In the following proposals it is proposed to maintain these four corps, and the corps of Household Cavalry may be dismissed from further consideration, as it is not proposed to interfere with the Household Cavalry. For active service the cavalry will be organised in divisions; each division will be composed of two brigades; each brigade will be composed of three regiments; each regiment will be composed of three squadrons. The squadron on service is to have 126 sabres, the regiment 378 sabres, the brigade 1,134 sabres, and the division 2,268 sabres, not including officers and staff. Besides this force, each army corps will have one regiment for divisional purposes, and one squadron for headquarters duties. Turning now to the organisation of the units composing this force, we have already, as stated, three corps. The corps of Dragoons, ten regiments, will remain as they are. The corps of Lancers, five regiments, will be made into six regiments by the 21st Hussars being converted into a Lancer regiment, to which it is understood that there would be no objection as the regiment was originally a Lancer regiment. The corps of Hussars will then consist of 12 regiments. Each corps, except the Dragoons, will, it is observed, be divided by three. We have 28 regiments in all, of which nine are permanently in India and two do not go to India. Both of these latter are Dragoon regiments, and it is proposed that they should in future take alternate turns with each other on the Indian roster. The effect of this will be to reduce the number of Dragoon regiments taking turns on the Indian roster to nine, the regiments in each corps then admitting of being divided into groups of three, each group having one regiment in India, one regiment at home on a high strength ready to go abroad, and one regiment on a lower strength. ["Hear, hear!"] The effect of this arrangement as compared with the present establishments will appear from the following figures:—The number of regiments on the new higher establishment will be eight, as compared with six on the old. Each regiment on the new higher establishment will have 26 officers, as against 24 on the old; 108 non-commissioned officers, as against 102; 560 privates, as against 564; and 433 horses, as against 410. Comparing the new and the old lower establishments, the number of regiments on the new lower establishment will be nine, as against 11; each regiment having 23 officers, as against 24; 93 non-commissioned officers, as against 100; 460 privates, as against 390; and 343 horses, as against 313. It will be observed from these tables that the regiments on the higher establishment will be at a higher strength than those of the present higher establishment, and the regiments on the lower establishment at a higher strength than those of the present lower establishment, and I would beg the Committee to note that the essence of the scheme is that the First Cavalry Division and divisional cavalry regiment will at all times be ready for active service, requiring no men or horses to complete numbers. ["Hear, hear!"] The other advantages claimed for the scheme are that the regiments on the lower establishment in the Second Division can at any time be made up to war strength by men and horses from the reserve, who would be fit for the ranks by the time the division could embark; that squadron officers in peace time will be trained to lead squadrons on war strength; that cavalry drafts for India will be composed of trained soldiers; that young horses will be saved from hard work to a far greater extent than can be done in squadrons on the present strength; and that senior officers will be accustomed to lead cavalry brigades—in fact, that they will learn in peace time those duties that may devolve on them in time of war, if only the House by passing the Military Works Bill will enable us to hold such manœuvres as will enable us to exercise the cavalry. ["Hear, hear!"] But certain changes are necessarily involved by the scheme, and they are as follows:—Certain changes in the foreign service roster, so as to insure the proportion of representative regiments of each corps being at home at the same time; the abolition of the Canterbury depôt, which will cease to train recruits for India, but will remain the headquarters of the cavalry riding establishment and the administrative centre for all matters connected with cavalry reserves; and great simplification of uniform. It is proposed that all regiments should keep their present full dress, but that the undress of the regiments of each corps should be assimilated. Let me make it perfectly clear that there is no intention to do away with the identity and historic associations of the present regiments. ["Hear, hear!"] We are well aware of the importance attached to these distinctions, and Lord Lansdowne believes that in sanctioning this scheme as the most effective organisation for the cavalry both in peace and war, he has fully safeguarded the regiments in these respects. Although the purchase of 432 additional horses has been met by savings in the current year, there will be some initial cost in the scheme, but there will be a small annual saving arising out of other economies which it enables us to effect, while we have a satisfactory increase in the strength of the regiments.

*SIR CHARLES DILKE (Gloucester, Forest of Dean): How will the saving be made?

*MR. BRODRICK: There are rather less non-commissioned officers of cavalry, and the depôt at Canterbury will not be so expensive as it is at present, and there is a slight change in the number of officers which, with the saving in pensions, will more than compensate for the expenditure on extra horses. Now, with regard to the artillery. Measures are in contemplation to divide the service of officers in the artillery between the garrison and mounted branches. That has been for a long time the subject of serious consideration. Some years ago a step was taken in this direction by posting officers to field or garrison artillery and treating horse artillery service as a sort of staff appointment. It was then held that the passing of officers from the mounted branch to the garrison artillery from time to time, though they had less knowledge of big guns than might be desirable, imparted life and smartness to the garrison artillery. But, despite this advantage, if it were one, it is clear that the great divergence in the nature of the two services makes the continuance of the system impossible. ["Hear, hear!"] A long course of garrison artillery makes a man unfit for the horse artillery service, while horse artillerymen come to garrison duties with all the mechanism of big guns to learn. The Commander-in-Chief states that the difference between the mounted branches of the artillery and the garrison artillery is as great now as between cavalry and infantry. It has, therefore, been determined, with due regard to existing rights and qualifications, to separate artillery officers into two lists for mounted and garrison artillery respectively. Lord Lansdowne has appointed a committee to inquire into the subject of different claims, and every effort will be made to continue the same rate of promotion and to give weight to any claims which may be put forward by those who prefer the mounted service; and I think the change will commend itself to all critics as giving us a system more applicable to modern artillery. Another thorny subject which we have had to deal with has been the condition of the medical department. For some time past, as the Committee is aware, we have had difficulty in procuring sufficient candidates for the Army Medical Department. Many reasons have been adduced for this, among which may be mentioned the question of rank and social condition, the examinations which were held to be conducted under less favourable circumstances for candidates from Irish and Scotch medical schools than for those attending London schools, the rate of pay in India, and the prolonged terms of foreign service. Lord Lansdowne has given the most careful personal attention to all these questions. He has received various deputations, and has spared no pains to get to the root of the difficulty. His conclusion is that as regards the examinations, while every consideration should be given to eminent members of the Scotch and Irish medical schools in filling vacancies on the examination board, the board should be constituted solely with reference to the professional eminence of its members—["hear, hear!"]—without regard to the mere fact of their coming from one part or another of the United Kingdom. The falling off of Irish candidates, not being more than on a par with the falling off of other candidates, has no special significance or importance. Lord Lansdowne has also reviewed the whole circumstances attending the present titles of medical officers, a question which appears to be closely bound up with their complaints of a lack of social consideration. The truth appears to be this. When the system of attaching medical officers to regiments was abandoned, on grounds which at the time were certainly deemed to be sufficient, for the system of appointing them to stations, medical officers lost their special and close personal contact with their regimental brother officers. Attempts have been made to give them a better position—first, by ranking them with combatant officers on the recommendation of Sir Andrew Clarke as representing the schools, and then by conceding composite medical and military titles carrying with them substantive rank in their own department. These concessions, though welcomed at the time by the profession, have not altogether acted as was desired. Lord Lansdowne is anxious that every consideration should be shown to the officers of this most valuable and distinguished department. [" Hear, hear ! "] He has, after communication with the India Office, been able to secure to the medical officer an increase of pay in India, and the Indian tour will be decreased from six years to five. [" Hear, hear ! "] Assistance will also be given to form medical messes at the large stations, quarters will be offered in barracks where possible, and opportunities to study on return from foreign service will be given. But none of the proposals which have been submitted to the Secretary of State for giving new forms of Army rank to the medical staff appear to him desirable for adoption. He does not believe that by such titles the medical department will obtain the status to which their talents and professional acquirements entitle them, and anxious though the War Office is to meet the medical profession on all points, this is not one of those on which further action appears to be desirable. As regards the conditions of our forces, so much has been said in the Debates before the Speaker left the chair on the condition of the Line and the state of recruiting that I do not propose to touch upon these subjects further now. But the present Estimates, apart from the increases of establishment which have been fully explained, contain no very striking features, except that we have been able to make various provisions which will act directly on the comfort of the private soldier. The Quartermaster General (Sir Evelyn Wood), who has been unremitting in his efforts in this direction, has succeeded in making arrangements wth the railway companies which will enable us in future to send troops between England and Ireland and otherwise in the United Kingdom by the shortest and most comfortable route, and thus to abandon the long sea passage by coasting steamer. [" Hear, hear ! "] We have also arranged to give the soldier on discharge or on transfer to Army Reserve free conveyance to his selected place of residence in the United Kingdom—[" hear, hear ! "]—which is often further from his place of discharge than his place of attestation to which we are bound to return him. Despite these concessions, by a most careful economy in conveyance of stores, etc., Sir Evelyn Wood shows us a reduction on the Vote apart from special services on manœuvres. The Vote was £329,000 in 1895-96, £309,000 in 1896-97, and £281,000 in the present year. This is, I think, peculiarly satisfactory . [" Hear, hear ! "] For some time past we have also been considering the soldier's bread, the flour for which has earned an unenviable title as " red dog," a name which perhaps more than the quality has caused objection at some stations. [*Laughter.*] The white flour which it is proposed to substitute will cost us £8,000 a year, but, considering that this is a subject on which the soldier is specially particular, we think the change is due to him. [" Hear, hear ! "] Our attention has also been drawn to the prickliness of the flannel shirt supplied to the Army—due to the less careful dressing to which inferior flannels are subjected. I myself made an experiment with the flannel, and I confess I was not impressed with the comfort which it afforded. [*Laughter.*] All men's skins are not equally susceptible, but that by no means relieves those who are sensitive, and we have taken £4,000 to provide a better quality of flannel. [" Hear, hear ! "] Finally there is the question of boots. [" Hear, hear !"] Everyone admits that the soldier's boot is durable, but its want of flexibility often causes discomfort. To a certain extent this is due to the preference of many men for a boot too small for them—preferable perhaps for walking out on Sundays, but unsuited to a long march. We have, I believe—and all classes bore witness to it in the Ashanti expedition—as good a hand-made field-boot as can be made. The only difficulty is we cannot obtain it. The trade do not supply it in sufficient quantities. Boots, however, are unremittingly being tried to improve on the present boot, and I shall be glad if any hon. Member who has an interest in the subject will look in at Pimlico and see the varied assortment which there are under experiment. The question is not one of price, it is the difficulty of obtaining a flexible and at the same time sufficiently durable machine-made boot. [" Hear, hear ! "] As regards the Militia and Auxiliary forces, a great change has been made this year by fixing the period of commands for Militia and Volunteer officers at five and four years respectively, with power of renewal. The object of this change is not to end the career of any really competent officer before he retires by age, but to secure a reconsideration of competence at stated periods—a procedure which it is believed will commend itself to all who have the interests of the service at heart. Seventeen battalions of the Militia were brigaded this year at Aldershot, and their work at the small manœuvres carried on there earned the warm commendation of the Commander-in-Chief. In his force, as in the Volunteer force, the dearth of officers is a serious drawback. The Volunteers, thanks in some degree to the grant voted by the House last year, have reduced their deficiency by 200 officers during the year, and it is hoped further progress will be made in this direction in the coming year. As regards the Militia, a variety of expedients have been suggested for filling up vacancies in the force. These have been under Lord Lansdowne's careful consideration, and I hope that before the Militia Vote comes on I may be able to make a statement on this subject. It seems clear that as the best organisation for the Militia is to have two classes of officers—first, county men, who enter with the intention of rising in the regiment; and, secondly, officers who hope through the Militia to get commissions in the Line, or having served in the Line are willing to give a turn of service in the higher ranks of the county Militia. As regards the latter class, it is a question worth considering whether any Line officer taking retired pay might not under certain conditions (laid down before he entered the service) be liable to service in the Militia as he is now to recall to the Line in case of war. This and other similar questions are under consideration. I may add that it is intended again this year to train a considerable number of Militia battalions with the Line. Incidentally, I may mention that the issue of canvas shoes to the Militia last year, which was made as an experiment, has given so much comfort to the men that it is proposed to extend it. ["Hear, hear!"] Hitherto the Militiaman has only had one pair of boots to wear during the month of his training. We found the issue of canvas shoes gave so much comfort and was so favourably reported on by the commanding officers that we have provided money to give every Militiaman this advantage. We also propose to complete the issue of helmets to the Militia, except in the case of those wearing a special headgear. Some criticisms have been passed on us in recent Debates for not giving further attention to the development of the artillery. I do not think we are open to this criticism. Last year we took measures which added 81 pieces of field and horse artillery to our equipment. We have now 45 batteries of six guns each, or 270 field guns, with 40 reserve guns; 10 batteries, or 60 horse artillery guns, with six reserve guns—the complete equipment and reserve of three army corps. Beyond this, in case of invasion, we have 188 field guns in the hands of the Volunteers and 204 guns of position which the military authorities assure us are a most valuable item in our defence. It is not pretended that guns horsed and manned by Volunteers are at this moment equal to the Royal Artillery, but the military view is that they are better manned and better horsed than the American guns were at the beginning of their war, or the French guns in the army of the Loire in 1871, and when we reckon up our artillery we may well afford them the credit they deserve. ["Hear, hear!"] This year we hope to complete the ammunition columns for the horse and field artillery, and to commence the formation of a modern siege train, of which 24 pieces are allowed for in the Estimates of 1897-8. We also have taken a considerable sum for quick-firing guns in connection with the defence of harbours against torpedo boats, the necessity for which was explained on the Military Works Bill, and the works for which are included in that measure. The Militia, including Militia Artillery, have been already armed with the ·303 rifle, and it is proposed within the next financial year to complete the re-arming of the whole of the Engineer and Rifle Volunteers. In connection with this I may perhaps mention that the provision of small arm ammunition to complete the equipment of all descriptions of troops has now been accomplished, and that the three trade firms are now sending in regular supplies of this ammunition. There are many other subjects in connection with the progress of the Army on which I would gladly touch; but this Session has already been fertile of Army discussion, and will probably be more fertile still. What I have desired to show the Committee is that progress has been made in every department of the service. We are often accused of taking too optimistic a view of Army affairs. But I would ask whether there is not another side to the question, and whether possibly we in England who are so determined to see into every detail of our Army organisation do not sometimes take too black a view of the progress we have made. My right hon. Friend who spoke earlier in the evening used words of a Frenchman, to the effect that we are insensible to the demands of our Army. I remember a quotation from another Frenchman, the sense of which is that John Bull gives credit to all the world except his own soldier.

Sir JAMES FERGUSSON: My Frenchman said that he wondered when we were covering the whole world red that we had not thought it necessary to increase our Army. [*Laughter.*]

*Mr. BRODRICK: I think, on the whole, my Frenchman made the observation most pertinent to our Debates. [*Laughter.*] I am the last man to stand here and say we are getting all we should like, or making all the progress we might make, that our system is absolutely perfect, or that we could not by any means make further progress. I believe that every year we are obtaining fresh light, that every change brings to us fresh organisation, decentralisation of stores, and responsibility, while doing away with the old system of red tape by which everything was discussed in the War Office affecting the remotest parts of the globe. All that we believe to be good, but at the same time let us not ignore the progress that has been made, the condition of our troops and the number of the Reserve, that the services for which we have to provide have been reviewed by successive Cabinets, and that latterly the stores and equipments have been provided, and the Army thus placed on a workable basis. Knowing what we intend to do, having regard to the National Defence which we must make in case of invasion, and the number of troops to be sent abroad, I think I may say that all these are items of progress, showing that there is a sound principle prevailing at headquarters, one not averse from criticism, but which represents the Army in a fair and patriotic light and not in that which may seem most favourable to the country. [*Cheers.*]

Mr. COURTENAY WARNER (Stafford, Lichfield) referred to the Militia, and said that, though the helmets had been mentioned, nothing had been said about the caps. He hoped that no more black powder would be supplied. Something ought to be done to improve the condition of the non-commissioned officers in the Militia so as to get a supply of better men. He advocated that the Militia should be enlisted for foreign service in case of war.

*Sir JOHN COLOMB (Great Yarmouth) was pleased to hear that the War Office authorities were giving attention to those small material things which contributed so much to make the life of the soldier more pleasant. As put from the Chair the Vote was for 163,569 men; but this was a very limited Vote, because on the Army Estimates there were, exclusive of men in India, 645,500 men; and therefore it was obvious that in taking the Vote for the smaller number of men the Committee was only taking the Vote for the Regular Service. What did the right hon. Gentleman mean when he said that the ammunition equipment was now complete for all arms of the Service? Was it meant that the ammunition equipment would be equal to the demands made upon it in time of war; and was the ammunition estimated by the number of men and arms represented on these Estimates?

*Mr. BRODRICK said it was according to the equipment laid down for the Army, Militia, and Volunteers.

*Sir J. COLOMB: Is there any spare ammunition to meet those demands that must come from all parts of the Empire?

*Mr. BRODRICK: There are certain ammunition stores in other parts of the Empire for those demands.

*Sir J. COLOMB asked whether an assurance could be given that if war broke out the demand by the colonial forces could be supplied. On the last two occasions when there was a panic demands came from all quarters of the Empire for ammunition and equipment, and we were unable to supply them. It was necessary to extend our views in this matter, and to be ready to supply arms and ammunition beyond the forces of the

United Kingdom. He did not clearly understand whether the artillery was going to be divided into distinct and separate corps—whether three or two corps were to be constituted.

*Mr. BRODRICK said there would be a corps of mounted artillery and a corps of garrison artillery. The officers would be separate.

*Sir J. COLOMB thought that the fact of allocating a large body of artillery officers to a duty that was purely sedentary, with no chance of any active service, would have some effect on the class of officers obtained in the future. He was glad to hear the intention of the Government with regard to officering the Militia. It was a wise step, and he hoped that before long the Government would harden their hearts and approach the Militia question in a bold spirit. He thought it was to be regretted that the Militia had for so many years been treated with apathetic neglect. The full advantage which we could reap from the Militia had not been grasped by the War authorities, and his belief was, that the Volunteer Force, which was not created by any stroke of military policy, but by a spontaneous movement of the nation, had enabled the War authorities to do what could not be done before—namely, to release the Militia from purely local service in the United Kingdom. He hoped the right hon. Gentleman would be able to assure the Committee that the Government were considering that matter, because, after all, it was at the root of the solution of the question which had been the difficulty with us all along ever since the introduction of the short service system. The interesting sketch of the right hon. Gentleman of what had happened since 1847 was, as they all knew, quite true; but his contention was that it was because we had not had a consistent military policy. ["Hear, hear!"] That was at the root of our military weakness. On the whole, he thought many of the matters to which the right hon. Gentleman had alluded would give great satisfaction to the Army, and none would give greater satisfaction than the efforts which had evidently been made to improve the position and comfort of the private soldier.

*Sir CHARLES DILKE, referring to the reply of the Under Secretary to the complaint that the spokesmen of the War Office were too optimistic, said that he and those who agreed with him had always distinguished between their general views as to the system on which alone, as they thought, the Army could be put on a permanently satisfactory footing, and the particular schemes which the Government brought forward and which were consistent with their policy, that was to say, they always tried to give a perfectly fair and impartial consideration to the detailed proposals of successive Governments, even though those were proposals to make the present system work, and he should do so on the present occasion. He congratulated the right hon. Gentleman on the clearness of his military expositions, and agreed that many of the proposals made to-night—given the existing system—were excellent, and said they would have his warmest support. He felt most strongly that we had not a field artillery which was equal to the needs of the Empire, and believed the Government would be driven to increase that branch of the Service in future years. He was not prepared to say that it was impossible to create a Volunteer field artillery. The Swiss had been extraordinarily successful with their field artillery upon a training shorter than that which we gave to the Militia Artillery, and that showed what could be done; but for himself he believed that if a proper artillery was to be created for Volunteers it would have to be upon some mixed system, partly professional and partly volunteer. There was the remarkable fact that while there had been an enormous increase of military expenditure we had greatly diminished the field artillery in the last 10 or 20 years, and even the increase made this year would leave us infinitely below the figure reached years ago. What would be the additional cost of the proposals?

*Mr. BRODRICK: The total cost will be £450,000 a year, becoming complete in the fourth year.

*Sir C. DILKE added that this, taken in connection with the Military Works Bill, would mean a considerable increase on the Army Estimates of the future; and of course it emphasised what he had formerly said as to the small return we got for the expense.

On the return of the CHAIRMAN of WAYS and MEANS, after the usual interval,

MR. J. G. GALLOWAY (Manchester, S.W.) said that he most heartily supported any proposals which had for their object the increasing of the defensive forces of the country, or the increasing of their efficiency, and it was rather as to the omissions of the Government that he desired to say a few words. He held that the Government had very properly asked for a large sum of money in order to permanently increase the establishment of the Army, but he dissented from the policy of the War Office under which the Army would be centralised in three, four, or possibly five large camps. It appeared to him that great danger to the country might arise through the adoption of such a policy. What, for instance, would be the effect of such a policy on recruiting and the number of recruits? Hitherto, fortunately, we had been able to do without conscription, and he was sure every Englishman believed that so long as proper facilities were afforded for recruiting there would never be any necessity for recourse to that system. He felt, however, that if we withdrew our soldiers from the large centres of population we should at once remove a large incentive to recruiting. Nothing could have a more advantageous effect upon the whole military system of this country than that the troops should be quartered at the large centres of population, and that the people in those centres should from time to time see the troops in their midst. The Under Secretary of State for War would bear him out when he said that the Guards, for example, were not recruited from London but from the provinces. That surely ought to be an additional reason why all the incentives to recruiting should be continually maintained in the provinces. He fully recognised the necessity of brigading regiments together, in order that they might be properly trained, but it was a self-evident proposition that the troops must be enlisted before they could be trained. He feared that if the taxpayers' wishes were entirely disregarded we should soon find the present system inadequate and have to devise some other, possibly the one suggested by the right hon Baronet the Member for the Forest of Dean. It was questionable whether, from a public point of view, it was good policy that the troops should be moved into large camps. Nothing could be more necessary than that adequate protection should be afforded our population. No one held a higher opinion of the police forces of the country than he, but he, nevertheless, felt that those forces were not sufficiently strong in numbers to put down a serious riot in any of the large centres of population, and that, therefore, it was necessary troops should be near at hand. The War Office would say that the facilities of transport were now so great that it was easy to move troops from one place to another. It seemed to him the Department were so imbued with the idea of centralisation that they often overlooked even the most necessary precautions for the safety of large centres of population. Take the case of his own constituency, Manchester. In July last the War Office suddenly removed the troops from Manchester, in view, he supposed, of the proposed centralisation. The troops were withdrawn without any intimation of any kind or description being given to the local authorities. A magazine of powder was left entirely unprotected, and the officer commanding the troops telegraphed to the Chief Constable asking him to protect the barracks. Surely that was no part of the duty of the police. It might be necessary that troops should be moved into camp for training purposes. The training season was the spring and summer months, and he put it to the Government whether for the autumn and early winter the troops could not be brought back to the large centres of population. He hoped that in the interest of recruiting and the safety of our large towns and cities the Government would reconsider their present policy.

CAPTAIN JESSEL (St. Pancras, S.) said that, while he should like to have some further explanation as to the alternative schemes which had been mentioned, he desired to state that he approved the proposals of the Government as far as they went, and believed they would be welcomed as a step to the good by all men who were concerned in the welfare of the Army. As a cavalry man he of course felt peculiar interest in that arm of the service, and he regarded the changes proposed as a substantial improvement. He had had experience of the error and inconvenience of weak squadrons, and he was glad to learn that now three squadrons would be kept up to their strength in each regiment. One point to which he wished to refer was that last year the Under Secretary for War stated that it was to be the policy of the War Office to decentralise the department as much as possible, so as to lighten it of certain duties and give to the general officers commanding districts more scope and independence of action. This change was recognised at the time as a wise one; but, so far as he knew, there were only two matters in regard to which officers commanding districts had been given a free hand, the disposal of lunatics, and the appointment of civilian chaplains. [*Laughter.*] He should like to ask the Under Secretary for War whether in the ensuing year any change—any kind of decentralisation, would be carried out with regard to the stores of clothing? The stores being now mostly kept at Pimlico, great difficulty would certainly be experienced in a time of stress to get the clothing shipped off or distributed as required. ["Hear, hear!"] He was very glad to see that the Government had recognised the valuable services of the Yeomanry, and that an additional sum of £3,000 was to be granted to them this year. ["Hear, hear!"]

COLONEL WELBY (Taunton) said he welcomed the scheme of organisation now proposed by the Government as an advance in the right direction, and he believed it was of a character which would lend itself to that greater scheme of organisation of the Army at large, which must come sooner or later. ["Hear, hear!"] He understood the cavalry scheme was to be one of divisions, brigades, and regiments. The divisions would probably be only on paper at first. What they had really to do with were the brigades, each of which was to be composed, he understood, of three regiments. Now what he wished to know was to what extent, if any, this scheme of organisation would interfere with the regimental system? Were there to be three squadrons forming the entire regiment, or were there to be three squadrons as a regiment working with the brigade, and one in depôt? If there was to be also a squadron in depôt he should be in entire agreement with the right hon. Gentleman. What he wanted really to get at was how the strength of the three squadrons in trained men and horses, was to be kept up? If it was to be done by denuding other regiments it would be introducing a bad system into the cavalry service; but if it was intended to keep up the strength of the squadrons entirely from the depôt squadron, the scheme, he was confident, would prove to be an excellent one. He did not see how this could be effected through the depôt at Canterbury. He would also ask the right hon. Gentleman whether, while making the proposed changes of organisation, he could not deal with the discrepancy that at present existed between the number of horses and men in a cavalry regiment. It was constantly thrown in the teeth of the cavalry corps, for instance, that while they had got 200 men they had only 100 horses. Where were the men without horses? Why, filling the places of officers' servants, clerks on the staff, and so forth, and yet these men, who were without horses, were counted on the strength of the regiment as efficient cavalry soldiers. ["Hear, hear!"] Could not the authorities consider some scheme by which Reserve men might be employed in those places, so that the strength of the cavalry should be regarded only as the number of men who had horses, and were available at any time to ride them? ["Hear, hear!"] It was not fair to the cavalry regiments that they be pointed at in the House and in the country as having so many men and only so many horses. ["Hear, hear!"] In Germany, France, and other foreign countries, a squadron was accounted to be, say, 120 horses and 120 men; as many men as formed the corps so many horses. Why could we not adopt a similar system. If some such suggestion were carried out it would enable all the men of the regiment to be actively utilised, and give employment to the Reserve men, and at the same time overcome one of the difficulties applying to the reservists. ["Hear, hear!"] Something had been said about the uniform to be worn by the new brigades. He regretted that the undress uniform was to be the same. What was called the undress unifrom was that which was worn in barracks, but what was wanted was a really serviceable working dress, and he would ask the right hon. Gentleman whether such a dress might not be provided for the purposes of manœuvres, drills, and general work. In foreign countries this was done. In Russia the Guard had a magnificent full dress, but when they went on service they wore as plain a dress as any man of the Line. The only difference there was between the Garde Corps and the Line Corps was that there was a small piece of lace on the collar. He would ask the right hon. Gentleman whether something of this kind could not be devised now when this new departure was being made. He knew one great difficulty was the head-dress, but he did not see why there should not be a really serviceable working head-dress. He would press this on the right hon. Gentleman's attention, because it was a time when those changes could be made, and he thought made in a way which would be very acceptable to the Army. The right hon. Gentleman referred to the Medical Department, and he was sorry to hear him say that it was impossible to return to the regimental system. He thought the system of changing doctors so frequently was a bad one, and he did not see why the men in their regiments could not be treated in the same way as civilians were treated. He noticed from the right hon. Gentleman's statement that the time of the doctors in India was going to be lessened. That would increase the rapidity with which the doctors would move from this country to India, and increase the evil of which he complained. The difficulty arose chiefly, if not wholly, from this Indian rota. He would ask the right hon. Gentleman whether he could not modify to a certain extent the medical department, and as they had got a Brigade of Guards, whether he could not put a brigade or regimental surgeon to this new cavalry organisation. He was sure it would be good for the men, and would give them confidence in the organisation of the Army, and make it easier to get recruits. The hon. Member for North West Manchester, in referring to the question of barracks, had no doubt touched upon a point which is a very great difficulty with any future scheme of re-organisation. One system which obtained in Austria was worth consideration—that was that when a great city like Manchester wanted a regiment quartered there, it built its own barracks, and he believed that a great city like Manchester would be willing to do that. ["Hear, hear!"] He knew the danger of it, because it gave the city a hold upon the Army organisation; but still it was worth consideration. As he understood the hon. Member for Manchester, his proposal, or idea, was that the barracks should be in these great cities, and the troops should be quartered there during the winter, but that they should go to these great camps in the summer time. He hoped that the right hon. Gentleman who had planned out so excellent a thing as Salisbury Plain for the Army, would insist upon that being simply a camp of exercise, and that there should be no permanent camp there. He thanked the right hon. Gentleman for this much larger scheme of cavalry organisation than he thought the country had ever known, and he thanked him especially for saying that it was the intention of the Government in no way to interfere with the regimental system, which, he believed, had carried them through all the great days of warfare. That was why he had always distrusted this system of linked battalions.

*SIR F. FITZWYGRAM (Hants, Fareham) said he was sorry to see that the Secretary of State for War proposed to raise three new battalions. To his idea they had too many battalions already. Their infantry were split up into too many units, and that was the great cause why they were not efficient. The Government's proposal, if carried out, would only increase the existing evil. Under their present system their infantry were filtered away in 141 battalions. His impression was that every foreign battalion should be 1,200 strong, and every home battalion 1,200 strong. If they had 1,200 men for the home battalion, it might be accounted for in this way; 1,000 men on the active home battalion and 200 extra for the drafts. He believed that in that way they would get their home battalions and their foreign battalions efficient. But of course it must be acknowledged that that scheme would mean an increase to the Army of 20,000 men. He need not tell them that that would never be voted by this House; but it seemed to him that very much the same object might be effected by reducing the number of battalions by one-third, and aggregating them together in three linked battalions instead of two linked battalions. He wished to see the foreign battalions 1,200 strong, because if there were only to be 50 abroad it would be necessary to maintain the same number of men in those 50 battalions as had been hitherto maintained in 76 battalions. He thought that when they came to consider this they would find that without any increase of cost to the country, and without any augmentation of men, they would have an army which would consist of 50 home battalions of 1,200 strong, fighting strength 1,000, and 50 foreign battalions of 1,200 strong. That would give the foreign battalions about the same number of fighting men as they had at present. This idea of linked battalions was not new, but as Mr. Childers destroyed all the old traditions of names and numbers, he did not see why they should not bring it up still further so as to give three battalions to each link. He would not go at length into the scheme; he put it forward merely as a sketch, and the details might be worked out. The fault of our present system was not want of numbers in the infantry, but the weakness that arose from breaking it up into too large a number of units. He was quite aware that many of his hon. and gallant Friends did not approve of this, but went in for augmentation, saying, "Give us more men." He, however, did not think that the country would give more men, and that it would be better to set aside vain hopes never likely to be realised, and come at once to some practical scheme that might be worked out with the approval of the country. It was an old-fashioned idea to keep up a number of skeleton battalions, for it was said it was easier to bring these up to strength than create a new regiment. This was all very well a hundred years ago, but now wars were conducted with such rapidity that no battalion was of any use unless ready at a moment's notice. Lastly, he had a few words to say in reference to the Brigade of Guards. He was sorry to see the augmentation in the number of battalions. He did not see why four battalions at home should not be sufficient for three battalions abroad, as was found to be the case with Line regiments. He protested strongly and emphatically to raising any new battalions whatever which were not to take a fair share of foreign service in the colonies and in India.

Sir F. FitzWygram.

*Mr. POWELL-WILLIAMS thought it would be convenient if he now dealt with one or two minor points raised in the course of the discussion. The first of these was in relation to horse and field artillery, and he stated how matters stood. There were 45 field batteries, each consisting of six guns; there were 10 batteries of horse artillery, consisting of 60 guns, making 330 altogether, and there were 40 field guns and six horse artillery guns in reserve, making a total of 376 guns. By far the greater portion of the batteries were fully equipped and in readiness for service, and in the Estimates there was provided a further sum to complete the whole of them. When this was done it would be seen that in respect of proportion of guns to per thousand of troops we stood in nearly as favourable a position as foreign countries, assuming, as he did, that the class of guns we had in our Army are as good as the weapons foreign armies possess. It was, perhaps, unadvisable to carry things further at the present moment than they were carried in the Estimates, for this reason, that before very long there would probably be invented and perfected a quick-firing horse and field gun. When this new gun was perfected, clearly our forces would have to be armed with it as quickly as possible; and with this probability in view the Secretary of State had rightly decided not to carry matters further than the Estimates proposed. There was a complaint from the hon. Member for Manchester that two regiments had been moved from Manchester suddenly and without due notice or consultation with the local authorities. He did not know what local authorities ought to have been consulted, unless possibly the Board of Guardians. [*Laughter.*] These things, of course, were in the hands of the military authorities; and he was not prepared to accept the theory that those who paid for the troops ought to command them. [*Laughter.*]

Mr. GALLOWAY: I did not say so.

*Mr. POWELL-WILLIAMS understood his hon. Friend to say they should have a voice in moving the troops from place to place.

Mr. GALLOWAY: No; I did not say anything of the sort.

*Mr. POWELL-WILLIAMS would not press the matter. In this particular instance there was very sufficient reason for removal—the barracks were in a very unsanitary condition. The hon. Member for St. Pancras had called attention to two matters to which the Secretary of State attached great importance. One of these was in reference to some proposal to change the numbers of cavalry regiments. He did not know whether any such proposal had been made, but he could give his hon. Friend an assurance that it would not be accepted; the numbers of cavalry regiments would remain precisely as they were. The other matter was the decentralisation of clothing supplies, and on that he assured his hon. Friend that matters were making satisfactory progress. But this was not a thing to be entered upon lightly and indifferently—it was like marriage in that respect—and it was very costly. It would involve an outlay probably from first to last of £200,000; certainly of over £150,000. But a start had been made, experiments had been sanctioned and were being tried. It had been found that in a considerable number of centres in various districts—at any rate in the headquarters of the districts—very little alteration and fitting would enable clothing to be stored. These alterations would be very quickly taken in hand and completed. In other cases there would have to be heavy outlay to supply satisfactory accommodation, and the work must take some considerable time. The matter certainly would not be lost sight of. The question had been raised as to the cost of the Army proposals which his right hon. Friend had submitted to the Committee. His right hon. Friend had stated the cost as £450,000. This sum embraced every item of charge which the increase proposed by the Government would give rise to during the next few years.

Sir H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN said there were some of the proposals for augmentation of the Army in the Estimates which all would approve of, and rejoice in. The first of these was the the addition of a battalion to the West India Regiment, a force which deserved every possible encouragement and exhibition of gratitude that could be shown. He believed that the additional battalion would give greater facilities for changing the quarters of the force, and he only wished it were possible to introduce into their course of service the occupation of some quarters not altogether tropical. He was aware this was a matter of difficulty, and that it had been contemplated more than once; but if it could be effected without injury to the susceptibilities in any direction it would be an exceedingly desirable thing to station the regiment sometimes in a locality not open to the evil of tropical life. Then he came to the addition of the Cameron Highlanders, and observed that no explanation had been given as to the mode in which the battalion was to be recruited. He knew there was a general impression in the minds of people, especially of residents within the sound of Bow Bells, that everybody in Scotland wore a kilt. He saw in one of the Christmas numbers of the illustrated papers an elaborate and very entertaining pictorial version of the well-known ballad of "The Laird o' Cockpen," and he was extremely amused to find that, though the *locale* of the ballad was in the Lothians, all the little boys on the roadside, as the Laird of Cockpen rode along to visit his ladylove, wore beautiful kilts of the Stuart tartan pattern. [*Laughter.*] He did not know anyone within striking distance of Cockpen who ever saw a kilt in his life. [*Laughter.*] Being unable to maintain one battalion of Cameron Highlanders, they were to have a new battalion created. He was full of faith, and he should be glad to believe almost everything the right hon. Gentleman who represented the War Office should tell them. He should be pleased to know where in Scotland the Scotchmen and Highlanders were to be found who were to fill that second battalion of Cameron Highlanders. The present battalion in the main part was recruited in Glasgow; but Glasgow was drawn upon by all the other kilted regiments, and he believed all the people who could either have a "Mac" before their name or could speak Gaelic had been exhausted long ago. [*Laughter and* "Hear, hear!"] Then the artillery was to be considerably increased, and so far as that was necessary for the working of the defences of the coaling stations there was no objection. But there was an objection in one sense. Although he knew the fixed and regulated opinion on the other side, he should have thought it would be very much better if the Navy would undertake the defence of the coaling stations. ["Hear, hear!"] He did not want to hamper the Admiral on the station with the cares of defending the particular coaling stations, but surely, if in a place like St. Helena a few marines were stationed, they could move as any ship passed. If it was an unhealthy climate or an unpleasant station, they could be relieved and removed so easily by the Navy, whereas what was more detrimental to a company of infantry or a few artillery as those they were now invited to vote, than to be stationed for two or three years permanently in such a *locale* as that? He knew that places like Sierra Leone, St. Helena, and other coaling stations must be defended, but he could not help thinking common sense required that it should be the Navy that should be responsible for the defence of these places, and not the Army. ["Hear, hear!"] He applied the same principle to such larger places as Malta and Gibraltar. What could be more extraordinary than that they should coop up in those two garrisons at the present moment ten of the best battalions of their mobile force? He said the other night they were deteriorating under their eyes from day to day. They were not deteriorating, it might be, but they were not improving. Negatively, if not positively, they were deteriorating, and therefore he should have hoped, now that they had a strong Committee of the Cabinet established to look into these matters, they would seriously consider whether the naval view was really to prevail to the extent that it did at present, and whether they might not see some marine forces employed on a larger scale than now for the defence of these fortresses, thereby releasing a number of their mobile battalions, which would then have all the benefit of the Salisbury Plain manœuvring ground of the right hon. Gentleman, and all the other blessings of boots and flannel shirts which he was anxious to bestow upon them in this country. ["Hear, hear!" *and laughter.*] These things concerned both the Army and Navy. Each had its prejudices, which sometimes ripened into being superstitions, and he was at present attacking what he believed to be a naval superstition. He hoped it was not too late to attack that superstition with some effect, and then the whole question of the unequal distribution of battalions would solve itself. The hon. Member for Hampshire, to whom he always listened with great respect in these matters, had said one thing which rather astonished him—namely, that he opposed the increase of the battalions of infantry because he said he was in favour of larger cadres and fewer of them. He agreed with the hon. Member, but, whenever any proposal had been made to deal in a logical and common-sense way with the infantry or cavalry, there had always been this tremendous outcry as to the traditions of the regiments, their numbers, and associations. The Under Secretary for War made an announcement as to the reorganisation of cavalry. He would prefer to see the details in print before examining them, but he might say it seemed to be a step in the right direction. The right hon. Gentleman was advised in the matter by authorities beyond doubt the most capable he could have. He himself was very glad that this matter, which had hung in the wind for a great many years, was at last being dealt with by the military authorities. The right hon. Gentleman stated—and every one was glad to hear it—that he had been able to provide something for additional comforts for the men. He could not help wondering, as he was speaking, and the Secretary for the Treasury was sitting in an attitude of admiration of his discourse—[*laughter*]—whether anything was to be done towards the more frequent washing of the sheets and blankets of soldiers. [*Laughter and* "Hear, hear!"] He hoped that now the Under Secretary was a little nearer the Throne than in the times when he seemed to be the reservoir of personal

Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman.

complaints of soldiers throughout the country, he would quietly and without public display—[*laughter*]—see that these sheets and blankets were more frequently washed. [*Renewed laughter.*] The Under Secretary at the close of his speech spoke of being an optimist. He himself was an optimist and gloried in being one. ["Hear, hear!"] What was an optimist? He understood him to be a man who preferred to look on the bright side of things, and to contemplate the good things that had been done rather than those that had been left undone. The Under Secretary for War was perfectly right. He and himself and others outside the House, who had really been inside the War Office and knew how the administration of the Army went on, without claiming any great credit for themselves had this advantage over many people who spoke with considerable confidence in the matter—that, whereas they spoke with experience of the defects of the system, they themselves spoke with experience of the advantages of the system—[*cheers*]—and the impossibility of the alternative system which might be proposed. Therefore, if the right hon. Gentleman and himself spoke as if everything was for the best in the best of all possible worlds, it only meant that from their knowledge they believed that the best was being done just now under the conditions imposed upon them with the means which the country supplied. [*Cheers.*]

MR. ARNOLD-FORSTER complained of the want of employment amongst discharged soldiers. It was stated publicly in evidence before the Wantage Commission that out of the total of the Army Reserve 20,000 men were believed to be out of employment. From inquiries he had since made he found that, in the Field Lane Refuge, of 1,150 destitute persons 179 were discharged soldiers. Returns from provincial workhouses told a similar tale. He believed that the poor future of the soldier after serving in the Army deterred the best class of recruits from enlisting. ["Hear, hear!"] Reference had been made to the Royal Marines relieving Line battalions. The Royal Marines consisted of 15,000 men, and had one general officer on active service, which consisted in sitting on a stool in Pall Mall. The Marines as a body of troops were unrivalled, and it was lamentable that they should not offer them a greater objective of ambition. He hoped the reforms that had been suggested in the Debate would be carried into effect. There should be some authoritative agreement as to the length of service. Persons regarded as "authoritative" differed on the subject, giving the periods at three, six, seven, eight, and twelve years. Now they were told they were to discard all these, to have four years and a "go-as-you-please" term of service after that. It was an example of having "authorities" eternally quoted against you. It was only when there was a movement taken up on a large scale, a large demand made, and a large appeal made to public opinion that any changes worth thinking about at all were made. He persisted in his view that until some very radical reforms were introduced into our military system the House would not get away from the perpetual recurrence of Debates such as had occurred that night. No one after hearing the speech of the right hon. Gentleman, the Under Secretary, could get away from the fact that what he had told the Committee was not the view of the military authorities, it was but a maimed and stunted account of their view. It was the habitual mistake of the War Office that they did not take the country into their confidence. The Navy had at least compelled the Naval authorities to tell the House what they really wanted. The House had never refused to vote supplies when a responsible Minister told the House of Commons what he wanted. It was not quite fair to come and put before the House a state of things which was not the view of the military authorities. He did not believe that the House would ever refuse to meet an appeal for military necessities. Until such a full statement was made upon Army matters as had been made in regard to the Navy this unsatisfactory state of things would continue; and he would, at any rate, do what he could to discredit the present method of stating the needs of the Army. The regiments were inefficient, and known to be inefficient, and until a clean breast was made and some confidence given to the House he should continue to press for a complete and searching reform.

MR. HENRY LABOUCHERE (Northampton) said he had listened with deep interest to the Debate which had taken place. [*A laugh.*] They had heard a great deal about the Guards. He did not know much about them himself, but he was surprised that hon. Gentlemen who, he had no doubt, had plenty of military courage had not the courage to go to a Division. [*Laughter and an* HON. MEMBER: "We could not."] Hon. Gentlemen took care to raise the question when they knew they could not divide. He knew that game. [*Laughter.*] If they had gone to a division he should have voted with them so as to encourage the spirit of independence he would like to see grow up on the other side of the House. Although hon. Gentlemen who spoke on behalf of the Guards represented a very important factor in this matter, he represented a far larger body of men than they. He represented the British taxpayer—["hear, hear!"]—who was obliged to pay for all this increase in expenditure and who, when he got the opportunity, loudly protested against it. It was all the more necessary for Members of the House of Commons to look closely into these Estimates, because he remembered that Lord Beaconsfield said that the heads of the two spending departments ought to be in the House of Commons and that unless they were, Members of that House could not exercise due control over them. Had hon. Gentlemen taken into consideration the fact that taking things all round, this permanent increase in the expenses of the country would amount to about £800,000 per annum? Yet not one word of protest had been raised against it. Of late years the Navy had been very largely increased because Ministers had said that it was absolutely necessary to have a Navy stronger than the navies of any two other countries. At the same time the House was told that England was not a military nation, but that she must rule the sea; and he said to himself, "Now, if we spend all this on the Navy it has this advantage, that we shall not have to spend more on the Army." He was, therefore, surprised to read a speech of the Commander-in-Chief in which he actually gave as a reason why more money should be spent on the Army that we had already spent so much on the Navy. There was a sort of competition between the naval and military authorities and if the House of Commons did not put its foot down, the people would be eaten out of house and home. ["Hear, hear!"] The proposal was to increase the infantry and artillery. He would have thought it more desirable to increase the artillery than the infantry, and if it had been proposed to increase the artillery alone he should have suggested that it might be done by decreasing the infantry. The plea put forward was that there were not sufficient men for foreign service. The question was, could the difficulty be met not by increasing the number of soldiers but by reducing, without any harm to the Empire, those places abroad where soldiers were sent. ["Hear, hear!"] Perhaps the Guards rather than go to Gibraltar would agree that we should give up Gibraltar. [*Laughter.*] But he thought it was far more important that a reduction should be made in Egypt. As far as he could gather he believed we had now 4,200 men in Egypt. He was not going to repeat the various protests he had made on political grounds to our occupation of Egypt, but would look at the matter from a military point of view. The importance of Egypt from a military point of view was due to the fact that the

Suez Canal, which was the means of communication between our Indian and home possessions, ran through Egyptian territory. He admitted that if that canal fell into the hands of some foreign Power in time of war it would be a most serious matter to us. In time of peace it was very obvious that we gained nothing by this garrison being in Egypt. Nothing prevented our commerce or our troops going through on equal terms with that of other nations. As to the case of war, he would assume for the sake of argument that we were at war with France and Russia. It was not necessary, however, that we should occupy Egypt in order to stop other Powers with whom we might be at war from passing by the Suez Canal to India and the East. So long as we held the command of the sea we could always prevent a fleet passing that way, and if we were at war with other Powers we should not attempt to convoy our merchandise or send our troops by way of the Suez Canal. Mr. Childers had told him that when he was Minister of War there was an important Departmental Conference between the naval and military authorities at which it was decided that in case of war between naval Powers it would be impossible to send our troops under convoy through the Suez Canal. Everybody knew that in case of war they would be obliged to allow neutrals to pass through the Canal, and if any neutral could be induced to blow up his ship in the Canal, it would block the Canal for two or three weeks. Some tacticians were of opinion that in the case of such a war it would be wise for us to evacuate the Mediterranean and concentrate our forces nearer home; if we did so it was obvious that we must either increase our garrison in Egypt or withdraw it. If we increased it he did not even then see how we should be able to prevent an army approaching Egypt by land through Syria. Moreover, in such a case, if we increased the force in Egypt, we should have to draw soldiers from India or from the British Isles, which would put us in an utterly false strategical position, as these places would require troops. In a Dispatch written by M. Waddington to the Minister for Foreign Affairs, and dated November 3rd, 1886, M. Waddington quoted words which Lord Salisbury had used, to the effect that they were greatly mistaken who thought that we wanted to remain indefinitely in Egypt, and that we sought the means honestly to withdraw the troops which we had there, and which would be more useful in India. He (Mr. Labouchere) very often agreed with Lord Salisbury. [*Laughter.*] At the time of the Treaty called the Drummond-Wolff Convention, Sir Henry Drummond-Wolff wrote a Dispatch to Lord Salisbury in which he said that the drain on the military and financial resources of England rendered it most desirable that our troops should as soon as possible be taken from a position of so delicate a character, which in time of war might be a weak point. Lord Salisbury, writing in reply, said that he assented entirely to Sir H. Drummond-Wolff's views. Then the First Lord of the Treasury had said:—

> "We are pledged before Europe not to occupy Egypt permanently. We do not look upon the occupation of Egypt as strengthening the position of this country."

In 1891 Mr. Gladstone said that our occupation of Egypt was an embarrassment and weakness, and in 1892 Lord Kimberley declared that the long continuance of the occupation would be fraught with great disadvantage to our country. Thus the Prime Minister and other prominent statesmen had stated that from a military point of view our retention of this garrison in Egypt was not advantageous. It might be said that Egypt paid for the troops. Well, Egypt paid a portion of the cost, no doubt, but nothing like the whole amount. It should be remembered that no gain accrued from taking men from labour and putting them into the Army, for a country depended largely for its prosperity upon the number of labouring men which it had. He protested against this system of hiring out mercenaries to a foreign Power. Surely no one would say that we ought to increase our Army simply to benefit Egypt. Very possibly the Egyptians were badly governed before our occupation, and if we withdrew their future system of government would very likely not be as good as the present.

*THE CHAIRMAN OF WAYS AND MEANS: The hon. Member is trenching upon political subjects. He must confine himself to the military portion.

MR. LABOUCHERE moved:

> "That a number of Land Forces, not exceeding 154,574, all ranks, be maintained for the said Service."

He said that he had only incidentally interpolated the remarks for which the Chairman had called him to order. Our occupation of Egypt was stated to be only temporary, and for this temporary occupation they were asked to increase the Army. Could anyone point to any single occasion when, after having increased the numbers of our Army in time of peace, we had reduced it to the former numerical state? Once the numbers of the Army were increased, they were never reduced. Practically the Committee were now asked to burden the Budget for all time with this addition of £800,000 per annum. He was not prepared to consent to increase the Army for these wild schemes of occupation, schemes said to be temporary, but which would be converted into permanent ones if that should be possible. He concluded by moving the Amendment standing in his name.

MR. JOHN DILLON (Mayo, E.) seconded the Amendment. When he first entered the House some 17 years ago, there was in it a body of Members who were known as the party of economy, and whenever a Government proposed any increase in the taxation of the country it was always subjected by that party to searching criticism and a good deal of opposition. It might be that the opposition of those gentlemen to increases of expenditure was too general; nevertheless, in his opinion the condition of things which then prevailed was much more wholesome than the state of things now, when hon. Members like the hon. Member for Belfast, who used to be looked upon as a Radical, and would possibly so describe himself still, attacked the Government with the greatest ferocity because they had not proposed Army Estimates equivalent in amount to the monstrously extravagant additional expenditure on the Navy. In the last few years millions had been added to the permanent expenditure of the country, and that had been done without vigorous protest except from one or two quarters. The hon. Member for Northampton was perfectly justified in his assumption that the proposed addition to the Army was directly connected with the occupation of Egypt. Seven or eight years ago the present Commander-in-Chief declared that in consequence of that occupation and the strain that it put upon the British Army, it would be necessary to increase the military forces by 10,000 men, and that increase was made. It was not sufficient, however, and now they were called upon to sanction a further increase of upwards of 7,000 men. Those of them who heard the extraordinary speech delivered by the Chancellor of the Exchequer last week could not do otherwise than believe that the present increase was only the beginning of a long career of extravagance. This increase was plainly to a considerable extent dependent upon the necessity of a prolonged occupation of Egypt. They knew from the Chancellor of the Exchequer that the requirements in connection with the occupation of Egypt would grow enormously in the next few years, and they would, therefore, if they voted this increase now, be called upon in all probability to vote further and greater increases in the next few years, in order to develop and consolidate the British Empire in the Soudan. This country was now in a period of profound peace, the most unbroken during the century, and yet we had settled down to an 8d. Income Tax without hope of any diminution. Indeed, he doubted whether in view of the further demands that would be made on the Treasury, an 8d. Income Tax would be sufficient. The present period of unparalleled prosperity—in England at all events—might come to an end, and if it was followed by a period of depression similar to that which existed in 1893 and 1894, it would be necessary in order to maintain the present burden to increase the Income Tax by 1d. or 2d. He thought the country was entitled to know what value it was getting for all this expenditure. While they were called upon to vote immense sums for the British Army and the Britsh Navy, and for the re-conquest of the Soudan, they saw, nearer home, scandalous and monstrous and unheard of proceedings in the Island of Crete, within sight of British ships, and within the reach of British arms, and yet not a single soldier or sailor was moved to put a stop to that state of things. It was monstrous that they should be asked to increase the naval and military forces of the country, and yet that nothing should be done to end the outrages which were disgracing Christendom and humanity in the Turkish Empire. The Under Secretary had expressed the hope that the Military Works Bill and the Military Lands Bill would be allowed to pass quickly. For his part he would resist these measures to the utmost of his ability. It appeared to him that the British taxpayer was suffering from a temporary fit of insanity with regard to the expenditure of money. England was enormously wealthy, and an 8d. Income Tax was an inconvenience and an uncomfortable thing even for her, but she was dragging in her wake in this monstrous enterprise a poor country which would be swamped, and founder under the burden which would be placed upon her. It was their duty, even if the expenditure was justified, from an Imperial point of view which he did not believe, to take into consideration, to take into account the circumstances of a poor country which had not shared to the extent of a single 6d. in the prosperity and wealth and trading expansion of England, but which, on the contrary, was plunged into a condition of profund depression. Therefore, from the Irish standpoint, as well as from the view of the hon. Member for Northampton, which he shared, he objected to this expenditure.

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY: The hon. Gentleman who moved this reduction did it avowedly on the ground that the occupation of Egypt, which requires the services of 4,200 British troops, would not be expedient in the interests of the British Empire; and he divided his speech in making out this contention into two heads—one devoted to the Canal and the other devoted to Egypt itself. He said the Canal was of no strategic or commercial importance to us that we should require this expenditure, and that we should gain nothing from the occupation of Egypt, even apart from the Canal. He produced in defence of both propositions a long catena of eminent military and political authorities to support his views.

MR. LABOUCHERE: All our best generals. [*Laughter.*]

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY: All our best politicians and all our best generals. [*Laughter.*] There was one authority he did not quote. I do not know whether I ought to describe him as one of our best generals or one of our best politicians, but his opinion is couched in these words:—

> "He considered it absolutely necessary to maintain supreme and paramount influence over the Canal, and it was impossible to maintain that influence unless we also had paramount influence in Cairo and the valley of the Nile. He did not know that there was anyone more strongly opposed to our intervention in Egypt than he was, but, speaking in a general sense, he really believed this intervention was absolutely necessary if England was to remain the great Empire that she was."

That represents the earlier phase of the hon. Gentleman's opinions. [*Laughter.*] That was the hon. Member's earlier manner—[*laughter*]—but whether he spoke as the best of our politicians or the best of our generals I know not. In any case he must admit that there has been a period when people of intelligence took a different view from that which the hon. Member now takes. [*Laughter and cheers.*] In truth, I rather think if I were to go into the question of the utility of the occupation of Egypt to the British Empire on the present Vote you, Sir, would call me to order and would restrict me to the question of whether the 4,200 men should or should not be kept on the Establishment. Let me point out, therefore, that we really could not assent to the hon. Member's Motion if we are to remain in Egypt; if we regard our duties apart from our interests as requiring us to be in Egypt this force must be there; and, therefore, there is no military question involved at the present time. Even the hon. Member would not say that we ought to disband these 4,200 men and maintain the occupation of Egypt. It would be impossible for me, however, without transgressing the rules of order, to go into the reason which makes it absolutely necessary that these men should be kept on the Establishment. But though I cannot go into the merits of the question, I may conciliate the hon. Member, not, perhaps, in his capacity as politician or as general, but in his capacity as economist, for these 4,200 men which I think he has described as costing a million of money—

Mr. LABOUCHERE: No, no; the figure he quoted was £800,000. But the Government were asking for 7,400 men, and he took the sum at £100 per soldier, adding the charge for generals and so on. [*Laughter.*]

The FIRST LORD of the TREASURY: Then it is not our Estimate the hon. Member wants to reduce; it is the Egyptian Estimate, a subject which is hardly in order on the present occasion. Egypt pays the greater part of the cost of the English occupation; broadly speaking, it pays for these troops.

Mr. LABOUCHERE admitted that Egypt paid a considerable amount, but he could not suppose that any Gentleman on that side of the House would take that point because that was really hiring out our soldiers as mercenaries for foreign States.

The FIRST LORD of the TREASURY: All the additional cost falls on Egypt except a trifling sum. That being so, I do not think the hon. Member need be perturbed over this Vote. If we are to keep Egypt, and as long as we keep it, men must be there and paid for. The hon. Member will admit that this is not the occasion on which to discuss the Vote on the occupation of Egypt. The success of the hon. Member's Motion would only prevent us from continuing our present Egyptian policy; and therefore I submit that the only way in which the House can be legitimately asked to come to a decision on the point is on a Resolution openly and plainly stating that the English occupation of Egypt ought forthwith to come to an end. [*Cheers.*] When the hon. Member chooses to bring forward that Motion we shall be prepared to discuss it in all its bearings, but until that moment arrives I submit to the Committee that it is not for our advantage, and does not conduce to legitimate discussion in Committee of Supply, that we should, on an absolutely irrelevant issue, be asked to decide a question not merely of English or Imperial policy, but a question in which the whole of Europe is concerned as well as ourselves. I trust, in these circumstances, the Committee will speedily come to a decision on the point, and it will not consent to follow the hon. Member in the course which he has asked it to pursue. [*Cheers.*]

Sir WILFRID LAWSON (Cumberland, Cockermouth): Will the right hon. Gentleman give us a day to discuss the occupation of Egypt?

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY: If a Vote of Censure is brought forward by the proper authorities—[*cheers*]—I shall gladly do so.

Question put, "That a number of Land Forces, not exceeding 154,574, all ranks, be maintained for the said Service."

The Committee *divided*:—Ayes, 20; Noes, 134.—(Division List, No. 28.)

Main Question again proposed.

*CAPTAIN PIRIE (Aberdeen, N.) wished to remind the Government that in regard to the Army they were responsible to the nation, not only for its efficiency but also for the welfare of the men who composed it. He was sorry to miss from the right hon. Gentleman's statement any reference to the character of the men in the Army. Unless the nation could be convinced that men left the Army better than they entered it, the class of recruits which it was desirable they should obtain would not be secured, nor would they get the results for which they hoped. The popular prejudice against the Army found expression in the exaggerated language sometimes heard. He had been told of parents who said that they would rather follow a son's body to the grave than that he should join the Army. The nation had confidence in the management of the Navy, but not of the Army. At the present time large numbers of immature boys were decoyed into the Army, and in many cases their lives were practically ruined. That was a condition of affairs to which the attention of the nation should be aroused.

GENERAL McCALMONT (Antrim, N.) thought that two divisions of cavalry—not one, as was proposed in the Government's scheme—should be kept up at full strength. The enormous difference between the strength of our cavalry and the strength of the cavalry of both France and Germany, was most apparent in the matter of horses. In France there were 601 horses to the regiment, in Germany 612, and England only 433. We had very nearly as many men in a cavalry regiment as France or Russia, but, as compared with those countries, each of our regiments was deficient in 200 horses. Where were those horses to come from in time of war? Were they to be obtained from the omnibus companies or the tramway companies, or pressed from the hunting stables? [*Laughter.*] But those horses were no more to be compared to the horses which the French and German cavalry rode than a cab horse was to be compared to an elephant. [*Laughter.*] He did not believe at all in a reserve of horses. What we had to do was to find out what cavalry we needed and keep it up to its full strength in time of peace. ["Hear, hear!"] He was glad that in the proposed reorganisation it was not intended to touch the regimental associations of the Army. When he was at Constantinople at a time that our relations with Russia were rather strained, General Skobeleff said to him in a friendly way,

> "Your Army has one great advantage over ours. Our army is composed of enormous masses of men, but your Army has the advantage of regimental divisions, and you should never allow it to be interfered with."

["Hear, hear!"] He earnestly hoped, indeed, that that great institution of the Army would never be touched.

MR. JOHN McLEOD (Sutherland) said there was a very distinct understanding, if not a pledge, before the last Government went out of office, that a regiment would be stationed at Fort George. He thoroughly agreed with what had been said on the Opposition side of the House with regard to the extravagant expenditure on the Army, but he thought that as long as money was being spent the Scottish people were entitled to a fair share of it. [*A laugh.*] The Scottish people contributed their share towards that expenditure, and the least they could ask was that a due proportion of the regiments at home should be quartered in Scotland. He had considerable doubt as to the good that would result either to the district of Fort George or to a regiment from being quartered there, but the people of that locality were so misguided as to believe that it would be a considerable advantage both to themselves and a regiment to have one there, and therefore in the interest of the people he hoped the Under Secretary for War would be able to relieve the anxiety on that point by sending a regiment to Fort George. With regard to the raising of another battalion of Cameron Highlanders, he was sure the War Office authorities were under a very great misapprehension if they imagined that they were going to get recruits from the Highlands for this second battalion. There was a very popular tradition that more Highlanders did not enlist in the Army because of certain treatment meted out to them at the beginning of the century. [*Ironical laughter.*] But after examination he had discovered that the disinclination arose from an entirely different cause. Anyone who studied the history of the Highland regiments would have no difficulty in coming to the conclusion that a Highlander was never a man who hired himself out for the purpose of killing. Highland regiments had, with credit to themselves and glory to England, gone to all parts of the world and made empire, but those regiments were raised for a particular object, and having served that object the men considered their functions were at an end. He therefore ventured to say the right hon. Gentleman would find great difficulty in finding recruits from the Highlands for the second battalion of the Cameron Highlanders. If England wished to fight battles abroad she would have to find men to do so outside of Scotland. Scotland had quite sufficient to do at home. [*Ironical cheers.*]

Original Question put, and agreed to.

Mr. John McLeod.

2. £5,937,800, Pay, &c., of the Army (General Staff, Regiments, Reserve, and Departments).

3. £295,800, Medical Establishment, Pay, &c.—Agreed to.

Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That a sum, not exceeding £553,000, be granted to Her Majesty, to defray the Charge for the Pay, Extra Pay, Bounty, &c. (exclusive for Supplies, Clothing, &c.) of the Militia (to a number not exceeding 135,243, including 30,000 Militia Reserve), which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1898."

SIR HENRY CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN (Stirling Burghs) protested against any further Votes being taken that night. It was altogether unusual to take more than the first Vote which involved a large sum on the same night. There were many hon. Members who were interested in the following Votes, and who might be absent in the belief that this invariable practice would be followed on the present occasion. ["Hear, hear!"] They had already allowed one Vote—the Medical Vote—to pass, but he hoped no further Vote would be taken.

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY said he entirely agreed with the right hon. Gentleman, and he had no desire whatever to press on Votes which might be unexpected. Under those circumstances he would not go on with any further Votes, and would move "That the Chairman do report Progress, and ask leave to sit again." ["Hear, hear!"]

Question put, and agreed to.

Resolutions to be reported upon Monday next; Committee also to report Progress; to sit again upon Monday next.

WAYS AND MEANS.

Committee deferred till Monday next.

MILITARY WORKS (MONEY) BILL.

Second Reading deferred till Monday next.

PUBLIC HEALTH (SCOTLAND) BILL.

Adjourned Debate on Second Reading [5th February] further adjourned till Monday next.

MILITARY LANDS ACT (1892) AMENDMENT BILL.

Order read, for resuming Adjourned Debate on Question proposed [11th February], "That the Bill be now Read a Second time."

Question put, and agreed to.

Bill read a Second time, and committed for Monday next.

TRUSTS (SCOTLAND) BILL.

On the Order for the Second Reading of this Bill,

Mr. R. B. HALDANE (Haddington) asked for some explanation of the Bill on the ground that sufficient opportunity had not been given for considering it.

*__The LORD ADVOCATE__ (**Mr. Graham Murray**, Buteshire) said the Bill was simplicity itself. In 1887 an Amendment Act to the then Trusts Acts was passed, learned Member knew, such reductions of rent to tenants, for as the hon. and learned Member knew such reductions could not be given under the Common Law in Scotland. Unfortunately the Amendment Act was so worded as to limit the powers of trustees to granting reductions on agricultural rents only. But there were many cases other than those applying to agriculture in which deserving tenants were entitled to reduction of rent—the cases of mineral tenants for instance. ["Hear, hear!"] This Bill was intended to enable reductions to be made on mineral rents as well as on agricultural rents.

Mr. J. CALDWELL (Lanark, Mid) said it was very unfortunate that year after year it should be necessary to bring in Bills to amend previous Amendment Bills. He had no objection to the present Bill, and he did not intend to oppose the Second Reading, but he wished to strongly complain that reasonable time and opportunity had not been given to hon. Members for the perusal or consideration of the Measure. On the previous night the Second Reading of the Bill was moved, even before it was printed. It had, however, since been printed, and hon. Members from Scotland had had, therefore, the opportunity of seeing it, and though, as he had said, he should offer no objection to the Bill, yet he wished to impress on the Government that reasonable time and opportunity must in future be given to hon. Members to peruse and consider Bills before they were proceeded with. ["Hear, hear!"] That had certainly not been the case in the present instance, and he hoped the protest which had been made would be regarded by the Government as a warning.

Bill Read a Second time, and committed for Monday next.

LAW OF EVIDENCE (CRIMINAL CASES) BILL.

Second Reading deferred till Monday next.

COUNTY SURVEYORS (IRELAND) AMENDMENT BILL.

On the Order for the Second Reading of this Bill,

Mr. W. JOHNSTON (Belfast, S.) expressed the hope that the House would assent to the Second Reading of the Measure. The Bill, he said, was simple in its terms, and its object was to provide pensions for County Surveyors in Ireland.

*THE ATTORNEY GENERAL FOR IRELAND (MR. JOHN ATKINSON, Londonderry, N.) said that so far from the Bill being simple or acceptable in its terms, it really violated all accepted notions of propriety and justice. [*Laughter.*] The second clause of the Bill is framed to enable the Grand Jury of a county to award a pension to any county surveyor who might be serving in that county at the time when he retired, and it gives them the power to direct that the amount of that pension should be payable not only from the county cess of the county in which the surveyor was serving at the time of retirement, but also from the cess of those counties in which he had previously served. He thought that was a most unwise and unjust provision. ["Hear, hear!"]

MR. JOHNSTON said he was extremely sorry to have misled the House, but the hon. Member for Fermanagh assured him that he had seen the Attorney General for Ireland, and had introduced an Amendment to the Bill as originally drafted, which, he told him, had received the sanction of the right hon. and learned Gentleman. He was extremely sorry to have misled the House, but under the circumstances he hoped the House would acquit him. [*Cheers.*]

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY: I suggest that, in the circumstances, the Debate should be adjourned.

MR. JOHN BURNS (Battersea) hoped the hon. Member would withdraw this objectionable Bill. If the Debate was adjourned encouragement would only be given to a group of mischievous Bills of a similar character, which it was the intention of Members on both sides of the House to bring in for the superannuation of everybody except the ratepayers, who provided the money. He trusted the House would reject the Bill.

Mr. W. Johnston.

MR. JOHNSTON: On the statement of the right hon. Gentleman the Attorney General for Ireland, I would ask permission to withdraw the Bill.

*MR. SPEAKER: Do I understand the hon. Member desires to withdraw the Bill?

MR. JOHNSON: Yes, Sir.

Motion, by leave, withdrawn.

Bill withdrawn.

LEASEHOLDERS (PURCHASE OF FEE SIMPLE) (No. 2) BILL.

Second Reading deferred till Friday next.

MIDWIVES REGISTRATION BILL.

On the Order for the Second Reading of this Bill,

MR. TATTON EGERTON (Cheshire, Knutsford) said the Bill was intended to carry out the recommendations of the Select Committee, which sat upon this question. This Bill had also been—

*MR. SPEAKER: Order, order! I understand that the hon. Member gave instructions at the Table that this Bill should be postponed to a particular date.

MR. TATTON EGERTON: If it did not come up on an earlier occasion. [*Laughter.*]

*MR. SPEAKER said that the hon. Member having given instructions at the Table that the Bill was to be put down for a particular date, he was not in a position to move now, because other hon. Members might have been misled. ["Hear, hear!"]

Second Reading deferred till Friday, 26th February.

House Adjourned at Ten minutes before Twelve o'clock, till Monday next.

HOUSE OF LORDS.

Monday, 15th February 1897.

CRETE.

The Earl of KIMBERLEY: I wish to ask the noble Marquess a question of which I have given him private notice. It is whether he is able to make any statement as to the position of affairs in Crete, and whether he can lay on the Table Papers respecting the arrangements entered into by the Powers last summer for the better administration of that island?

*The PRIME MINISTER (The Marquess of Salisbury): I will answer the latter part of the Question first by saying that a considerable mass of Papers are ready to be laid before Parliament, and that they have been delayed because it was thought necessary to submit them to the various Consuls who have to revise them. Their work is so heavy that they have not been able to get through them so rapidly as was expected. I hope in a few days they will be in the noble Lord's hands. With regard to the state of affairs in Crete, I suppose there is not much dispute about the facts. Reforms had been arranged and were being carried into effect, when the Hellenic Government, apparently forced by opinion among their own subjects, have intervened, have sent ships and have sent troops to Cretan waters. All the Powers, without exception, were of opinion that this was a most ill-advised act, and as soon as there was any indication that it was in meditation they protested against it and expressed their opinion in very earnest language to the Greek Government. So much for the state of things as it now exists. The Powers retain their opinion of the utter unwisdom of the act that has taken place, and I think they have no disposition in any way to sanction it. Her Majesty's Government retain the attitude which they have observed of keeping in concert with the other Powers of Europe and acting together with them. Our naval officers have received instructions to take no isolated action, but to concert with the naval officers of the other Powers. Evidently it is one of the consequences of acting in concert with other Powers that you cannot speak confidently in the future tense as to the course which they may intend to pursue. It is in itself more difficult to do than if you were acting independently, and, besides that, it would be obviously improper. I can only say, therefore, that the concert and sympathy of the Powers remains complete, and that we have no ground for thinking that it will be diminished, or that they have any intention of departing from the policy they have hitherto pursued. [*Cheers.*]

Viscount CLIFDEN: Might I ask the noble Marquess whether any Greeks have been landed in Crete?

*The PRIME MINISTER: I am not aware that they have. I think not.

HOUSE OF LORDS (DISMISSAL OF Mr. JOHN BULL).

*Lord MONKSWELL moved:—

> "That the petition of Mr. John Bull, complaining of his dismissal by the Lord Great Chamberlain in July last from the office of resident superintendent of the Palace of Westminster, be referred to a Committee of this House."

He said he desired to make it quite clear at the onset, that he did not contemplate making anything in the nature of an attack upon the noble Lord the Lord Great Chamberlain. That noble Lord was intrusted by their Lordships with the discharge of certain duties involving heavy responsibilities, and he had not the slightest doubt, nor could their Lordships have the slightest doubt, that the Lord Great Chamberlain had, as he had already stated, given the most careful and anxious consideration to the case of Mr. Bull. Neither had he the slightest doubt that the Lord Great Chamberlain was thoroughly convinced that the dismissal of Mr. Bull was imperatively called for, however ruinous such dismissal might be to that gentleman's prospects in life, and that there was absolutely no other course open to him in the interest of the maintenance of discipline among the minor officials of that House than to adopt the very extreme measure of dismissing Mr. Bull. He thought that if the Committee he asked for were appointed, it would probably be found that the Lord Great Chamberlain was mistaken in the view he held as to the conduct of Mr. Bull. If that should prove to be the case, the fault would lie not with the Lord Great Chamberlain, but in the present system under which these officials were appointed and dismissed. That system had been greatly censured by many high authorities in that House and notably by Lord Morley, the Chairman of Committees, and by his noble and learned Friend Lord Herschell. In his view the question of the continuance of the system should be referred to the Committee, and it appeared to him that possibly a thorough investigation into all the circumstances attending the dismissal of Mr. Bull might throw a practical light upon the working of the present system. That, however, was not the only ground upon which he asked their Lordships to appoint this Committee. His next reason for asking for the appointment must commend itself to every one of their Lordships, including even the Lord Great Chamberlain himself. He ventured to say that, if Mr. Bull chose to press for the appointment of this Committee he occupied a very strong position, owing to the strange and almost unprecedented circumstance that he had been dismissed without having been given an opportunity of stating his case before the Lord Great Chamberlain. Therefore, if their Lordships granted this Committee, they would only be giving Mr. Bull an opportunity of defending himself which had been denied to him by the Lord Great Chamberlain. Upon this point he thought that Mr. Bull had made out a strong case at least for inquiry. There was no public body in the Kingdom, whether it were a County Council, a Board of Guardians, or a Vestry, which would dismiss anyone in its service without giving him an opportunity of stating his case in his defence. This refusal on the part of the Lord Great Chamberlain to hear Mr. Bull in his defence, was not due to any negligence on the part of Mr. Bull himself, who had asked over and over again for an opportunity to be given him of being heard in his defence, and who had had his request refused. What the answer of the Lord Great Chamberlain would be to his Motion might be gathered from the papers which were before their Lordships, namely, that the case was so simple and so clear that it would have been a mere formality to have asked Mr. Bull to come forward and explain his conduct, that the interview must have been necessarily an exceedingly painful one to all parties, and could not possibly have any useful result. It was, however, seldom quite safe to assume that a man had nothing to urge on his own behalf, and those who had been concerned in litigation must be aware of the truth of the adage that "one story is good until another is heard." For his own part he should certainly have done all he could to have dissuaded Mr. Bull from asking for this Committee, and he should not have put down this Motion upon the Paper had he not satisfied himself, without in any way prejudging the case, that Mr. Bull could produce strong evidence in support of the substantial accuracy of the statement which he had made. A very short review of the facts would show that the case against Mr. Bull was not quite as simple or as clear as the Lord Great Chamberlain appeared to think. Mr. Bull began his career in the ranks. In 1881 his conduct and his ability were so exceedingly favourably reported upon that he obtained the rank of lieutenant, and of quartermaster in the Royal Engineers. In May, 1890, he was appointed by the Lord Great Chamberlain to the position from which he had recently been dismissed. He did not think that their Lordships would consider that, having regard to his length of service, and to his exemplary character whilst in the Army, this position, having attached to it a salary of £300 per annum with a residence at Westminster, was too great a recognition of his merits. When he left the Army to accept the appointment, Mr. Bull's prospects were exceeding good, and he only accepted the appointment for domestic reasons. The appointment was certainly not more than an equivalent for what he had a right to expect had he continued in the Army. Mr. Bull entered upon the duties of office with the feeling that he would be able to discharge them to the satisfaction of everyone with whom he was likely to come into contact, and his career in the Army afforded absolute proof of his competency to perform them. He had looked forward to a settled home, and to

Lord Monkswell.

the enjoyment of a competence and an honourable retirement. Mr. Bull had hoped that he would obtain the regard and esteem not only of his superiors but also of those with whom he came into daily communication. He believed that Mr. Bull did discharge his duties zealously, scrupulously, and industriously, and that he conciliated the regard and esteem of nearly all of his fellow-officials. But, most unfortunately for Mr. Bull, there was one exception—there was one man who from the first looked very unfavourably upon him, and it happened, most unfortunately for Mr. Bull, that this man was a person whom the Lord Great Chamberlain had every reason to trust, and upon whom he naturally relied for information with regard to the conduct of the minor officials of the House. Mr. Bull was dismissed practically upon two grounds for disobedience to orders following upon what the Lord Great Chamberlain said he must have known was an unsatisfactory course of conduct. Mr. Bull believed that, if he had been given an opportunity of explaining his case to the Lord Great Chamberlain, he would have been able to show that the charges of trivial alleged neglect of duty on a few occasions which were made against him were almost entirely unfounded. Had he been able to prove that he was the victim of misrepresentations in respect of those charges, in all probability the Lord Great Chamberlain would have taken a totally different view of his case, and would have come to the conclusion that, instead of being entitled to no consideration he was entitled to great consideration. He would now come to the question of the so-called disobedience to orders. It certainly would appear upon the face of it that Mr. Bull, with his previous record as a non-commissioned officer, which he was informed was the best of any non-commissioned officer in the service, with his military training and experience, would not have been guilty of disobedience to orders. Mr. Bull's case was that he acted under a misapprehenson of the nature of the orders, a misapprehension which might show a certain amount of fault on his part, and that he believed that what he was told to do was not in the nature of an order, but was a mere request on the part of the Lord Great Chamberlain, which he might assent to or refuse as he deemed fit. That request was that he should undertake to discharge the duties of the man whom he regarded as his bitterest enemy, and who was regarded in that light not only by him, but also by many others who were in the precincts of the House. The duties he was so asked to discharge were those of a man who filled the positions not only of a clerk in the Lord Great Chamberlain's office, but also of Secretary to the Coaching Club, and Mr. Bull was requested to discharge his duties as clerk, in order that he might officiate as Secretary to the Coaching Club at a time when he ought to have been discharging his duties in the House. Mr. Bull felt, whether rightly or wrongly—and he thought there was considerable ground for his contention—that that was an order the Lord Great Chamberlain ought not to have given him, and he felt that the Lord Great Chamberlain was encouraging a man to commit a serious breach of the Treasury regulation which forbade a person to take other work during office hours. He did not know whether Mr. Bull was right or wrong in that contention, but it was Mr. Bull's belief that that was the case. Mr. Bull naturally could not help contrasting his experience with the Lord Great Chamberlain with that of the Secretary to the Coaching Club, and he was a little sore that fault had been found with himself on trivial occasions, whereas the Secretary to the Coaching Club had, as he thought, been aided in committing a serious breach of the Treasury rule. But, notwithstanding all this, Mr. Bull would have put his feelings in his pocket and performed the duty he was requested to perform had he thought that the letter addressed to him was a positive order. There could be no doubt that the letter of the Lord Great Chamberlain's Secretary was in terms an order; but Mr. Bull, unfortunately for him, had, before receiving that letter, had a conversation with the Lord Great Chamberlain's Secretary, which convinced Mr. Bull that that gentleman would never take the course of commanding him to do Mr. Lovegrove's work. The position

Mr. Bull took up from first to last was this. He said:—

> "If this man comes to me and asks me as a personal favour to do his work, I will do it; or if the Lord Great Chamberlain orders me to do it, I will do it. But, if it is a mere request coming from somebody else, I shall not comply with it."

That was, no doubt, a great mistake on the part of Mr. Bull. When he received a letter ordering him to take another man's duty, he ought to have considered it an order and to have obeyed it. In not doing so, he committed an error of judgment; but he did not intentionally commit an act of disobedience, and that mistake had, he ventured to think, been visited with far too severe a penalty. He had hitherto addressed their Lordships as if Mr. Bull's case alone was before the House. He had no wish to use language of exaggeration, but there were many persons in the service of the House who stood in the same position that Mr. Bull stood in before he was dismissed; and it was not too much to say that the dismissal of Mr. Bull had caused and was causing a general sense of insecurity and uneasiness amongst those officials. Mr. Bull was known and respected by a great number of persons within the precincts of the House, and they thought that his dismissal without a hearing was a circumstance to make them very uncomfortable. They thought that the conscientious discharge of their duties might not shield them from slander, and they feared that they might possibly be dismissed without an opportunity being given them of speaking in their own defence. If their Lordships granted this Inquiry they would relieve the grave anxiety that certain persons felt who were peculiarly entitled to their Lordships' protection; and they would show that they were determined to mete out equal justice to everybody. It might be asked, what could be the practical results of such an inquiry? It was perfectly true that Mr. Bull had been dismissed and another person appointed in his place, and a Committee could not reinstate Mr. Bull. It could, however, rehabilitate his character, and that to Mr. Bull was no small matter. He even ventured to hope that if the result of an Inquiry should be to show that an injustice had been done to Mr. Bull that he might sooner or later obtain some suitable employment. As to what ought to be done on this Motion, he would suggest that the matter should be referred to the Offices Committee for consideration and report, and he would also suggest the addition of the name of Lord Shand to that Committee, who had expressed to him his willingness to serve.

THE LORD GREAT CHAMBERLAIN (The EARL of ANCASTER) hoped the House would bear with him for a few moments while he answered what the hon. Lord opposite had said, and he trusted that when their Lordships had heard what he had to say, they would not think it necessary to send the Question to the Committee as the noble Lord had asked. Mr. Bull was appointed resident superintendent in 1890. He came into the service of the House highly recommended and with an excellent character. A full explanation was given to Mr. Bull of the duties that would be required of him, and he expressed his readiness to accept the office and to do anything that might be required of him. The appointment was to be held during pleasure. Mr. Bull said that no complaints were made against him. All he could say was that Mr. Bull's conduct was unsatisfactory from the very beginning, for he was negligent in the discharge of his duties and took no interest in them. Once Mr. Bull was reprimanded by himself at the request of Colonel Carrington, upon the ground of the inadequate discharge of his duties; in fact, he received constant complaints about him from Colonel Carrington. When Colonel Carrington resigned his appointment last February, Captain Butler was appointed in his place, and he wondered whether Mr. Bull would be able to get on any better with Captain Butler, and soon after Mr. Bull was appointed, he inquired of Captain Butler how Mr. Bull was getting on. Captain Butler shook his head and gave him to understand that Mr. Bull's conduct was not satisfactory. The letter bookin the office would show abundantly that what he had said was perfectly correct. He would not, however, weary their Lordships by going through those letters as he did not think that was the proper place to do so. He would therefore come at once to Saturday, June 27th. On Saturdays their Lordships would remember, tickets to view the House were issued to the public. On the morning of June 27th Captain Butler came to him and told him that Mr. Bull had refused to do what he had asked him to do, namely, to give out these tickets during one hour on that morning. He would now read to their Lordships the letter written by Captain Butler to Mr. Bull. It was in these terms—

"Mr. Bull. Be good enough to issue the tickets from 12.15 p.m. to 1.15 p.m., to-morrow, Saturday, June 27th."

Mr. Bull said that was not an order, he on the other hand, said that was a lawful and proper order, given by a superior officer who was entitled to give such an order. He would now read what was written by Mr. Bull in reply to that. Mr. Bull wrote—

"With reference to your memo of this day's date, I must respectfully decline to officiate for Mr. Lovegrove to-morrow. If he is taking leave to attend one of the Coaching Club Meetings, which has been advertised to take place to-morrow, he is committing a breach of the Treasury regulations as to Government officials not being allowed to accept any private employment during office hours."

In that letter it would be seen that Mr. Bull flatly and distinctly refused to obey the order of Captain Butler. He would call their Lordships' particular attention to this fact, that neither of those letters were to be found in the petition of Mr. Bull, and he was in hopes—and he hoped now—that after he had read those two letters, the noble Lord opposite would not press his Motion. It was very unfair to Captain Butler and himself that Mr. Bull's petition should have been before their Lordships for six months without those two letters, and he wanted to know why they were left out. However, he would leave that matter in their Lordships' hands and return to June 27th. Captain Butler had given leave to Mr. Lovegrove to go out for an hour on that day and had ordered Mr. Bull to give out the tickets during that hour. That was the position of affairs, and he would ask what course he could have adopted but that which he did adopt? That order was given. There was no question whether Mr. Bull received the order or not. He knew their Lordships had every confidence in Captain Butler as he had, and the only course open to him was to support Captain Butler and to suspend Mr. Bull if order and discipline were to be maintained amongst the officers of the House. He knew what the service of their Lordships' House was in 1874, 20 years ago, and what it was at present, and he hoped that if their Lordships had confidence in him, the service of the House would continue what it had been in the past. On the evening of June 27th he had to go into the country to attend Quarter Sessions. He fully expected to have some answer to his letter suspending Mr. Bull, in which that gentleman would say something or other asking him to explain, or expressing a wish to see him or that if he had committed an offence he was sorry for it. He was quite sure that if a letter of that sort had been received by him he would had given Mr. Bull an opportunity of being heard. If such a letter had come to him he would have been most willing to consider it, so as to hear what Mr. Bull had to say. He felt no asperity against Mr. Bull, and it would, of course, have been much pleasanter not to have had any of these troubles. He would only have been too glad if Mr. Bull had discharged his duty and things had gone on quietly. However, no answer came. Captain Butler then asked leave to make a new appointment. It was the middle of the Session, and there was a great deal of work in their Lordships' House, which could not be carried on without the services of a Superintendent. Captain Butler recommended for the appointment two of the door-keepers, but they did not accept, for reasons of their own. He then recommended the present Superintendent, whose appointment, he was glad to say, had resulted entirely satisfactorily. All the letters, excepting the two which he had read, reached him after he made that appointment. It was no use seeing Mr. Bull then, as he had made up his mind and had made an appointment. In fact, he could have done nothing if he had seen Mr. Bull. Then came the question—Was the order originally given a reasonable one? Mr. Bull, in his petition, said that that order was not in accordance with the authority given in 1876. It should be borne in mind that when the order to issue tickets to the public on the Saturday in question was given there were only two officials, the Superintendent and the Clerk, who could perform the duty. It was therefore self-evident that if one of these officials did not do it, the other must. There were other duties which Mr. Bull had to perform which were not designated in the order of 1876. What was Mr. Bull asked to do on this occasion? He was asked to sit in a chair for one hour and to distribute these tickets, but he refused, and Captain Butler was kind enough to volunteer to do the duty. He sat in the chair and gave out the tickets, while Mr. Bull was standing close by him in the Prince's Chamber. With regard to Mr. Lovegrove, who was appointed Clerk in 1873, he thought it right to tell the House that that gentleman's salary was only £100 a year. Of course, if they wanted a man to do responsible work on such a salary they could not expect him to give his whole time to their service, and he must be allowed to take up other work. The work discharged by Mr. Lovegrove was very responsible, especially when Her Majesty opened Parliament in person. The hours during which he had to attend were very long; but Mr. Lovegrove was always ready to do anything and everything, and no hours were too long for him. Surely it was not unreasonable for the head of the Department to give a man who had worked for 23 years in this service leave for one hour on one particular day. He hoped their Lordships would consider this statement a satisfactory one; and he left the matter in their hands with some confidence.

THE EARL OF KIMBERLEY said he was very reluctant indeed to find fault with his noble Friend who had just spoken, but after reading the papers issued on this subject he could not say that he was perfectly satisfied. He could not understand why Mr. Bull was not given an opportunity of explaining. The ordinary course in a public office would have been, when the Lord Great Chamberlain thought it necessary to suspend him, to ask him at the same time for an explanation of his conduct. He could not remember, in his experience, any case where so extremely severe a punishment had been inflicted upon a civil servant who had not had a full opportunity of stating his reasons for believing that he had not committed an offence. The whole point of the question was, whether it was right that any person holding such a position as Mr. Bull filled should be dismissed from his office, and suffer all the serious consequences that that entailed, without having had an opportunity of giving an explanation. For his part, he did not think that such a course could be justified in any case whatever.

Lord Great Chamberlain.

THE LORD CHANCELLOR (Lord HALSBURY)—who explained that, of course, he was not speaking on behalf of the Government, for the Government were not concerned in this matter—said that he would not enter into the merits of the case, or attempt to deal exhaustively with it. He really felt great difficulty in apportioning the different amount of blame that might be apportioned to one or other of the parties to this transaction, but he could not help thinking that they would establish a very serious precedent, if, when an officer like the Lord Great Chamberlain had been appointed to select for employment a particular official, their Lordships should re-hear a case of dismissal if the Lord Great Chamberlain should think it right, in the exercise of his functions, to dismiss that officer. It must be remembered that in Mr. Bull's case there was a distinct order given to him in writing, and a distinct refusal on his part to obey. Those facts being ascertained, were their Lordships going to inquire into the question whether the Lord Great Chamberlain was justified or not in dismissing an officer who certainly did refuse to obey an order given by the Lord Great Chamberlain's properly accredited agent? As he had said, that would be a very serious precedent to establish. The only thing that Mr. Bull could hope to gain by the appointment of this Committee was a rehabilitation of his character, if it was impugned. As a matter of fact, there was no imputation upon his character for honesty and integrity. His offence was the refusal to obey an order, and he did not think that that was a matter which ought to interfere with Mr. Bull's future prospects. He deprecated over-ruling the Lord Great Chamberlain's decision in a matter specially committed to his determination. If there were any additional facts to bring to light there might be some ground for appointing a Committee, but no additional facts had been adduced.

LORD HERSCHELL thought his noble and learned Friend on the Woolsack had lost sight of the most important feature of the case, which was that Mr. Bull had been dismissed from his office without having been given that which he asked for, viz., an opportunity of explaining the circumstances and of removing, as he thought he could have done, the impression produced by the act which he had committed. Every civil servant had a right when he was dismissed—whatever might be the opinion of the head of the Department who dismissed him—to be heard and to give any explanation that he had to give. That seemed to him to be the ground upon which, without danger, this Committee might be granted. He feared that if it were not granted, and the matter were allowed to be treated as one which had been satisfactorily dealt with, it would go forth that, in the opinion of that House, the Lord Great Chamberlain was at liberty to dismiss any of the officials that held office at pleasure in his Department without giving them the opportunity which lawyers, and he believed people generally, were accustomed to regard as a primary right, viz., the opportunity of explaining away the matters charged against them. That course had not been followed in Mr. Bull's case. He was told he was suspended, and five or six days afterwards he was dismissed. He then asked to be heard, and his request was refused. That was not the proper course to follow. If a Committee were appointed, and the case were heard, it might turn out that the dismissal was a proper one—he expressed no opinion upon the merits of the matter; but then Mr. Bull would have had an opportunity of making an explanation. It should be borne in mind that this was rather an exceptional case. All civil servants of the Crown held office at pleasure; they might be dismissed at a moment's notice; they had no redress in a court of law; their salary and pension went, and no court of law would listen to their complaints. It had been said that their remedy was an appeal to Parliament, and that was true in most cases. The appeal was made ordinarily upon the Vote for the salary of the head of the Department from which a man was dismissed. The salaries of the head of most Departments appeared on the Estimates, and when the particular Votes were reached any grievances which any of their subordinates had could be ventilated in the House of Commons. That was the case with all officials appointed by the Gentleman Usher of the Black Rod, whose salary was on the Votes. But the case was different when they came to the Lord Great Chamberlain, the emoluments of whose office did not appear on the Votes. In that case aggrieved persons could not ventilate their complaints in the House of Commons. Their Lordships' House, having vested the right of these appointments in the Lord Great Chamberlain, it became the duty of the House itself to entertain exceptional grievances emanating from that Department. This case was so exceptional that he did not think a precedent of any danger would be created by granting this Committee, which would at all events have the advantage of enabling one who considered that he had been aggrieved to put his grievance in the way of explanation before a Committee. This would also have the effect of assuring all those who might occupy a similar position that they had a certain protection, and could not be dismissed at pleasure without the opportunity of being heard. ["Hear, hear!"]

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Resolved in the negative.

INDIA (BUBONIC FEVER INOCULATION.)

LORD REAY asked the Under Secretary of State for India whether any recent information had been obtained from the Bombay Government with reference to protective inoculation against the bubonic fever; and whether any retired members of the Indian Civil Service were to be temporarily employed in India. He stated that he had followed with some anxiety the development of sickness and famine in the Bombay Presidency, with the Government of which he had himself been so recently connected. He had seen with great satisfaction the admirable way in which Lord Sandhurst, by personal exertion and by other means, had dealt with the two-fold calamity which had befallen the Presidency. On the 18th of January Professor Haffkine, who had been employed on bacteriological research in Bombay, announced that he had found a prophylactic lymph or vaccine, with which he made, first of all, an experiment on himself, and which he believed had since been made on others. Since then Lord Lister, on January the 20th, at Belfast, called attention to the importance of the anti-toxic serum which had been discovered by Dr. Yersin in the Pasteur Institute. After Lord Lister made his speech on January the 20th, M. Roux, a man of European reputation in this matter and one of the most eminent disciples of Pasteur, and well known through his research with reference to diphtheric serum, gave some most interesting details with reference to the discovery of Dr. Yersin on the 26th of January in the Academy of Medicine in Paris. In 1894 Dr. Yersin was sent by the French Minister for the Colonies to Hongkong, where this disease prevailed at the time, and he there discovered the microbe. It was discovered at the same time by M. Kitasato. Further experiments were thereupon made at the Pasteur Institute, which led to the discovery of the serum, which, like the diphtheric serum, was taken from the horse. This serum was not only a prophylactic, but it also had curative effects. From experiments made on animals, it was clear that its protective virtue was even greater than its curative value. The next step taken by the French Government was to establish a Pasteur Institute at Nhatrang, in Annam. When the disease broke out again at Hongkong, in January 1896, the Institute was not sufficiently advanced to lend any serum; but on June the 10th Dr. Yersin proceeded to Hong-kong with a few bottles, to which were added 80 bottles sent from the Paris Institute. The disease was then dying out at Hongkong. Dr. Yersin then left for Canton, and there the first experiment was made with the serum. A startling result was obtained. A young Chinese, aged 18, who was inoculated on the 26th at five o'clock in the afternoon, at six o'clock, and at nine o'clock, had recoverd the next morning at six o'clock. Dr. Yersin went on to Amoy on July the 1st, but he left serum behind him, and two other cases were attended with complete recovery. At Amoy Dr. Yersin treated 23 patients. In the course of ten days only two died out of the 23 patients, and those two fatal cases were partly due to the fact that the patients were not treated in the first stages of the disease, but after having been ill five days; however two others who had also been ill for five days recovered. Taking the three patients at Canton and the 25 at Amoy, with two deaths on the 28 cases treated, a mortality was obtained of 7·6 per cent., instead of 80 per cent., which was the normal death-rate of the disease fixed by M. Roux. Those facts were certainly worthy of very serious consideration, and he hoped that no effort would be spared to obtain the serum, either from the Pasteur Institute or from Nha-trang. He saw that the matter had not escaped the notice of the Bombay Government, because in a letter from the municipal commissioner to the standing committee of the municipality a hope was expressed that he would be in possession of the serum this month—or rather that Dr. Yersin would be able to have some ready this month. Perhaps the noble Earl could give some information. He could not leave this subject without paying a tribute of sincere respect to the memory of the Principal of the Grant Medical College in Bombay, the late Dr. Manser, who fell a victim to the disease, and of whose eminent services he was personally cognizant. With regard to the second Question, any one who knew the zeal and the devotion to duty of the Indian Civil Service would agree that there was very considerable risk that the members of this service might overwork themselves, and at all events in certain districts where there was great pressure by reason of the relief works it might be very desirable to give some additional strength to the establishments. Among retired Indian officials there were those who had declared themselves ready to go and assist their brethren in India, and he trusted that no hesitation would be felt by the Government of India to mobilize those reserve forces, which, under the exceptional circumstances now prevailing, might be used effectually and without in any way dislocating existing arrangements.

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR INDIA (The EARL of ONSLOW) in reply, said the experiments referred to had not escaped the attention of the Government in Bombay, and M. Yersin had been commissioned by that Government to procure serum for use in Bombay, and he was expected to return to the city about the end of the month or the beginning of next provided with a sufficient quantity of it. The prophylactic vaccine which Professor Haffkine had discovered was likely to prove extremely valuable also. He learnt that on January 2nd Professor Haffkine wrote that 21 animals had been immunised and that he was looking forward to making trial of the new process. He also asked that 40 horses should be purchased to provide a further supply of serum—a request which the municipal commissioner at once took steps to carry out. With reference to the experiments conducted up to the present time the India Office were informed that 512 inoculations in all had taken place, and that no attacks were reported except two in the gaol; and, speaking generally, the Government of Bombay considered that inoculation appeared to afford considerable protection, but sufficient time had not yet elapsed to estimate the degree of protection or how long it would continue. With regard to the second Question no retired Indian Civil servants had as yet been sent out to India, but the India Office would be prepared to receive the names of any who were willing to volunteer for this service. It did not rest with the India Office to determine whether or not they should be sent out, but their names should be telegraphed to the Viceroy, and if in the exercise of his discretion he thought their services could be made available no doubt he would act accordingly. The energy and activity which had been exhibited by Lord Sandhurst and the Government of Bombay in combating both the plague and the famine were warmly appreciated by Her Majesty's Government. [*Cheers.*] It might interest the House to hear the contents of a telegram which had just been put into his hands and which gave the latest information concerning the progress of the plague:—

> "Deaths from all causes in Bombay city for week ended February 12th, 1,835. Reported plague deaths, 813. Plague has been to some extent checked where first prevalent. Mandvi now almost free from disease. In Bombay city general tendency to extend north continues. House-to-house visitation active; 218 dwellings condemned as uninhabitable; 31 recommended for alterations; tiles removed from 3,141; earth floors dug up in 581 and 2,277 limewashed; 171 vacated; and 35 have been destroyed by fire during past week. Under Epidemic Diseases Act Government have empowered Municipal Commissioner of his own authority and without reference to the magistrate (1) to prohibit use of dwellings unfit for habitation; (2) to require abatement of overcrowding; (3) to require vacation of buildings and premises for cleansing and disinfecting; (4) to forcibly enter deserted

buildings and cleanse and disinfect them; (5) to remove earth of floors; (6) to cut off water connections; (7) to demolish whole or part of buildings unfit for habitation; (8) to destroy clothing, &c. Arrangements have been made for emptying all outgoing trains at stations outside Bombay and for strict medical inspection of all passengers. One indigenous case occurred in Poona cantonment, where conservancy and cleansing operations had been greatly improved and every precaution taken. In Poona city increase fron 43 to 47 cases during week, but concentrated in certain quarters, and hitherto no tendency to spread observed; general cleansing disinfecting operations active; infected houses vacated, disinfected, and opened to sun and air; segregation camp for inmates ready, but not willingly resorted to; they prefer leaving Poona. Difficulty in inducing declaration of cases and removal to hospital. In Coorla cases diminished; in Bandora, Bhiwandi, and also in rest of Thana district cases increased; in Surat district local cases reported from two villages. Possibilities of extension of plague to new localities very carefully watched and all local officers on alert. Karachi.—Correct number plague deaths for week ended February 12th, 269; February 5th, 297; January 29th, 181; January 22nd, 206. Mortality chiefly concentrated in poorest Mahomedan quarter, and there some difficulty found in detecting cases. Mahomedan officials at work among them. 600 Mahomedans gone into health camp; infected huts burnt or pulled down. Hindu health camp doing well; evacuation of infected houses enforced and reoccupation not allowed. No indigenous cases in Sind outside Karachi. Extensive powers given to all district officers under Epidemic Diseases Act."

COMMITTEE OF SELECTION FOR THE STANDING COMMITTEE.

The meeting of the Committee (which stands appointed for To-morrow) put off to Tuesday, the 23rd instant, at half past Three o'clock.

House adjourned at Twenty minutes before Six o'clock, till To-morrow, Three o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

Monday, 15th February 1897.

SURVEYORS (COUNTY DUBLIN) BILL.

Second Reading deferred from Thursday till Wednesday, 10th March.

Earl of Onslow.

QUESTIONS.

BRITISH TRADE AND FOREIGN COMPETITION.

SIR HOWARD VINCENT (Sheffield, Central): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs if, having regard to the fact that the Turkish Empire took an annual average of £8,000,000 worth of British goods in the quinquennial period 1890–94, according to Papers presented to Parliament, and more than Russia, Belgium, Italy, China, or Japan, and to the admission of British goods on better terms and lighter duties than in any other foreign country, Her Majesty's Government will press forward the conclusion of a new Treaty of Commerce to replace the lapsed Treaty of 1861?

*THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS (Mr. G. CURZON, Lancashire, Southport): Her Majesty's Government are not of opinion that any reason exists to press forward on their part negotiations for a new Treaty of Commerce with Turkey. Previous negotiations on the subject have shown clearly that such a Treaty could only be concluded on the basis of some increase in the customs duties at present levied on British goods in the Ottoman Dominions. Unless Her Majesty's Government can obtain full satisfaction on other points of commercial importance which would be included in the Treaty, it does not appear that any benefit would result to British Commerce from its conclusion.

WINCHESTER ASSIZES (TRIAL FOR BIGAMY).

MR. E. H. PICKERSGILL (Bethnal Green, S.W.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether his attention has been drawn to the trial of a woman for bigamy at Winchester Assizes on the 6th instant, on the prosecution of a police sergeant at Fareham, with the sanction (as he said) of the Chief Constable of Hants, when the Judge, the prisoner having been found guilty by his direction, ordered her to be at once discharged and disallowed the costs of the police evidence and the costs of the solicitor for the prosecution, on the ground that it was a prosecution which ought not to have been instituted; and whether he would avail himself of the next issue of a Home Office circular to caution the police that they ought to make proper inquiry, and exercise care and discretion, before instituting prosecutions for bigamy?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE HOME DEPARTMENT (Sir MATTHEW WHITE RIDLEY, Lancashire, Blackpool): I have seen a report of this trial in the newspapers, but the circumstances do not appear to me to form a sufficient ground for making a special communication, such as the hon. Member suggests, to police forces generally. I have no reason to suppose that they do not ordinarily exercise the necessary care and discretion in instituting proceedings for bigamy.

WEIGHING CATTLE (SCOTLAND).

SIR HENRY CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN (Stirling Burghs): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Agriculture whether he is aware that in certain auction marts where the cattle are placed separately on the weighing machine, and their weight indicated on the automatic dial, and they are afterwards driven into the ring and sold at so much per head, the dial has, owing to the carelessness of the auctioneer in neglecting to balance the machine, been found to be in error to the extent of as much as ½ cwt.; that the public are misled thereby as to the true weight of the animals offered for sale; and that these auctioneers, on being challenged for such inaccuracy, excuse themselves on the plea that they are not selling by weight; and whether it is a breach of the Weighing of Cattle Acts for auctioneers to exhibit any weight but the true one?

*THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF AGRICULTURE (Mr. WALTER LONG, Liverpool, West Derby): I am informed that complaint has recently been made with regard to the matters to which the right hon. Gentleman refers, and I would suggest that they should be brought to the notice of the local authority for the purposes of the Weights and Measures Acts. I do not think that the neglect of an auctioneer to keep a weighing machine properly balanced could properly be held to constitute an offence under the Markets and Fairs (Weighing of Cattle) Acts.

SAMPLE POST (RUBBER).

MR. A. F. WARR (Liverpool, East Toxteth): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury, as representing the Postmaster General, whether he will take steps with a view to the removal of the present restrictions upon the dispatch of rubber samples by sample post?

THE SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY (Mr. R. W. HANBURY, Preston): The Postmaster General regrets that he cannot see his way to remove the present restrictions upon the transmission of rubber samples by sample post. The objections to such transmission were fully stated in the reply to the Question put by the hon. Member for Canterbury on the 11th instant.

BEAM AND OTTER TRAWLING.

MR. J. CALDWELL (Lanark, Mid): On behalf of the hon. Member for Ross and Cromarty (Mr. WEIR) I beg to ask the Lord Advocate whether, having regard to the fact that the Atlantic seaboard of the Island of Lewis is not included in the North Sea Fisheries Convention, the Fishery Board for Scotland will avail themselves of the powers conferred upon them by the Sea Fisheries Regulation (Scotland) Act 1895, and forbid by bylaws the methods of fishing known as beam trawling and otter trawling in any area under the jurisdiction of Her Majesty within 13 miles of the Atlantic seaboard of the Island of Lewis?

*THE LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. GRAHAM MURRAY, Buteshire): I must refer the hon. Member to the reply I gave him on the 2nd instant, which is equally a reply to his present question?

POST OFFICE SAVINGS BANK ACCOUNTS.

MR. CALDWELL: On behalf of the hon. Member for Ross and Cromarty (Mr. WEIR), I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury, as representing the Postmaster General, if he will state the number of accounts in the Post Office Savings Bank on the 31st December, 1895, showing a balance of not more than £25, and the total sum represented by such accounts; the number of accounts exceeding £25 and not more than £50, and the total sum represented by such accounts; the total sum represented by the 346,463 accounts exceeding £50 and not more than £100 and the total sum represented by the 248,943 accounts exceeding £100?

MR. HANBURY: I am unable to give the number of accounts of £25 and under, or the amount standing to their credit, nor could the information be compiled without much labour and inconvenience. On December 31, 1895, the total amount on accounts not exceeding £50 was £35,306,192; on accounts between £50 and £100 was £23,967,268; and on accounts over £100 was £38,595,515.

BRIDGETOWN ABBEY (COUNTY CORK).

MR. WILLIAM ABRAHAM (Cork County, N.E.): I beg to ask the First Commissioner of Works whether he will direct that the Abbey of Bridgetown, at Castletownroche, in the county of Cork, be added to the list of those Irish ruins that come under his supervision for the prevention of total decay, this splendid specimen of fourteenth century ecclesiastical architecture being sadly in need of preservation?

MR. HANBURY: The matter will be brought before the Committee consisting of representatives of the Royal Irish Academy and Royal Society of Antiquaries, Ireland, who are good enough to assist the Board of Works with their advice on these questions.

STORNOWAY MAIL.

MR. CALDWELL: On behalf of the hon. Member for Ross and Cromarty (Mr. WEIR), I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury, as representing the Postmaster General, if he will state at what additional cost the Stornoway mail, which is at present delayed 41 minutes at Dingwall, and then sent on to Strome Ferry by a slow train, could be accelerated?

MR. HANBURY: The only way in which the Stornoway mail can be accelerated is by employing a special train from Dingwall to Strome Ferry. The cost of a special train cannot be estimated, at the lowest computation, at less than £800 or £900 a year, and such an outlay would be far greater than the circumstances would warrant.

ICELANDIC FISHERIES.

MR. CALDWELL: On behalf of the hon. Member for Ross and Cromarty (Mr. WEIR), I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs if he will state the nature of the difficulties which have arisen such as to necessitate a British cruiser being sent to Icelandic waters?

MR. CURZON: The presence of a cruiser in Icelandic waters is desirable during the fishing season, in order that proper advice and supervision may be available for British fishing vessels whose operations are carried on in the vicinity of the territorial waters of Iceland, and for the purpose of supplying Her Majesty's Government with trustworthy reports of any disputes which may arise in regard to fishery questions. The presence of a similar cruiser last year was found to be a great assistance to all parties.

PARISH COUNCIL ACCOUNTS (SCOTLAND).

SIR JOHN KINLOCH (Perthshire, E.): I beg to ask the Lord Advocate if he would grant a Return relating to cost of the audit of Parish Council Accounts in Scotland for the years 1895 and 1896?

*THE LORD ADVOCATE: It is intended to issue a Return giving the information desired, but it would be premature to do so at this time of the year.

FRAUDULENT ENLISTMENT (GEORGE SMITH).

MR. T. LOUGH (Islington, W.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether his attention has been drawn to a case at the Marlborough Street Police Court, where one George Smith was charged with fraudulent enlistment into the Militia, and sentenced to three months' imprisonment with hard labour; and, whether he can see his way to recommend that the full penalty shall not be inflicted?

SIR MATTHEW WHITE RIDLEY: I have inquired into the circumstances of this case. The offence of making a false answer, with which the prisoner was charged, was aggravated by his also concealing the fact that he had previously been discharged from another regiment for misconduct. In these circumstances the magistrate thought it a case for imposing the full penalty. The offence, he informs me, is of daily occurrence, and gives much trouble; and I do not see my way to recommending any interference.

IRISH MAIL SERVICE.

MR. T. J. CONDON (Tipperary, E.): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury, as representing the Postmaster General, whether any arrangements have been made, or negotiations entered into, with the Waterford and Limerick Railway Company, in reference to the proposed acceleration of the mail service to and from the south of Ireland; and, if not, whether it is the intention of the Government to make such arrangements?

MR. HANBURY: The arrangements for the mail service in Ireland consequent upon the acceleration between London and Dublin are under consideration, but the chief factor in the problem, viz., the hour of arrival of the mail in Dublin, was left undetermined till so late a date that the Department has, up to this time, been unable to arrive at any decision in the matter. It is however the intention of the Postmaster General to call upon the chief Irish Railway Companies to adapt their mail trains to the altered Service, as soon as he has examined all the complicated matters involved in the alteration of the mail service over so large an extent of country.

MR. T. P. O'CONNOR (Liverpool, Scotland): On behalf of the hon. Member for Galway (Mr. J. PINKERTON): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury, as representing the Postmaster General, if his attention has been directed to a resolution passed by the Galway Town Commissioners, asking the Postmaster General to take steps for dispatching the outward Irish night mails immediately on their arrival in Dublin, which would give a delivery in London and all English business centres on the next day at an hour which would enable letters sent from the remotest parts of Ireland to be answered on the day of their delivery, thus saving 14 hours in receiving replies to Irish letters; and, whether he is predared to make such alterations as may remove the difficulties complained of, and prevent unnecessary delay in the transmission of letters?

MR. HANBURY: The Postmaster General has received a copy of the resolution referred to by the hon. Member, but, as the hon. Member is probably aware, very strong pressure has been brought to bear upon the Postmaster General by Irish representatives to fix not an earlier, but a later, hour for the departure from Dublin of the day mail to England (which of course, carries the night mails from the Irish provinces), and it is to meet this desire that the Department, with some reluctance, fixed 7.10 a.m. instead of 6.40 a.m. as the hour of departure of the English day mail from Dublin.

RAILWAY RATES.

MR. LLOYD MORGAN (Carmarthen, W.): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade whether his attention has been called to a paper read on the 10th instant by Mr. Balfour Browne, Q.C., on the Railway and Canal Traffic Acts, in which it is stated that English railway companies favour Foreign producers of agricultural and other produce as against the Home farmer; that in competing with the Foreign producer, the railway rates in this country are against the British farmer; and that Foreign rates are in favour of his competitors; and, whether the Government will cause an inquiry to be made into the subject of railway rates, with a view to legislation in the direction of so revising the rates as to put the Home farmer and producer on terms of equality with his Foreign rival?

THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF TRADE (Mr. C. T. RITCHIE, Croydon): No, Sir, I have not read the paper referred to, but I have no doubt the hon. Member's account of what was stated therein is correct. Having regard to Section 27 of the Railway and Canal Traffic Act 1888, which provides:—

> "That no Railway Company shall make, nor shall the Court, or the Commissioners, sanction any difference in the tolls, rates, or charges made for, or any difference in the treatment of, home and foreign merchandise, in respect of the same or similar services,"

I am not prepared to direct any additional inquiry into the subject of Railway Rates.

ST. JAMES' SCHOOL (BRADFORD, YORKS.).

MR. ALFRED HUTTON (York, W.R., Morley): I beg to ask the Vice President of the Committee of Council on Education whether he is aware the St. James' School, Bolton, Bradford, has been closed by the managers; what sum they received as building grants; whether he is aware that, although the trust deeds require the premises to be used as a day school, the managers declined to lease the school to the Bradford School Board at a suitable rent; and whether the terms of Section 23 of the Act of 1870 had been complied with; and, if not, whether the Education Department can and will enforce the provisions of that Section?

THE VICE PRESIDENT OF THE COUNCIL (Sir JOHN GORST, Cambridge University): This school, which received building grants amounting to £399 6s., and was held under the usual trusts for establishing a school for the poorer classes, was closed in 1893. The Committee of Council have no information as to the alleged refusal of the managers to lease the school to the Bradford School Board, but Section 23 of the Act of 1870 does not require any managers to transfer their school to a Board unless they wish it.

MR. ERNEST FLOWER (Bradford, W.) asked if the right hon. Gentleman was aware that on Friday last the Bradford School Board concluded satisfactory negotiations with the managers of this school.

SIR J. GORST: No, Sir; I am not aware of that.

NORTH GERMAN LLOYD STEAMERS.

MR. J. M. MACLEAN (Cardiff): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for India whether the Government of India has decided to place the steamers of the North German Lloyd line on the same footing as those of British companies in respect to the exemption from penalties of Officers overstaying their leave through delay in the arrival of the vessel in which they return to India; and whether any North German Lloyd steamers now run on the mail lines to India?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR INDIA (Lord GEORGE HAMILTON, Middlesex, Ealing): The answer to the first part of the hon. Member's question is in the affirmative. So far as I am aware, the North German Lloyd steamers run to Aden and Colombo, but not to any port in India.

*MR. MACLEAN: Is not this concession an invitation to the North German Lloyds to start competition against British steamers running to British ports?

LORD GEORGE HAMILTON: I think the concession could hardly be refused.

OUTRAGE AT BALLIANA (REPORTED).

MR. W. FIELD (Dublin, St. Patrick): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether he has been informed that a lawless chief fled with seven followers from Cairo to Balliana, about 380 miles up the Nile, and took refuge in a Copt's barn; that the Egyptian police and soldiers, under British orders and officers, besieged the fugitives, who refused to surrender alive, being provided with arms and ammunition; that the soldiers and police obtained petroleum and saturated the roof, and burned to the ground the barn, the chief, and his associates; and whether, if this was the fact, he will prevent such occurrences in future?

MR. CURZON: A statement to the effect mentioned in the question has appeared in a French newspaper. Although the report is manifestly in the highest degree improbable, the extract has been sent to Lord Cromer for inquiry and report.

SUN YAT SEN'S DETENTION.

SIR EDWARD GOURLEY (Sunderland): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (1) if he will be good enough to inform the House when he first heard of the alleged kidnapping of Sun Yat Sen, and what measures he adopted for the purpose of obtaining his release; (2) whether his capture and detention at the Chinese Embassy was contrary to International Law; if so, what representations has he caused to be made to the Chinese Government: and (3) whether Sir Halliday Macartney, as a British subject, is to be held responsible for the capture and detention?

MR. CURZON: In answer to the first paragraph, the first intimation of the subject was received at the Foreign Office on Sunday, the 18th of October. Steps were immediately taken to ascertain the facts of the case, and as soon as trustworthy evidence was received a note was addressed by Lord Salisbury to the Chinese Minister pointing out that

Sun Yat Sen's detention was an abuse of the diplomatic privilege enjoyed by the Chinese Legation, and requesting his immediate release. This request was complied with on the 23rd October. In answer to the second paragraph, Sun's detention was certainly not warranted by International Law, and was regarded as a serious abuse of the privileges and immunities which are granted to foreign representatives, and the Chinese Government were so informed through Her Majesty's Minister at Peking and requested to give strict instructions to their Minister in London to abstain carefully for the future from any acts of the kind. In reply to the third paragraph of the Question, the act was that of the Chinese Minister, and he must be responsible for it.

AUSTRALIAN MAIL CONTRACT.

Mr. J. F. HOGAN (Tipperary, Mid): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury, as representing the Postmaster General, if he will explain in what way it is intended to provide that under the new contract for the conveyance of the mails to and from Australia a saving of four days will be effected; will there be an alteration in the existing route, or does the contract provide for a much higher rate of speed than heretofore; is there any provision in the new contract for accelerating the overland passage of the Australian mails from Naples or Brindisi to London, and averting the delays on this section that have occurred in the past; and will the sea carriage of the Australian mails be in the hands of one Company under the new contract?

Mr. HANBURY: The saving of time in the conveyance of the mails to and from Australia under the new contract will be effected by acceleration at sea. There will be no alteration in the existing route, except that the port of call in Western Australia may be changed to suit the wishes of the Colonies. The new contract will necessitate a considerable increase of speed on the part of the mail packets. There will be no provision in the new contracts as to the conveyance of the mails overland, that being a matter with which the steamship companies are not concerned. The sea carriage will be in the hands of the Peninsular and Oriental and Orient Companies, as at present.

ROYAL ENGINEERS (DISCHARGE).

Mr. HOGAN: I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for War whether he can state the circumstances under which Sapper Cormack, 23 Company, Royal Engineers, last stationed at Aldershot, was discharged on 26th November; and, was he convicted of any offence or misconduct that would justify discharge?

*The FINANCIAL SECRETARY to the WAR OFFICE (Mr. Powell-Williams, Birmingham, S.): This man was discharged by the General Officer Commanding at Aldershot for misconduct. His records fully bear out the charge.

SAMOA.

Mr. HOGAN: I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs what are the latest reports in his possession with reference to the condition of the exiled Samoan chief Mataafa; is Mataafa still detained under German guards in the island of Jaluit; and, is there any immediate prospect of his being permitted to return to Samoa? The hon. Member further asked whether the Under Secretary had received any official information corroborating the telegraphed statement that King Malietoa had given permission to Mataafa and the other exiled chiefs to return to Samoa, and that opposition to their return had been raised by the British, German, and United States Consuls; and, if so, whether he can state the grounds on which such opposition is based?

Mr. CURZON: No report has been received with reference to Mataafa since the hon. Member put his Question in the House on February 20th, 1896; and we have not heard either of permission having been given to Mataafa to return to Samoa, or of opposition having been raised by the foreign Consuls. Mataafa is still on Jaluit, and there is no immediate prospect of his being permitted to return.

PARLIAMENTARY PUBLICATIONS (MEMBERS' POSTAGE).

Mr. CHARLES BILL (Staffordshire, Leek): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury, as representing the Postmaster General, whether, for the future, Members of this House may be allowed the privilege of sending Blue Books and other official publications from the Vote Office by post free of charge to libraries and other public institutions?

MR. HANBURY: At present the only Parliamentary papers entitled to the privilege of transmission free of postage are Bills and Votes which are posted in the proper official bag at the Vote Office; and the Postmaster General regrets that he does not feel justified in recommending that the privilege should be accorded to other classes of Parliamentary papers such as those referred to by the hon. Member. The hon. Member is not perhaps aware that Official Publications are already supplied to Free Libraries applying for them from Her Majesty's Stationery Office.

HOSPITAL ACCOMMODATION (SIERRA LEONE).

MR. BILL: I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for War whether the additional hospital accommodation proposed in the Military Works Bill to be provided at Sierra Leone is in connection with the existing hospital, or whether another hospital is to be built elsewhere?

*MR. POWELL-WILLIAMS: The question of where the additional hospital accommodation for Sierra Leone shall be located is still under consideration. An increase to the garrison of Sierra Leone is provided in the Estimates and additional hospital accommodation will be required for the force thus added. It has not yet been decided where, at Sierra Leone, the whole of the necessary accommodation which will now be required, can most advantageously be provided.

EDUCATION VOTES.

MR. LOUGH: I beg to ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer whether the total increase in the Education Vote between 1889–90 and 1895–96 was about 80 per cent., and whether the increase in the amounts allotted to England and Scotland respectively were over 90 per cent., while the increase in the sum allotted to Ireland was only about 25 per cent.; and, under these circumstances, how he estimates that Ireland has latterly got more than her due proportion of public money for purposes of education?

Mr. Charles Bill.

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Sir MICHAEL HICKS BEACH, Bristol, W.): My statement, to which I think the hon. Member refers, was that "Ireland already received a larger proportion of the total cost of national education from the Exchequer than either England or Scotland," and the statement is undoubtedly correct. Taking the figures given in the last yearly reports of the three Education Departments for the year 1895 it will be seen that in England and Wales and in Scotland more than one-third of the "total school income" is supplied from sources other than moneys voted by Parliament, whereas in Ireland only between one-seventh and one-eighth is so supplied.

MR. LOUGH: Has it not always been the case that a much larger grant has been provided with regard to Ireland than the other two countries?

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER: Yes, Sir; I believe that is the case. [*Laughter.*]

LAND TAX COMMISSIONERS.

*SIR CHARLES DILKE (Gloucester, Forest of Dean): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury whether it is intended to propose legislation with regard to the appointment of Land Tax Commissioners (the appointing body of the Income Tax Commissioners), or whether they are to be allowed to die out, except the county magistrates who act ex-officio?

MR. HANBURY: I hope during the Session to reintroduce the Bill of last year, which was the Bill usually introduced in each new Parliament, but which was opposed by the hon. Member for the Eye Division. It is of course only four years since a large number of Land Tax Commissioners were appointed.

MR. F. S. STEVENSON (Suffolk, Eye) asked whether the Bill would include a provision for the total abolition of the property qualification for Land Tax collectors?

MR. HANBURY replied in the negative.

TRUCK ACT (RAILWAY COMPANIES)

MR. R. W. PERKS (Lincolnshire, Louth): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he is aware that some of the principal railway companies have declined to adopt the Truck Act of last Session; and have decided to abolish the system of fines altogether; and whether he will consider the advisability of making a general Order exempting railway servants from the provisions of this Act?

*SIR C. DILKE: I should like to ask the Home Secretary a question of which I have given him private notice, namely: Whether, before making any such exceptions he will wait for the representations of the workers affected, and whether the two companies mentioned—the South Eastern and North Western—have abolished fines which existed before the Truck Act passed or came into operation?

SIR MATTHEW WHITE RIDLEY: The hon. Member's question is based on a misunderstanding of the Act. There can be no question of a company adopting or declining to adopt an Act which is universally applicable, and compulsory on all employers except where special exemptions are granted. What I presume the hon. Member means to ask is whether I am aware that some railway companies have preferred to relinquish altogether the right to impose fines rather than carry out the stringent conditions which the Act imposes. This I understand is the case. As regards the general exemption of railway servants, I should of course consider any application that I might receive from them; but does the hon. Member understand that the effect of such an exemption would be not to abolish the fines, but to restore to the companies the power which they possessed before the Act was passed of imposing any fines, reasonable or unreasonable, which they might think fit? I should require very strong evidence indeed that the railway *employés* really desired this before granting exemption.

MR. PERKS asked whether, under these circumstances the Home Secretary would grant facilities for the Bills of which his hon. friend the senior Member for Leicester had given notice for the total abolition of all fines.

SIR MATTHEW WHITE RIDLEY: No. Sir; I am not prepared to do anything of the sort.

UGANDA RAILWAY COMMITTEE.

MR. PERKS: I beg to ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer when the first Report and Statement of accounts of the Uganda Railway Committee will be presented to Parliament, and up to what date such accounts will be brought?

*MR. CURZON: The first Report and the Statement of Accounts of the Uganda Railway Committee, which will cover the period extending to March 31 next, will be presented as soon as possible after that date; I hope by June.

MR. PERKS: Arising on that, may I ask the Under Secretary if he will kindly read the undertaking given by the Chancellor of the Exchequer on the 30th July last on this subject?

*MR. CURZON: Yes, Sir; I will read it. [*Laughter.*]

TELEGRAPH EXTENSIONS (SCOTLAND).

MR. J. G. WEIR (Ross and Cromarty): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury, as representing the Postmaster General, whether, having regard to the fact that a certain sum is allocated to the Secretary for Scotland each year for the purpose of telegraph extensions in the Highlands and Islands of Scotland, he can now state whether he has yet come to any decision as to the advisability of earmarking a portion of the grant so as to provide guarantees for telegraph extensions?

MR. HANBURY: The hon. Member will see, on referring to Class VII. of the Civil Service Estimates for 1897-98, which was circulated on Saturday, that it is not proposed to ask Parliament to continue the grant for telegraphs. The taxpayer has already contributed some £10,000 for this purpose in addition to the heavy future charges for maintenance, and, now that the most pressing cases have been disposed of, it is impossible to justify the continuance of this very exceptional boon, which is not shared by the poorer districts elsewhere in the United Kingdom. If the localities whose claims the hon. Member is supporting, cannot themselves guarantee new telegraph extensions in the ordinary way, I may remind the hon. Member that a special grant of £15,000 a year from local taxation moneys has recently been allocated to congested districts purposes in Scotland.

MR. J. McLEOD (Sutherland) asked whether the £15,000 was only the due proportion to the district under the Agricultural Rating Bill?

MR. HANBURY: That may be, but it has received £10,000 as well.

MR. McLEOD: Is that not money due from the Herring Brand fees?

MR. HANBURY: No; I think not.

RAILWAY CARRIAGES (CONSTRUCTION).

MR. JAMES O'CONNOR (Wicklow, W.): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade what was the result of the promise he made on the 21st July 1896 to place himself in communication with the Railway Association, with the object of effecting an alteration in the form of those railway carriages whose present structure affords facilities for the perpetration of murder and outrage?

MR. RITCHIE: At present my communications with the Railway Association have had no practical result. The hon. Member, however, will no doubt have observed that some of the Companies are trying the experiment of corridor trains, and that others are building saloon carriages in place of those of the old pattern.

REGIMENTAL TERRITORIAL TITLES.

MR. W. F. B. MASSEY-MAINWARING (Finsbury, Central): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for War if he is aware of the great unpopularity with both officers and men of the present regimental names; and, whether he will consider the restoration to the battalions of the line of their time-honoured numbers?

SIR HOWARD VINCENT: Before my hon. Friend answers, I should like to ask him if it is not a fact that when infantry regiments of the line had numerals, they almost invariably tried to discard them in favour of their national or territorial titles, and if such national and territorial titles are not of infinite advantage in promoting local interest in regiments and stimulating *esprit de corps?*

*MR. POWELL-WILLIAMS: There is no reason to think that the territorial titles of regiments are unpopular, though the old system of numbering regiments like all old traditions does not die easily. With the territorial system, which has now become firmly established, a return to the old system of numbering regiments is impossible. With regard to the supplemental question, I have only to say I believe there is some accuracy in the description which my hon. Friend gave of the difficulty that there was in getting soldiers absolutely to adopt the numerical system. There is a consensus of military opinion that any return to the old system is not only undesirable but absolutely impracticable.

CRETE.

MR. F. S. STEVENSON: I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether he is able to communicate any further information with regard to the situation at Heraclion?

*MR. CURZON: Our information on Saturday was to the effect that many native Christian families had left Heraclion without hindrance under the protection of the foreign ships of war, that pillaging in the town had ceased, and that British subjects were not molested. Yesterday we heard that the Greek Vice-Consul had embarked and requested the British Vice-Consul to take charge of his archives and to protect Greek subjects.

*SIR E. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT (Sheffield, Ecclesall): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether the Great Powers, in view of the fact that by their action the authority of the Sultan and the Turkish garrison in Crete have been reduced, will at once take effective steps to put an end to slaughter and outrage in that island, and especially to protect the helpless Mussulman population of the interior?

*MR. CURZON: The Great Powers, who are acting in complete harmony, are taking every step that lies in their power by the intervention of their Consuls, and by the presence and co-operation of the commanders and crews of their ships of war, to check the spread of disorder in Crete; but in the present state of the island it is almost impossible for them to communicate with the interior.

*SIR E. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT: I must ask my right hon. Friend whether we are to understand from his answer that no practical steps are being taken by the Great Powers to protect, in some effectual way, the Mussulman inhabitants of the interior. Are they still being exposed to massacre and outrage as they have been for the last fortnight?

*MR. CURZON: No, Sir; so far as our information goes that statement is not correct. ["Hear, hear!"]

MR. C. J. MONK (Gloucester): I beg to ask the Under Secretary for Foreign Affairs whether he will lay upon the Table or otherwise communicate to the House the note from the Greek Government presented to the Foreign Office on the 11th inst. by the Greek *Chargé d'Affaires*, in reference to the action of the Greek Government in respect to Turkey and Crete?

*MR. CURZON: The document in question contains allegations which will be much disputed, and cannot properly be laid on the Table except in conjunction with other Papers on the same subject.

MR. H. LABOUCHERE (Northampton): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether the Government had, alone or in conjunction with any other Power, announced an intention to interfere in any way with any possible action of the Greek fleet in Cretan waters? The hon. Member, in putting the Question, said perhaps the right hon. Gentleman would also say whether the statement in *The Times* of that day was correct, that three Powers had agreed to land troops in Crete?

*MR. CURZON: Her Majesty's naval officers have received instructions to take no isolated action. It would not be proper for Her Majesty's Government to publish at this stage the communications that they have had with other Powers without the consent of those Powers. No announcement of their intentions has been made by Her Majesty's Government. ["Hear, hear!"]

MR. JOHN DILLON (Mayo, E.): Can the right hon. Gentleman inform the House whether, if any attempt be made to land Greek troops, the British Fleet will interfere?

*MR. CURZON, No, Sir; that is just one of the questions which I have already stated I cannot answer.

MR. LABOUCHERE: Then I understand the right hon. Gentleman is not prepared to say that orders have not been sent to the English naval or other commanders—[*cries of* "Oh, oh!" *and* "Hear, hear!"]—not to interfere if Greek troops do land?

*MR. CURZON: No, Sir; I cannot consent to have any inference drawn one way or the other from my reply. I have made a statement. To that statement and that alone I adhere. [*Cheers.*]

MR. JAMES O'KELLY (Roscommon, N.): Will the right hon. Gentleman tell us whether instructions will be issued to the British Consuls not to permit any British vessels to carry Turkish troops?

MR. SPEAKER: Order, order! That does not arise out of the Question on the Paper.

SIR W. HARCOURT (Monmouthshire, W.): I wish to ask the First Lord of the Treasury (1) whether he is in a position to make any statement of the present position of affairs in Crete—[*cheers*]— and (2) whether he can lay on the Table Papers relating to the arrangements made by the Powers last summer for reforms in the administration of that island?

MR. T. P. O'CONNOR: May I ask the right hon. Gentleman at the same time to answer a Question which arises out of a telegram in one of the newspapers this morning, which states that the Greek cruiser *Miaulis* fired on a Turkish transport, and that afterwards the commander of one of the British men-of-war informed the captain of the *Miaulis* that in future he would use force, if necessary, to prevent any such action? Will the right hon. Gentleman say whether that statement is correct or not?

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR, Manchester, E.): I am not able to give the hon, Gentleman the information asked for. If he will put it down on the Notice Paper, the Under Secretary will reply to it to-morrow. With regard to the Question put to me by the Leader of the Opposition, I have to say that, in the opinion of the Government, it would not be at all expedient, in the public interest, that at the present moment any statement should be made in regard to the affairs of Crete beyond the statement already made by the Under Secretary, to the effect that Her Majesty's Government are working in most cordial co-operation with the representatives of the other Powers.

MR. DILLON: That is what we have heard for the last six months. [*Opposition cheers.*]

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY: And it has been true for the last six months. [*Cheers.*] With regard to the second Question put to me by the right hon. Gentleman, namely, as to the Papers, it has been the hope of Her Majesty's Government that they would have been able to lay on the Table Papers relating to Crete at a much earlier date, and the delay has been no fault of theirs. My right hon. Friend informs me that he hopes that within a week he will be able to lay a Blue-book on the subject of Crete on the Table. In that Blue-book will be contained the programme of reforms which was decided upon by the Great Powers last year.

SIR W. HARCOURT: How late will the Papers come down to?

*MR. CURZON: The Papers which will be presented, are the Papers of which I laid a dummy on the Table at the end of the Session of last year—[*Opposition laughter*]—and therefore the Papers will only come down to that date or about the end of August.

SIR W. HARCOURT: We have been informed that certain arrangements were made by the Great Powers for the reform of the administration of Crete so long ago as last August. As I understand, those arrangements have never been laid before the House in the form of Papers, so that we do not know specifically what those arrangements were. What I desire to say is that we should have now a statement of the arrangements so made with the Powers, and also a statement of the action taken since last August up to the present time.

*MR. CURZON: The Blue-book will contain a full statement of the arrangements agreed upon last August. But the right hon. Gentleman must be aware that the laying of Papers before the House involves considerable delay, owing to reference having to be made to all the various parties and Governments concerned, and therefore the Papers will not contain the narrative of facts up to the present moment.

MR. DILLON: Will the right hon. Gentleman give a return of the number of men killed and women outraged since these arrangements were made? [*Opposition cheers.*]

MR. GIBSON BOWLES (Lynn Regis): I beg to ask the Under Secretary a question—of which I was fortunate enough to be able to give him private notice—whether he is aware that the Papers which he laid on the Table of the House in dummy, on 10th August last, have not yet been distributed? Is he also aware that that is contrary to the Order of this House of March 20th 1871, which prescribes that Papers should always be so laid on the Table as to insure their speedy delivery amongst Members? Is he aware that in this instance the delivery has not taken place for six months, and will he undertake—

MR. SPEAKER: Order, order! The hon. Member is going beyond the limits of a Question. He is arguing a question of procedure.

MR. GIBSON BOWLES: May I ask, to conclude my Question, whether he will undertake that obedience shall be paid to the Order of the House?

No answer being returned from the Treasury Bench,

MR. GIBSON BOWLES rose, amidst loud Opposition cheers and cries of "Move the adjournment." He said,—May I ask for an answer to my Question? [*Renewed Opposition cheers.*] I have a right to have one. Mr. Speaker, I gave the right hon. Gentleman notice of this Question, and arranged for an answer. [*Opposition cheers.*]

*MR. CURZON: I am quite ready to answer the Question, but I understood from Mr. Speaker that it was not in order. I believe the hon. Gentleman's statement as to the Orders of the House is perfectly correct, and that there has in this case been an infringement. But it has been due to very exceptional circumstances, which I would like, in a few words, to explain. This Blue-book contains a narrative of the proceedings up to the end of August. We sent the whole of these Papers out to Crete to Sir Alfred Biliotti, our Consul there, in September, with the request that he would look through them and return them at the earliest date. Owing to the enormous preoccupations of his post during the last few months, he was unable to return them until the second week in January. Our next step was, in accordance with invariable practice, to secure the assent of various foreign Powers, to whom reference has been made. Their replies have come in one after the other, and the assent of the French Government only reached us last week. That concludes the requisites for the final publication of the book. It is in print, and I hope it will be laid before the House in the course of a week. [" Hear, hear ! "]

INDIAN LOAN.

MR. MONK: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for India whether a loan is about to be issued in London on the security of the Nizam's revenues; and whether the Secretary of State's approval has been obtained; and, if it has not, whether the issue will be in contravention of an existing statute?

LORD GEORGE HAMILTON: I have received no information from India as to the raising of such a loan, nor has my consent or that of the Government of India been asked, as required under the terms of the Statute 37 Geo. III. c. 142, s. 28. I am advised that any British subject directly or indirectly concerned in raising any money by way of loan for a native State in India, without the consent of the Secretary of State in Council or of the Governor-General or one of the Governors in Council previously had and obtained in writing, commits a misdemeanour, and the bonds and securities held or taken become null and void.

SCHOOL BOARD ELECTIONS (SCOTLAND).

MR. J. CALDWELL: I beg to ask the Lord Advocate whether his attention has been called to the provisions of Sections 6, 26, and 30 (*d*) of The Elections (Scotland) Corrupt and Illegal Practices Act, 1890, regarding scrutiny, striking off of certain voters, and as to whether a candidate was duly elected by a majority of lawful votes; and to Section 5, Schedule B of the General Order regulating the triennial election of school boards in Scotland issued by the Scotch Education Department in October last, wherein no provision is made for marking the number of the elector or otherwise identifying the elector on the counterfoil; and if he can explain how it will be possible, in the event of a scrutiny, to determine how the elector voted and the effect of the vote on the election?

*THE LORD ADVOCATE: In burghs, proceedings at the poll take place under the provisions of the Ballot Act, so that the question of the hon. Member does not apply. In parishes, proceedings take place under the General Order of the Department, and the question does apply. But the subject has been more than once under review, and it is still considered unadvisable to alter the terms of the Order.

EGYPTIAN GOVERNMENT (GRANT-IN-AID).

MR. JOHN DILLON: I beg to ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer when he will lay upon the Table the details of the expenditure of the grant in aid to the Egyptian Government; and whether the revenue and expenditure of the Egyptian Government, including grants in aid, will, as in the case of Cyprus, be audited by the Comptroller and Auditor General?

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER: The Foreign Office hope to lay on the Table in the course of the next few days a Blue-book containing the information asked for. The Comptroller and Auditor General will satisfy himself that the directions of Parliament with regard to the grant in aid have been carried out; but the expenditure of the Egyptian Government will not be audited by him. Egypt is not in the same position as Cyprus.

BOARD SCHOOLS (FINANCIAL AID.

MR. E. J. C. MORTON (Devonport): I beg to ask the Vice President of the Committee of Council on Education whether he can now state when the Bill to provide for further financial aid to Board Schools will be introduced; and whether he can promise on behalf of the Government that the Bill shall be read a

First time and printed before the Division on the Second Reading of the Voluntary Schools Bill is taken?

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY: I have to say, as I before indicated in reply to some observations of the hon. Member for Northampton, I cannot give any promise as to the exact date when this Bill will be brought in, nor could it be before the Second Reading of the Voluntary Schools Bill.

CLONBAIN "WHITEBOY" CASE.

MR. J. C. FLYNN (Cork): I beg to ask the Attorney General for Ireland (1) in reference to the Clonbain "Whiteboy" case tried at the last Winter Assizes in Cork, whether he will state why the Crown did not produce the constabulary at the trial; (2) whether District Inspector Cosgrave seized the notebooks of the constabulary bearing on the case; and is 12 o'clock (noon) the time specified in the diary kept in the barrack as the hour at which the complainant reported the outrage; and (3) in view of the fact that it was on a matter of time one of the prisoners, Daniel Buckley, was convicted, will further inquiry be made by the authorities into the case, or will a constabulary inquiry on oath be ordered into the connection with or knowledge of the case by the local police?

*THE ATTORNEY GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. J. ATKINSON, Londonderry, N.): Three members of the constabulary were in attendance in court as witnesses for the prosecution in this case, and two of them were examined. Two other members of the police, to whom I presume the question specially refers, were summoned as witnesses for the defence and were present at the trial, but were not examined on behalf of the prisoners. It was of course open to the accused to have examined, not only those witnesses summoned at their own instance, but also any witnesses in attendance on behalf of, though not examined by, the Crown. The defence, however, did not adopt this course. Following the practice established for the necessary protection of the public interest, I must respectfully decline to state reasons why any particular witness was not examined on behalf of the Crown. It is true that the District Inspector took up the notebooks of the two members of the constabulary, who were summoned for the defence, as he was entitled to do. I decline to state what were the contents of these books; they were not given in evidence, and any relevant facts noted in them could have been deposed to by the constables who made the notes, if within their knowledge, had they been examined. It is not intended to direct any further inquiry into the case, as suggested in the last paragraph of the Question.

PRIVATE LUNATIC ASYLUMS.

MR. FIELD: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether any regular inspection regarding the management of private lunatic asylums and their inmates is made and reported on by responsible Government officials; and, whether the system and working of private lunatic asylums will be inquired into and reported to the House?

SIR MATTHEW WHITE RIDLEY: All licensed houses are regularly visited by the Lunacy Commissioners, those in the metropolitan area six times a year, those outside that area twice. The latter are also visited six times a year by three justices and a medical practitioner appointed for that purpose by Quarter Sessions. I am not aware of any necessity for such an inquiry as the hon. Member suggests.

USURY LAWS.

MR. R. A. YERBURGH (Chester): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether, in view of the widespread prevalence of usury, as evinced by recent disclosures, and of the misery and suffering it entails upon the poorer industrial classes, and of the fact that under its present form usury has never been the subject of Parliamentary Inquiry, he will grant the Select Committee to inquire into the question, the Motion for which stands upon the Paper to-day?

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY: I cannot, on the part of the Government, assent to an inquiry into what are called the usury laws, for that would be taken to mean an inquiry into the propriety of limiting by Act of Parliament the amount of interest on loans, which I am sure is not my hon. Friend's intention or the object he has in view. But a more limited inquiry might with advantage be instituted, and if he will draw up a more limited reference than that indicated with regard to the fraudulent practices which are alleged to exist, I think much advantage might accrue from the appointment and labours of such a Committee. ["Hear, hear!"]

VOLUNTARY SCHOOLS (RATING).

Mr. C. HARRISON (Plymouth): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury, with regard to the fact that local rates levied upon Board Schools are paid out of funds made up of Imperial grant and Board School rates, and levied over the whole of the School Board area, and that by exempting Voluntary Schools in boroughs and counties respectively from local rates the burden of making up the deficiency will be thrown, not on the borough or county generally, but upon the particular parish in a borough or county in which the school may be situate, whether the Government will adjust the burden so that the same shall be borne by the whole of the borough or county in which the schools so excepted may be situate?

The FIRST LORD of the TREASURY: I hope the hon. Gentleman will defer any discussion of an argumentative character on the details of the Education Bill until we get to the Committee stage.

CRIMINAL LAW AMENDMENT (IRELAND) ACT, 1887.

Mr. JAMES O'CONNOR: I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether, in view of the continued tranquillity of Ireland, he will this Session introduce a Bill for the repeal of the Criminal Law Amendment (Ireland) Act, 1887?

The FIRST LORD of the TREASURY: I think there is no probability of the Government introducing a Bill of this kind.

SUPPLY (SCOTCH ESTIMATES).

Sir HENRY CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether he will put the Scotch Votes down for an early Friday, in consideration of the fact that last year they were brought on shortly before the completion of Supply, when adequate discussion was impossible, and that an undertaking was then given that a fuller opportunity would be afforded this year?

The FIRST LORD of the TREASURY: I will endeavour to have the Scotch Votes put down for an early Friday, in compliance with the wish of the right hon. Gentleman.

MILITARY MANŒUVRES BILL.

Mr. A. M. BROOKFIELD (Sussex, Rye): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether it is the intention of the Government to proceed with the Military Manœuvres Bill?

The FIRST LORD of the TREASURY: I think it improbable any time will be taken up this Session in connection with the Manœuvres Bill. The House will be asked to deal with a great many military matters in connection with another Bill, and the Manœuvres Bill will probably not be proceeded with for the present.

SUPPLY (ARMY ESTIMATES).

Dr. FARQUHARSON (Aberdeenshire, W.): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether it is not the fact that progress is usually reported after Vote 1 of the Army Estimates has been passed, and whether he is aware that, acting on this understanding, hon. Members interested in Vote 2 had left the House before it came on; and whether, under these circumstances, he will take the Report stage of Vote 2 at such an hour as to admit of moderate discussion?

The FIRST LORD of the TREASURY: I think the hon. Member is not correct in saying it is contrary to the practice of the House to take more than Vote 1 in Commiteee. It is not often the Government have to go beyond Vote 1 at a single sitting. We should not be acting in accordance with the principles we laid down when Fridays were devoted to Supply if we moved the Adjournment directly Vote 1 was obtained. What happened was—the Chairman put the succeeding Votes from the Chair on Friday, and directly the Under Secretary for

War signified that he thought it convenient that the Adjournment should be moved, I at once assented on the part of the Government.

*SIR C. DILKE asked what Supply would be taken on Friday, and whether the Leader of the House would move that the Speaker leave the Chair on Thursday or Friday.

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY: On Friday we shall take the Civil Service Estimates for the year and go into Committee upon them. The first Business on Thursday will be the First Reading of the Military Loans Bill. [*Opposition cries of* "Oh!"] That is my intention at present.

MOTION.

METROPOLITAN AND OTHER POLICE COURTS.

Bill for transferring the Expenses of Police Courts to the Metropolitan Police Fund, and for making provision with respect to the Courts of the Stipendiary Magistrate of Chatham and Sheerness, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Jesse Collings and Secretary Sir Matthew White Ridley; presented accordingly, and Read the First time; to be Read a Second Time upon Tuesday, 23rd February, and to be printed.—[Bill 134.]

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

VOLUNTARY SCHOOLS' BILL.

Order Read, for resuming adjourned Debate on Amendment proposed to Question [11th February], "That the Bill be now Read a second time":—

And which Amendment was, to leave out from the word 'That," to the end of the Question, in order to add the words "no Bill will be satisfactory to this House which does not provide for Board Schools as well as Voluntary Schools."—(*Mr. McKenna.*)

Question again proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question." Debate resumed by—

*MR. F. A. CHANNING (Northampton, E.), who had upon the Paper the following Amendment to the proposed Amendment—at end to add the words,

"and which does not provide for local representative control in the case of all schools receiving the aid grant."

First Lord of the Treasury.

He said that Education was the one question on which the people held clear and definite convictions, and had a right to know what was being done, but the Bill of the Government was most obscure and indefinite, and withheld from the public the details with which they had a right to be acquainted. They had a right also to extort from the Government full time for the consideration of the details of this Measure. He thought they were indebted to the noble Lord the Member for Rochester and the hon. Member for Tunbridge for the light which they had thrown upon the intentions of this Bill. The noble Lord was identified with the Church House scheme which, though rejected with scorn by the Tory Press last autumn, was at least a complete scheme to secure not denominationalism but the future of the Voluntary Schools. But the present Bill, as a temporary Measure, was wholly inadequate to fulfil the intentions which the noble Lord had at heart. It could only be accepted by him because it gave a fighting fund—a sort of secret service money to be administered at the discretion of irresponsible bodies to further his object. It was accepted, not on its merits, but avowedly as the initial step in legislation designed to attack the principle of the popular control of education. The Bill was meant to mask the main attack. The hon. Member for Tunbridge had tried to identify the friends of the Board Schools with opposition to religious teaching; but let them remember the words of the late Archbishop of Canterbury, who had said that they would get on a great deal faster if people would cease their futile denunciations of Board Schools, in a great number of which, he was persuaded, very good religious teaching was given. What hon. Members opposite wanted was specific denominational, dogmatic teaching. When they looked at the syllabus of the Board Schools in London, or in his own Division, they found that the children were instructed in what was most suited to their tender years, they were taught not any cut-and-dried catechism, but the tender, sympathetic words of the Bible: the Sermon on the Mount, the moral lessons of the Parables, and the pathetic and infinitely eloquent words of our Lord. These were things which appealed directly to the highest instincts of child life. They had a right to challenge the hon. Gentleman as to what was the scope of the religious teaching which he wanted this Bill to extend. That House was a temple of fairplay. They were reluctant to believe in oppression. But he had a right to ask whether the hon. Gentleman approved of teaching questions and answers such as were inculcated in the notorious catechism of Dr. Gace? Would he approve the words of a Canon in the West of England, who said:—

> "We cannot, we dare not, go to chapel; it is against God's will that the chapel exists." "The place itself exists in defiance of God's design. . . . Dissent is a state of things which God abhors"?

He was sorry to inflict such quotations on the House, and he thought hon. Members opposite would regard them with the same contempt as he did, but he had the right to challenge them to say whether this was the sort of teaching which was to be forced on the simple minds of our English children. In the *Church Lad's Brigade*, a monthly paper, he found these words:—

> "It is simply sinful for any Churchman to become a Dissenter. God has shown us in His Word that Dissent is no part of His plan, but distinctly against His will."

The hon. Member opposite disclosed his view—he wanted to get rid of that bogey of the extreme Church party (but not of the moderate Churchman), the Cowper-Temple Clause. He distrusted the ethics of infallibility. The man, or the Church, who claimed infallibility advanced stage by stage from proselytism to persecution. They were not unfamiliar with this phase even in the Church of England. Only a few days ago three capable women teachers had been dismissed at Willesden because they would not agree to attend the Communion at an Anglican church. They had seen in London the determination of the extreme Church party to force upon teachers in Board Schools as well as in Voluntary Schools the strictest tests as to their religious opinions. They knew the men who were behind this movement. All these things were indications of the temper and character of the movement with which they had to deal. The Bishop of Chester and Cardinal Vaughan had shown their policy in arrogant threats towards the Government. The First Lord of the Treasury had treated the Bishop with a certain amount of ironic contempt, but they must remember that Bishops like the Bishop of Chester represented an enormous organisation—an organisation to which this Bill was practically given as a blank cheque and as a charter without conditions. The Bishop of Chester spoke of the combined action of Anglo-Catholics and Roman Catholics for the emancipation of denominational schools from the disabilities under which they had laboured since 1870, and declared that the object of the alliance was to exclude the endowment of what was practically a new creed—undenominational religion. That was the whole secret of the movement. It was to destroy the Cowper-Temple Clause, which excluded denominational formularies from the elementary schools. He looked upon the Cowper-Temple Clause as a truce to sectarian passions, which had rendered immense service to education. Could they never eliminate the paralysing poison of sectarian differences and sectarian animosities, and set education free from proselytism and sectarian tyranny? The Bill was bad educationally, bad politically, bad morally, bad economically, and it was worst of all in its dishonest and dissembling draftsmanship. One of the great evils of the Bill was touched upon by the Amendment now before the House, in the preferential grants to one class of schools. A greater evil still was that the Bill would create a revolution in the Government of the schools of the country, for it would hand over the control of the education of three-fifths of the children of the country to an unknown body with an unknown constitution, unknown powers, and unknown policy. The question of association was undoubtedly the most important question raised by the Bill. He agreed very largely with a letter by a well-known London Churchman, Canon Barker. In *The Times* last November Canon Barker protested against—

> "the proposal that the Government should hand over the proposed new grant in aid to a committee of confederated schools for them to deal with as they think best. This is a most alarming proposition. Imagine the confusion and friction which would be caused by each confederated school having to plead, as it would, before such an unrepresentative and irresponsible body for a portion of the 'new grant in aid,' and for such a body, according to its sweet will, to dole out grants according to its idea of what a school ought to have. It would simply be robbing Peter to pay Paul. No, if there is to be discrimination in the amount granted to schools, let the impartial Education Department be the body to determine. But, if the Government see fit—which I do not think it will—to admit into its new Bill the principle of confederation, I devoutly hope that it will be permissive."

But the Bill before them was compulsory. He also asked the House to consider an important expression of opinion by *The Birmingham Daily Post*, a newspaper which supported the Government:—

> "There is great distrust as to a scheme so entirely new, so entirely doubtful in its working, and so largely left without explanation in the Bill. As it now stands, all we know is that the distribution of the new grant will be left to some arrangements to be made at some time and in some way undefined, between the Education Department and a large number of denominational councils, which must chiefly consist of ecclesiastics; and in the nature of things it is certain that these councils ultimately if not immediately, must practically get into their own hands the control of the denominational schools generally. . . Before such an enormous power is conceded we want to know clearly how it is to be exercised, and how the State, as represented by the Education Department, is to check it, and prevent mischief being done."

Those were the words of the chief organ of the Colonial Secretary, which represented some of the most influential Liberal-Unionist opinions in the Midland Counties. The Government had not been left without light in this matter. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Dartford and the Vice President of the Council had given the Government excellent advice. In a letter to *The Times* in November last, the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Dartford contemplated as an absolute certainty that if the Government introduced a Bill it would be a Measure dealing with necessitous Board Schools as well as Voluntary Schools. The right hon. Gentleman pointed out that the real crux of the question was the distribution of the grant, and he insisted that the distribution should take place upon lines and under conditions clearly laid down by Act of Parliament. The right hon. Gentleman evidently never contemplated the extraordinary manœuvre by which the Government were to hand over powers without conditions to the extreme Church party, and they had all heard—not without amusement—the speech in which the right hon. Gentleman had accepted the Bill. The Government were in this matter sending out a fleet with sealed orders. But they had done more. They had also sealed the mouth of the only man who was capable of telling them what the orders were, what the Education Department could do, what lines it would lay down, what powers were to be given, how they were to be exercised, and and what checks were to be placed upon the proposed associated bodies. He referred to the Vice President of the Council. That right hon. Gentleman had also seen that the crux of the difficulty was the discrimination to be used in the distribution of the money between the various schools. "It must be obvious," said the right hon. Gentleman,

> "that a distribution of that kind could only be made by a local authority. The central Government, out of 20,000 schools, could not undertake the task of discriminating which were necessitous and which were not. Therefore they must relegate the distribution to some kind of local authority which knew the circumstances of the schools, or had, at all events, the means of ascertaining easily the circumstances of the schools, and which would be or might be able to give to those that required, and not to squander the money in gifts to those who were already sufficiently well off."

The right hon. Gentleman continued:—

> "There was a proposal made in the Bill last Session to create such local authorities, and there was a good deal of discussion and of objection, and ultimately the proposal had to be withdrawn. But he thought they would find,

upon reflection, that they had no choice between one of two things—either they must have a grant all round, all round to Voluntary Schools if they pleased, or to Voluntary Schools and Board Schools; but they had no choice between a grant all round, in which the Imperial Government could exercise no discretion, and the creation of some local authority which could receive the grant and undertake to distribute it according to discrimination amongst schools, not because they were Voluntary or Board, but because they were necessitous and wanted further aid from the Imperial Exchequer to enable them to give a satisfactory elementary education."

That advice had fallen on deaf ears. The right hon. Gentleman appealed to the House and the country to deal with the question in a candid and philosophic spirit; but this Bill was absolutely silent as to any of his proposals. That is the answer to his appeal to be candid and philosophic. In the face of these facts, hon. Members had a right to challenge the action of the Government. They had a right to ask why, instead of adopting the right hon. Gentleman's suggestions, the Government had insisted on the principle of compulsory federation, and were handing over the control of the whole denominational system of schools to a secret, self-appointed, unrepresentative, and irresponsible sort of *Vehmgericht*, to whom was left without restrictions the delicate decision between the claims and wants of various schools. The First Lord of the Treasury in his opening speech confirmed the contention that this was not merely a temporary expedient for the distribution of a few pounds now, but that it would be a system for the distribution of these grants in future, and would tend to consolidate the Voluntary Schools under the rule of these irresponsible bodies. The right hon. Gentleman said

"the Department would have the power to reject or modify the schemes submitted to it; but in all probability he anticipated the schemes would usually guide the Department."

What were the checks the Department had at its disposal? The only real power given to the Department was the iniquitous proposal of forcing a Voluntary School to join an association which it did not want to join. Even the audit check was permissive. In the Bill of last year the federations had to satisfy the Education Department, that they represented the managers, and they were not to be scattered all over the country; they were confined within the area of a single county, and might even be in a smaller area. And, still more important, there was no forcing of all the schools of one denomination into one association. The present proposal was a monstrous one. It was a question not only for men who felt strongly, as he did; but it must appeal to hon. Members opposite who would not be willing to yield the share they had taken in the provision and management of schools in their neighbourhood, and to hand over their powers thus blindfold to a body as to which they knew nothing. Would they permit him now to say a few words upon the question raised by the Amendment immediately before the House? This Bill, as he had said, proposed one educational revolution in handing over the whole control of the Voluntary Schools of the country to religious and secret organisations. It proposed another revolution in subverting the principle of equality in the Act of 1870. That Act established the right and duty of the people to make provision for education, and at the same time it tolerated the existence of every school on the distinct understanding that the grants to both classes of schools should be on equal and identical principles, and that those who wished to keep up Voluntary Schools should contribute from their own resources in order to maintain them. He attached more importance to the principle involved in this change than he did to the actual amount of the money which was to be handed over. He protested against the State departing from the position of toleration which it took up in 1870 and now, for the first time, giving a preferential grant to the Voluntary Schools—an iniquitous pledge that the

Government will find funds to carry on this war, and to enable these schools to struggle against and battle down what was erroneously called the competition of the Board Schools. He protested against that, not only as an injustice, but, still more, because it tended to the waste of national resources. He represented a Division where there was a much larger number of children in Board Schools than in Voluntary Schools, and therefore he felt it his duty to lay one or two points before the House. In one of the towns in his constituency—a town of 3,000 inhabitants—there were a Voluntary School and a Board School. The subscriptions to the Voluntary School amounted to 2s. 3d., and a Board School rate of nearly 6d. in the £ was raised; £60 was to be given to the Voluntary School, and nothing to the Board School, which was, on equal terms, entitled to a grant of £75. In another town of 10,000 inhabitants the subscriptions to a large Voluntary School were 2s. 6d., and that school was to receive nearly £160; whereas four splendid Board Schools, erected at great expense, for which the people rated themselves at 1s. 4d. in the £, were to receive nothing, though they were entitled to £250. In his Division there were 30 Voluntary Schools, some of them old endowed schools, many of them inferior schools, one or two of them only fairly efficient schools; they had an average attendance of 5,240 children, and their subscriptions amounted to £943, or 3s. 7¼d. per child in average attendance. There were 19 Board Schools, and two or three of them were as fine as any Board Schools in the kingdom. They had 7,293 children in average attendance, and the authorities levied, with the constant approval of the people who returned them, in rates £9,310. What was the result? The Voluntary Schools, whose supporters only contributed £943, were to get £1,310 a year in return for that local effort, whereas the Board Schools, for which the local effort was very nearly ten times as great, were to receive absolutely nothing, though they were clearly entitled, on equal terms, to £2,000 a year. The Bill was hopelessly bad in its financial aspect. He intended to strenuously oppose the abolition of the 17s. 6d. limit, because he thought it was absolutely inimical to the economical interests of the country as well as of the educational interests. In conclusion, he asked what was the Liberal policy in regard to the Voluntary Schools? There were now 2½ millions of children in Voluntary Schools. Those schools were, by the introduction of this Bill, admittedly inferior in equipment, teaching power, and the opportunities they gave to the children of the country. ["No, no!"] Was the Liberal policy towards those schools merely a negative policy? It was not. A double duty lay on the Liberal Party to deal broadly and generously and in a statesmanlike spirit with this question, because the position in which they now stood, and the fact that 2½ millions of children were in these inferior schools —["Oh, oh!"]—were largely due to the fact that Liberal statesmen had not risen to the occasion in former years. The Act of 1870 was marred by the timid and hesitating policy in which Mr. Forster refused, not from a Radical like the hon. Member for the Edgbaston Division, but from a Moderate man like Mr. Walter, who was then in the House, proposals which would have introduced in 1870 the principle of universal attendance at school, and also the principle of universal elective school authorities throughout the country, avowedly with the intention, as Mr. Walter said, of the Voluntary Schools being absorbed, and in order to prevent the further development of the dual system, which was felt to be contrary to the interests of education and of the taxpayers. The fact that Liberal statesmanship was so largely responsible for this system having remained so long, threw on them a double obligation to do their duty on this question. He did not think hon. Members had as yet thoroughly realised the effect of subsidising the Voluntary Schools in order to keep up this dual system of schools. He ventured to predict that, before many years were over, the result of this policy of subsidising denominational schools would be that the country would find that they were paying £5 for two or three bad and inferior schools instead of £3 for a consolidated and effective and simple system. This Measure was purely temporary. No Government, whether it was a Tory or a Liberal Government, would ever venture to place the whole educational cost of this country on the taxation of the country. It was an impossible task, and nibbling at it by the abolition of the 17s. 6d. limit was a merely temporary expedient, which could not guide them to a future solution in that direction. The ultimate result must be that these schools must come upon the rates, and the result of that would be the acceptance of the principle of public, local, representative control of all schools receiving Government grant. One of the ablest Unionist papers in the country, *The Scotsman*, had, a few days before, warned the Government that

> "the sooner they recognised that the dual system cannot be a permanent system the better. . . . One of the two classes of schools must ultimately disappear, and there can be no doubt as to which must succumb in the end. . . . So long as this system lasts, educational reform in England will be dangerous to the party which attempts it, and peculiarly perilous to those who attempt it in the special interest of the denominational schools."

That was wise advice, and if Members would consider the question dispassionately, in the interests of education and of taxation, they would come to the same conclusion he had. He had placed an Amendment to the Amendment on the Paper, but he understood that it was not competent for him to move that Amendment at the present time. He regretted he was unable to do so, but he did not regret that the Amendment appeared on the Paper, because it affirmed in clear and definite words the cardinal principle on which the Liberal Party in the country, whatever their Leaders might say or do, was determined to stand and to fight on this question to the last. The Bill was, in its intention, a mockery on the cause of religion, a wrong to the children of the country, and a wrong to the nation, which they should resent.

THE SOLICITOR GENERAL (Sir ROBERT FINLAY, Inverness Burghs) said he thought the House must have listened with some surprise to the quotations from several clergymen with which the hon. Gentleman who had just sat down entertained the House at the commencement of his speech. Did the hon. Gentleman suggest that those extracts fairly represented the teaching in denominational schools. He was sure he could not do so. ["Hear, hear!"] Then why read them? For the purpose of creating a prejudice which he knew to be illegitimate. [*Cheers.*]

MR. CHANNING: I asked the hon. Member for Tunbridge whether that was the sort of religious teaching he was prepared to encourage and wanted this Bill for.

THE SOLICITOR GENERAL asked why, if the extracts did not represent the teaching of Voluntary Schools, the hon. Member should have troubled the House with them. ["Hear, hear!"] He thanked the hon. Gentleman for the candour with which, in the latter part of his speech, he declared war against Voluntary Schools. If he would forgive him the expression, he would say that a great part of his speech illustrated what they might call the intolerance of those who preached toleration. ["Hear, hear!"] Not the least interesting feature of this Debate had been the clear recognition it had elicited from the most influential Members that schools in which there was distinctive religious education were an integral and essential part of the educational system of this country. [*Cheers.*] The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Montrose Burghs stated this point with his usual complete frankness. He said his views had been and now were that the State should not recognise any educational institutions which to any extent partook of a sectarian character," but," said the right hon. Gentleman," the country had declared against this view," and he must accept the fact. The country had indeed declared against that view. In England the growth of Voluntary Schools was the most emphatic testimony that could be borne to the fact that distinctive religious education was demanded by the people of this country. ["Hear, hear!"] He need not say what were the feelings of the representatives of Ireland, while in Scotland the question of Voluntary Schools had not attained to that importance which it had in England, simply for the reason that the Board Schools there were denominational. ["Hear, hear!"] In every Board School in Scotland the standards of the Presbyterian Church were taught, and it was only for that reason that the question of Voluntary Schools had not come to the front as it had in England. The country had indeed declared against the views which the right hon. Gentleman had held and now held. What, under these circumstances should be the attitude of a statesman? The right hon. Gentleman opposite seemed to meet the attitude of the country on this question with what was at least an attitude of sombre acquiescence on his part. He had no policy to propound. He listened to the right hon. Gentleman's speech from beginning to end to find any definite proposal put forward by him for dealing with the situation, but the right hon. Gentleman seemed to be possessed by a spirit of mere negation. He subjected the Bill to a series of minute and detailed criticisms, but one waited in vain for any declaration of positive and practical policy upon this great question. ["Hear, hear!"] The right hon. Gentleman referred to the attitude of the Colonial Secretary upon this matter, but surely the attitude of the Colonial Secretary was more worthy of a statesman. He frankly accepted the declaration which the country had made upon this point, and endeavoured to deal with the situation as a statesman should by keeping up the efficiency of the Voluntary Schools, on the maintenance of which the country insisted. [*Cheers.*] The State at present was not neutral as between Voluntary and Board Schools. The Board Schools had at their back the rates, on which the State had enabled them to draw as far as they wanted to draw for the purposes of education. Had the Voluntary Schools such an exchequer at their back? In face of that great fact—he did not stop to refer to other instances of preference—how could anyone assert in his place in that House that the attitude of the State was impartial as between the Board Schools and the Voluntary Schools? ["Hear, hear!"] They were told that the Measure the Government proposed was not final. It would require boldness indeed on the part of the statesman to get up and say he regarded himself as the author of what would be a final settlement of this question. Surely it would be mere pedantry, because it was recognised on all hands that the opinion of the country was not ripe for a final settlement, not to do what was wanted at the present time—["Hear, hear!"]—not to take steps which, as they believed they could show, would solve this difficulty for many years to come. They had listened to a series of elaborated excuses on the other side for doing nothing at all in aid of the Voluntary Schools. One excuse was certainly somewhat astonishing. It was said that the Voluntary Schools represented the laggards of the educational ranks, and they were told that they should first help, or help at the same time, more forward districts in which there were School Boards. But were the Voluntary Schools laggards in the educational race? Who was it that bore the burden of the education of this country until the Act of 1870? [*Cheers.*] If any one was a laggard it was not the Voluntary Schools. [*Cheers.*] It was the Voluntary Schools who did that work which the Act of 1870 was passed to supplement in those districts which were backward and not so forward as those in which

Voluntary Schools were at work Then it was said:—

> "The Voluntary Schools are in no danger at all. You may trust to the zeal of Churchmen. They will not only go on paying rates to maintain Board Schools in which their neighbours are given a religious teaching which does not satisfy Churchmen, but they will also pay subscriptions to keep up their own schools."

He gladly acknowledged the work that had been done by the friends of denominational schools in furnishing subscriptions to keep them going under stress of severe competition, but Voluntary Schools were in very great danger. The standard of education in this country was rising—he rejoiced in that fact; and it had been raised by the competition of Board Schools having the rates at their back and never being stinted for money—he rejoiced at that. But the consequences to Voluntary Schools must be recognised; they had no such unlimited Exchequer to draw upon while making every effort to comply with the ever increasing demands of the Department, which had in its eye the completely efficient and thoroughly equipped schools which Boards with unlimited power of drawing on the rates could provide. Was it to come to this, that parents desirous of distinctive religious teaching for their children were to have inferior secular training? Was religious teaching to be penalised in this way? Yet that was the effect of the present state of things. ["Hear, hear!"] Voluntary Schools would suffer from this cause, and a parent would have to ask himself the question, "Am I prepared to sacrifice the best possible secular training in order that my child may get the religious teaching I desire he should have?" ["Hear, hear!"] In a great many cases parents would be attracted from these Voluntary Schools, which, other things being equal, they would prefer, and would send their children to Board Schools. ["Hear!"] Surely this was not a right state of things. The State should hold the balance even between these schools. [*Opposition cheers.*] Yes, but those hon. Gentlemen who cheered wanted to keep it uneven. ["Hear, hear!"] The State should hold the balance even between those schools which gave a distinctive religious teaching and those which did not. If Voluntary Schools were kept under the strain of this competition they would die; attendance would dwindle, and school after school would close, and the state of things would be such that a parent, however he might desire religious teaching for his child, could not get it. ["Hear, hear!"] It was said this was a skeleton Bill. ["Hear, hear!"] There was not much superfluous fat about it, but he thought it would be apparent that all the bones and sinews were there, and experience would show the Bill to be in thoroughly good fighting trim and that it would give a good account of itself before the round was over. The object of the Bill was to increase the efficiency of Voluntary Schools; it was introduced in the interests of parents who desired such schools for their children. It was not a subscriber's relief Bill, it was a Bill to provide and increase the efficiency of Voluntary Schools, the subscriptions the schools now receive being maintained. This was the object of the Bill, but in effect it did help the ratepayers. ["Hear, hear!"] If Voluntary Schools were to be condemned to a lingering death, as some hon. Gentlemen opposite seemed to desire, school rates would be doubled. ["No, no!" *and* "Hear, hear!"] That was the inevitable conclusion. The right hon. Gentleman (Mr. Morley) took the case of Newcastle, and he said there were 12,000 children in the Board Schools and 12,000 in the Voluntary Schools there. If the Voluntary Schools ceased to exist there the ratepayers of Newcastle would have to support schools for 24,000 children. ["Hear!"] The rate at Newcastle was 7½d. in the pound, and the amount raised £31,000 a year for maintenance, current charges, and interest and sinking fund for money borrowed. Was the right hon. Gentleman prepared to see this amount doubled? Then it was said the relief which was to be given to Voluntary Schools would come from the taxpayers who already paid the school rate. That was true, but the sum required to keep Voluntary Schools in an efficient condition was a very great deal smaller than the sum that would be required to replace them if they disappeared and Board Schools had to be provided. ["Hear, hear!"]

MR. A. H. DYKE ACLAND (York, W.R., Rotherham) said in some districts there were no Voluntary Schools at all.

THE SOLICITOR GENERAL said he was dealing with the country as a whole.

One must look at the subject broadly and not lose oneself in details. The rates for the ready maintenance of Board Schools, and not including interest and sinking funds for loans, amounted in England and Wales to two millions. If Voluntary Schools disappeared the country would have to face the expenditure of another two and a quarter millions for additional maintenance, and in addition there would have to be provided a large capital expenditure for the purchase of Voluntary School buildings or for new buildings. ["Hear, hear!"] Hon. Gentlemen opposite talked about the rights of citizens, but the British citizen must be a very peculiarly constituted being if he preferred paying in his capacity as ratepayer two and a quarter millions a year for the maintenance of additional Board Schools, besides all the cost of providing the buildings, to the expenditure of £616,000 a year for the purpose of keeping alive and efficient those Voluntary Schools which would make that larger expenditure unnecessary. [*Cheers.*] It was an unjust taunt against the noble Lord (Lord Cranborne) that he spoke, not with the voice of a citizen, but of a Churchman, but it was a perfectly fair observation to many hon. Gentlemen opposite to say that their dislike of Voluntary Schools blinded them in this matter to the true interests of citizens. ["Hear, hear!"] What was this cry for equality of treatment and demand for 5s. all round for Board and Voluntary Schools? Take the case of London, where there were a great many Board Schools and not one necessitous, for, however poor the district might be, there were the school rates of the whole Metropolitan School Board area to draw upon. A grant of 5s. a head on account of every child attending a Board School in London would amount to £100,000 a year, and something in the same proportion might be said of every large town. Did hon. Gentlemen propose that £100,000 should be annually paid out of taxation to London in order that it might be wasted on additional expenditure—[*cries of* "No, not wasted!"]—or take the alternative, applied to the relief of London ratepayers. ["Hear, hear!"] With what accents of scorn would right hon. Gentlemen have spoken if such a dole had been proposed by the Government; what forcibly expressed criticism would not unjustly have been directed against the eleemosynary relief. The Government had brought forward no such proposal, for the Government recognised that the case to be dealt with in reference to poor Board School districts would not be met in such a manner. These poorer Board Schools had lately excited a vast amount of new-born enthusiasm on the part of hon. Gentlemen opposite, but who first proposed to do anything for these schools? The Government, in their Bill of last year. ["Hear, hear!"] It was a little too bad that, having been the first to recognise their need, the Government should now be accused of being blind and deaf to the claims of poorer Board Schools. ["Hear, hear!"] The relief of poorer Board Schools was an object quite distinct from that the present Bill had in view; it was a ratepayers' question, and the machinery required would be wholly different to that contemplated in the Bill. Right hon. Gentlemen opposite were curious in their inquiries about the Board School Bill, and he appreciated the spirit of their demands. It meant that they found their ammunition in reference to this Bill running short, and they wanted a fresh supply in order that they might keep up the Debate, discussing two Measures instead of one. ["Hear!"] He would not stop to remind the House that a good deal had already been done for poorer Board School districts by the Agricultural Rates Act of last year. This Bill was to promote the efficiency of Voluntary Schools, and right hon. Gentlemen complained that the Government did not define efficiency, and they dropped a pensive tear over the Bill of last year. He said that Bill defined efficiency. It was extraordinary the affection right hon. and hon. Gentlemen had developed for the Bill of last year. [*Laughter.*] No epithets were too severe for it while it was alive, but now that it was dead the praise of that Bill had served to vilify the Bill of this year, and Gentlemen opposite were warm in their commendation of several of the clauses of the former Bill. What was the use of putting in a clause defining what the efficiency of a school was? Everybody knew. Efficiency meant a good teaching staff and proper equipment for carrying on the business of the school, and to insert a clause such as the right hon. Gentleman had desiderated would only have supplied him and his friends with material for a good many Amendments of a more or less unnecessary character. ["Hear, hear!"] Then they were told that in another respect this Bill compared most unfavourably with the Bill of last year. The right hon. Gentleman said that the Bill of last year at least admitted the principle of local control, but this Bill contained nothing of it. There were in the Bill of last year some expressions which referred to a somewhat attenuated local control which had now assumed considerable proportions in the mind of the right hon. Gentleman. What was the only effective local control? It was the power of appointing and dismissing teachers. ["Hear, hear!"] If they retained that they retained everything; but he ventured to say that no religious body which desired distinctive religious teaching would for one moment dream of accepting any local control of that sort. ["Hear, hear!"] On this point they had been furnished with a most excellent and conclusive authority in a speech made by the right hon. Member for the Montrose Burghs. In 1890, in the Debate on the Address, a Motion had been brought forward in favour of free education, and in connection with that Motion the question of local control was started. What did the right hon. Gentleman then say?

> "Our position, I think, is this: that where a school is intended for all it should be managed by representatives of the whole community. When, on the other hand, a school claims to be for a section of the community, as, for example, the Roman Catholics or Jews, it may continue to receive public support as long as it is under the management of that sect. That, of course, is the Scottish system. It works well there, and without any friction."

With regard to the allusion to the Scottish system, he would only say that the right hon. Gentleman was now a member for a Scottish constituency, and he thought he must recognise by this time the fallacy which lurked in that sentence. [*Laughter.*] The reason he cited that passage was this. The right hon. Gentleman laid down in the clearest terms that where a school was intended for a section of the community it might receive public help, and that public help while it retained the management of its schools. [*Cheers.*] The right hon. Gentleman gave the two illustrations of the Roman Catholics and the Jews. Would the right hon. Gentleman extend treatment to these two sects that he would not extend to other religious bodies? He was perfectly certain he would not. [*Cheers.*] The fact that he mentioned only these two bodies gave rise to a well-founded suspicion—

MR. JOHN MORLEY (Montrose Burghs): Ill-founded.

THE SOLICITOR GENERAL: Well, an ill-founded suspicion that those utterances represented a sort of concordat, and that in return for these utterances the right hon. Gentleman's supporters were to have the help of hon. Gentlemen sitting below the Gangway opposite. According to the right hon. Gentleman, therefore, it was perfectly compatible with sound principle that a school should receive public money while it was under the control of those who represented the Church with which that school was identified. ["Hear, hear!"] The control the Government proposed to give was the control of the Department. They were now told by Gentlemen opposite that the Education Department was utterly unfitted for such functions; that it was a centralised body, did not know local wants, and that it was vital to the Measure that they should give control, not to the Department, but to some locally elected body. Last year the proposal made was to set up a local body to deal with these matters, and then right hon. and hon. Gentlemen had nothing that was too strong to say in praise of the Department by way of depreciating the Government proposal to set up local bodies. The right hon. Member for West Monmouth, on the 18th of June of last year, in Committee on the Education Bill, said:—

> "It is said you must have this new authority to dispense the 4s. grant, and you assume that the local authority will know better the local conditions. Will it? You create a new authority which, perhaps in 20 years, may know half as much as the authority already existing, and you say it has to discriminate—rather a difficult thing—between schools which are and those which are not to have the grant. But the Education Department knows that already; knows it a great deal better than any new body can know it, and will deal with that question, in the opinion of those communities, with much more impartiality. It is owing to the creation of this unnecessary, inexperienced, and, in my opinion, utterly incompetent authority in the place of the experienced and capable

authority which is now dealing with the education of this country, that we mainly resist to the utmost of our ability the provisions of this Bill."

[*Cheers.*] Last year hon. Gentlemen opposite resisted mainly on the ground that the Bill proposed to set up a local authority. This year they were told by the right hon. Member for the Montrose Burghs that the absence of local control was the most important feature which disparaged this Bill. [*Laughter.*] It was really impossible to please the hon. and right hon. Gentlemen, and all one could do was to endeavour to find that machinery best adapted to do the work, and he very much preferred the opinion of the right hon. Member for West Monmouth as expressed last year with reference to the efficiency of the Education Department to the opinion expressed this year by the right hon. Member for the Montrose Burghs. [*Cheers.*] Discrimination, of course, was necessary, and that discrimination on questions of subscriptions and aid grant could better be exercised by a central authority than by any locally elected body. ["Hear, hear!"] They could not attempt to set up a hard-and-fast line and say, for instance, that the subscriptions were to represent a certain figure, otherwise no help was to be given from the aid grant. Except in the case of a few infant schools, managed under very exceptional circumstances—in many cases the teaching being gratuitous—it was perfectly impossible for any Voluntary School to get on without extraneous help, whether in the form of regular subscriptions, occasional help, endowments, or fees paid by the parents of the children. Those fees were as much subscriptions as the yearly sums paid by richer people. ["Hear, hear!"] It was said that the Department which undertook this task would be overworked. It would, however, get very great help from the associations to be formed under the Bill. The right hon. Member for Montrose complained that the associations were introduced by a mere "if," but they were purely Voluntary bodies. They already existed in many places, schools having now the right to combine. It would be a mere platitude to insert a clause in the Bill saying that schools might combine in future as they did now. All the Bill had to do was to encourage the formation of such associations by saying that the schools forming them should have two privileges. First, that there should be allotted to each association which the Department recognised a sum in proportion to the number of children in all the schools forming the association. Secondly, the governing body of the association should have the right to advise the Department as to the distribution of the lump sum among the different schools; and the scheme prepared by the association would be acted upon unless the Department saw that the purposes of the Act were not carried out. The Government hoped that these encouragements would lead to the formation of associations throughout the country. As to their areas, they will not necessarily be the same for all denominations. In the case of the Church of England schools, the dioceses would form the natural divisions. [*Ironical cheers.*] But in the case of other denominations, hard-and-fast divisions which might suit one and not another need not be laid down. In ordinary cases, an association would consist of schools of the same denomination; but it would be a great advantage if the schools of denominations nearly approaching one another in teaching and doctrine should combine. The right hon. Gentleman had asked how the case would be dealt with of a refusal to join an association on the ground that to join would kill local interest in the school. The right hon. Gentleman had overlooked the fact that joining an association did not mean that all the subscriptions would be thrown into a common fund. It merely meant that the group of schools forming the association secured to themselves the allotment of a sum of a money equal in the aggregate to a grant of 5s. per child in all the schools, and each school secured a voice in the division of that total sum according to its necessities. He did not believe that to join such an association would diminish local interest in the schools, or that that fear would be recognised as an adequate ground for refusing to join. It seemed to be forgotten that no school would have any absolute right to receive a portion of this aid grant. Whether a school got the grant or not depended on a number of circumstances, and the main factor in the case vas whether the Education Department onsidered the school to be necessitous, nd one in which the voluntary subscrip- ions had been adequately maintained. nother misconception was the idea that he proposed distinction between town nd country affected the distribution of he grant to unassociated schools. The istinction between town and country ad nothing whatever to do with schools vhich were not in association. In the ase of association—and in that case lone—the amount of the allotment de- ended upon a difference of rate. There vas nothing in sub-section 2 about a lifference between town and country chools. It was only in dealing with the mount to be allotted to each associa- ion that the rate per scholar was to differ f the Department fixed different rates or the town and country schools. It vas a case of individual discretion with espect to non-associated schools. The ight hon. Gentleman thought it ery unreasonable to give the De- artment power to fix a higher rate or urban than for rural schools. The ight hon. Gentleman cited the cases of he counties of Durham and Stafford- hire as mainly urban counties, where he expenditure was 34s. and 32s. 6d. er child; and then he took three rural ounties—Dorset, Shropshire, and Here- ordshire—where the expenditure is from 7s. 6d. to 42s. per child; and said what n extraordinary thing it was that pre- erence should be given to the urban chools, where the education cost less nd where the subscriptions were less han in the rural schools. The right on. Gentleman had not taken the Board chools into account in those figures. It as obvious that with respect to Volun- ary Schools the measure of the expendi- ure was not at all what was wanted for he efficient conduct of the school. The oluntary Schools in urban districts were ften tied down to a lower scale of ex- enditure than efficiency demanded, wing to want of subscriptions. Unfor- nately, subscriptions were lower in rban communities than in rural. There ere many causes for that fact. In the untry there were greater local interests, here were local proprietors; while in e towns there were poor districts with o rich neighbours. And yet the right on. Gentleman thought that because e subscriptions to urban schools were lower, it was a reason for giving them less help. He should have thought it was a reason for the very opposite course. The thing desired was to give help to those who needed it, and not to those who had enough already from local subscriptions. [*Cheers.*] This was not a subscribers' relief Bill, but a Bill for promoting the efficiency of the schools. [*Cheers.*] If the right hon. Gentleman had taken the Board Schools as well as the Voluntary Schools into account he would have arrived at a fair standard of what was wanted in the urban and rural schools respectively. The Board Schools had unlimited resources to draw upon. [*Cries of* "Oh!"] The School Boards had regard to educational efficiency, and they raised the rates adequate for maintaining that efficiency. A second reason for the distinction was that the fee grant, on the whole and speaking roughly, benefited the country schools much more than it benefited the town schools; and for this reason, that the fees in the country were much lower than 10s., and in the town were much higher. For instance, in Herefordshire, where the fees were 6s. 5d. per child, the gain from the fee grant had been £2 17s. 4d.; while in Lancashire, where the fees were 13s. 9d., there had been, after all allowances, a loss in one year of £20,000. Surely that was a good reason for giving power to the Department to establish a differential rate between town and country. True, it did not apply to London, which had profited slightly by the fee grant. But there was a third reason for the differentiation which did apply to London most forcibly. In large towns the cost of the schools was much more than in the country. The teachers had to be given a larger salary to pay the higher rent, and, again, there were more children in the higher standards. Very little had been said against the clause which abolished the 17s. 6d. limit; and it really would have been extraordinary if there had been any objection to a clause which had the effect of removing the restriction by which efficiency, if combined with economy, was penalised. The right hon. Member for the Montrose Burghs gave his unqualified approval to the clause for exempting Voluntary Schools from rates. He did not think that one objection had been made in that

Debate to that proposal of the Government. But the right hon. Gentleman asked what where they going to do in reference to the Board Schools, and he urged that, if the reason for exempting institutions from rates was that they were of a meritorious character, this applied to Board Schools as well as Voluntary Schools. But that argument certainly did not apply to Board Schools, which had no difficulty whatever in paying their rates. The case of Luton Borough had been referred to, which had a population of 30,000, and the union of which the borough formed a part had a population of 45,000. The right hon. Gentleman said that at Luton the Board Schools would go on paying their rates for the benefit of the 15,000 people who inhabited the other portions of the union in which there were only Voluntary Schools. The right hon. Gentleman was really mistaken in his facts, for as a matter of fact there were a considerable number of Voluntary Schools in the Borough of Luton, whilst in that portion of the union which was outside the borough there were a good many Board Schools.

Mr. J. MORLEY: I do not see that that is material.

The SOLICITOR GENERAL said it was extremely material, because the right hon. Gentleman said the Board Schools in the Borough of Luton would be paying their rates for the benefit of the 15,000 people outside the borough in the union where there were only Voluntary Schools.

Mr. J. MORLEY will you explain how it matters whether there are Board Schools or not?

The SOLICITOR GENERAL said it mattered very much indeed, because in the non-borough part of the union there were persons who would be paying their rates to the benefit of the whole union. ["Hear, hear!"] He thought if he gave the right hon. Gentleman the figures he would see their bearing. In the Borough of Luton there were 2,163 scholars in Voluntary Schools, as against 3,338 in Board Schools. In the rural part of the union there were 1,337 in Voluntary Schools, as against 931 in Board Schools.

Mr. J. MORLEY: I am sorry to interrupt, but it is a question of the poor-rate we are considering, not the school rate. ["Hear, hear!"]

The SOLICITOR GENERAL said the rates paid by the Board Schools in the rural part of the union went to the poor rate of the whole union. ["Hear, hear!"] The right hon. Gentleman had entirely ignored the fact that the rural part of the union had Board Schools as well as Voluntary Schools. He would not dwell further upon that. [*Opposition laughter and Ministerial cheers.*] He would ask the right hon. Gentleman seriously to consider what was the effect of his proposal to exempt Board Schools from the rates as well as Voluntary Schools. He would point out what the effect of this would be in London. The total rateable value of London was something like 35 millions; the Voluntary Schools according to their present assessment represented about £31,000, which was a good deal less than one-thousandth part of the rateable value of the whole of London. The effect of the exemption of the Voluntary Schools was really almost inappreciable, and was still further diminished by the fact that the greater part of the rate was distributed over the whole of the metropolitan area. So that the relief of the Voluntary Schools would not bear hardly upon any single parish in London or upon any other part of the country.

Mr. J. MORLEY: You proposed it last year.

The SOLICITOR GENERAL said the proposal of last year was not to exempt Board Schools from rates, but that the rates both for Voluntary Schools and Board Schools should be paid out of the school rate, which was a perfectly different proposal. [*Cheers.*] What would be the effect of exempting Board Schools in London? If the Board Schools were exempted Bethnal Green, for example, would lose annually from the rates about £4,592, whereas by the exemption of Voluntary Schools it would only lose £98; Camberwell would lose £6,533 if Board Schools were exempted, but only £87 if Voluntary Schools were exempted; Shoreditch would lose £3,436 if Board Schools were exempted, but only £145 if Voluntary Schools were exempted. There was one portion of the metropolitan area which would profit enormously if the views of the right hon. Gentleman were carried out—that was the City. The City would gain a very large sum annually, because there were few schools in it, and it contributed to the chool rate levied within the metropolitan rea. It was rather novel to find that he right hon. Gentleman was a champion f the City, and asked them to relieve he City from that burden by which its oorer neighbours were relieved. *Laughter.*] The equalisation of rates ised to be a principle of the Liberal arty, and the fact that the Board Schools vere rated, coupled with the fact that he rate was paid out of the rate levied ver the whole metropolitan area, went ar in the direction of equalising the netropolitan rate, and yet the right hon. entleman calmly said that the Bill was lefective because it did not exempt Board Schools as well as Voluntary Schools. To xempt Board Schools, which did not need xemption, would inflict an intolerable ardship upon many of the poorer parts f the metropolis. The real issue in this natter had now become clear amid all he smoke and dust of conflict, and the uestion was whether these Voluntary Schools were to be maintained or not. *Cheers.*] They had listened to elaborate bjections and excuses for doing nothing, ut all this only veiled an hostility to lenominational education in these chools. ["Hear, hear!"] The country vas now in a position to appreciate at heir true worth the professions which vere made last Session of readiness to elp through any Measure which was coniined to the relief of Voluntary Schools—*cheers*]—and he did not think the ountry would be deafened by the highounding and hollow phrases which had een used in opposition to this Measure. The enemies of the Voluntary Schools vere united in their opposition for various easons, but the real ground of their pposition was that they desired that the rocess of what they called the "painless xtinction" of these schools should go n. But if the enemies of Voluntary Schools knew what they wanted, so did he supporters of the Voluntary Schools. *Cheers.*] They were alive to the fact hat, although this Bill could not be conidered as final in its character, it would nable Voluntary Schools to keep up the ight for many years to come, and they neant to carry this Measure through. *Cheers.*] In spite of all opposition, the overnment hoped before many weeks vere past to put this Measure of relief o religious education on the Statute ook. [*Cheers.*]

MR. W. S. ROBSON (South Shields) said the hon. and learned Gentleman had said there could be no effective control over schools unless it included the right to dismiss teachers. He gladly accepted that definition. He went on to say that the merit of this Bill was that it gave control to the central Department. Did he mean to say that the Education Department was to have that effective control of which he spoke—the right of dismissing at its own will teachers of whom it did not approve. ["Hear, hear!"] They on the Opposition side demanded that there should be effective local control, and there was absolutely no inconsistency between the position taken up now and on the Bill last year, except in the imagination of the Solicitor General. The hon. and learned Gentleman denied that this was a subscribers' relief Bill, but if it was not why did it abolish the 17s. 6d. limit? ["Hear, hear!"] The Solicitor General had ingeniously and very carefully ignored the definition, which was vital to all discussion of this Bill, certainly with regard to the hardship on those who supported Voluntary Schools. He had entirely ignored the distinction between the case of Voluntary Schools in School Board districts, and the case of Voluntary Schools in non-School Board districts. In the case of Voluntary Schools in School Board districts it might well be that subscribers were able to show a case of hardship. The right hon. Gentleman seemed to think that they had a right to take money from the State to teach their specific doctrine.

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR, Manchester, E.): No, I do not think they have an abstract right.

MR. ROBSON said the right hon. Gentleman then seemed to regard it as an academic and quixotic question. He thanked the right hon. Gentleman for his intervention, because he should show that the Bill was one for sectarian endowment, and which, for the first time in our history, put upon the Statute Book that the State was to grant money, not merely for State purposes, but for the teaching of doctrines which were no concern of the State. ["Hear, hear!"] His view was that there was no hardship on a subscriber in a School Board district having to make a double contribution, provided his contribution was not in respect of secular education. He pointed out that districts in which there were no School Boards were specially favoured, having a much lower rate than urban districts, and under the legislation of last year having half the rates on agricultural land paid for them; but now they were to have another special advantage in respect of the Education rate. Was there any conceivable principle as a question of taxation why the Government should give relief to those districts and not to others? He declined to treat the question entirely as an educational question; it had to be treated also as a fiscal question, and fiscally there was no reason why parishes that were without School Boards should have their education given them for nothing by the State, while the far more necessitous great towns received no relief whatever. ["Hear, hear!"] The Voluntary Schools paid their teachers less and taught their scholars worse. Hitherto the benefits had been distributed by Parliament on the principle of payment by results, but the new Education Minister was going to alter all that, and to pay indirectly according to bad results. ["Hear, hear!"] The districts which had provided just the meanest minimum of education for the purpose of getting the grant were to be rewarded, while those which had taken the whole burden of efficient education were to be left alone. Nothing could justify such a glaring inequality. [*Cheers.*] They could not make education a local burden in one place and an Imperial burden in another, and yet that was what they were asked to do. Those who had drafted the Bill must have had their minds fixed solely on the educational controversy, and upon the dispute which had been going on between contending sects, and had forgotten to treat it as a fiscal question at all. There were many persons who cared very little what doctrines were taught, or whether any doctrines were taught or not, but they cared a great deal about the equality of public burdens—["hear, hear!"]—and, although the House might not approve of their indifference to religious questions, they were bound to satisfy them on the question of equality. The points raised by this Bill, which really endowed sectarian education, might be evaded in that House, but they could not be evaded in the country. The ratepayers would understand the question. They who lived in a School Board district would see that they were bound to pay for their education, while those who lived in other districts were not, and the ratepayers would ask "Why?" The only answer that could be given was that the schools in the School Board district were not managed by clergymen. ["Hear, hear!"] He had no doubt that the right hon. Gentleman intended to offer to the ratepayers a bribe to place the schools in future under the management of clergymen, and it was further hoped to put an end to School Boards; he had no doubt that the scheme of the Government would have some such effect. It would not have that effect altogether immediately, because the ratepayer would reflect that he had got School Boards and that he had got to pay for them; and when he found that the only reason he got no relief from the rates was that his schools were not under the management of a clergyman, the effect—the certain effect, he hoped—would be that an anti-sectarian spirit would be aroused. Then they should have a fresh controversy. That brought him to consider the second great feature of that Bill—the question of sectarian endowments. Hitherto Englishmen had tolerated State grants to denominational schools on the assumption that they went only towards the cost of secular education, while the cost of specific dogmatic teaching was met by subscriptions. That theory would not hold good under this Bill. The Solicitor General had himself reminded us that there were 1,000 Voluntary Schools which had no subscriptions, and he evidently anticipated the objection that, in those cases at all events, the cost of religious teaching was met by the State grant, for he said that the fees paid by scholars were an equivalent to subscriptions, and he implied that they would pay for non-secular instruction. Allowing that the fees might be thus appropriated, which he by no means admitted as a fact, how did the figures work? The average subscription per child in attendance in 1894 was 6s. 6¾d.; the average amount per child received from fees was 2s. 0¼d.; that is 8s. 7d. per child from sources other than public moneys. If the 5s. grant be deducted from this, and there is nothing in the Bill to prevent the new grant from being so applied by the federated bodies, there would remain, say, about 3s. 6d. per child available for the cost of religious teaching. It was stated with approval in the recent Church Conference, by two Bishops whose names he had forgotten, that the cost of religious teaching might fairly be put at 1s. 6d. of the total cost per child. Now the total cost per child in Voluntary Schools was about 38s., so that under this Bill the amount subscribed and paid in fees towards religious education would, on an average, be little more than one-tenth instead of one-sixth. This showed that in some cases the whole, and in all cases a substantial part, of the cost of religious education would henceforth be paid by the State. ["Hear, hear!"] In this Bill the country would see that it was being called upon to pay, not merely for purely secular education, but for purely sectarian education, and yet the right hon. Gentleman had never taken the trouble to consider the question from that point of view; he regarded it as abstract and immaterial. Would it be so regarded in England? There was nothing which the average Englishman so disliked as concurrent endowment. ["Hear, hear!"] He himself was willing to pay for the teaching of his own creed, but he was not willing to pay for the teaching of other creeds. He would venture to say this, that if there was one doctrine more earnestly taught in a great many denominational schools than another it was that dissent was schism. ["No," and "Hear, hear!"] It was a doctrine preached from the pulpits and taught from the teachers' desks. He asked whether this doctrine was not going to be taught in the schools which were to get public money? They had a right to know what doctrine was to be taught. This was a Bill which conferred purely sectarian endowments; it even went beyond that—the Bill was essentially a scheme for clerical endowment. It was not a general, it was a provincial, endowment. If it was said that this was not a Bill which was intended to pay for religious teaching, then they were entitled to have guarantees in the Bill. ["Hear, hear!"]

*Mr. J. G. TALBOT (Oxford University) denied that the money would go mainly for the payment of religious teaching. Voluntary subscriptions were duly kept in view in the Bill. If the Bill, when passed, was carried out in the spirit in which it had been introduced by the Government, it would tend to the greater efficiency of education in this country. The hon. and learned Gentleman who had last spoken had ridiculed the words in the Bill "due regard." But those words often occurred in the Endowed Schools Acts. They were Parliamentary words of long standing, and there was nothing in them to excite ridicule. The hon. and learned Gentleman also stated that education was given for nothing in the rural districts. How could education be given for nothing anywhere? It certainly could not be given for nothing in the rural districts. He did not know whether the hon. Gentleman lived in the town or in the country, but if in the town, he should accept an invitation of his friends to spend a few weeks in a rural district, when he would find that, no more in the rural districts than in urban districts, was education given for nothing. It was a serious charge on the incomes of those who lived in the country parishes. It would not be given for nothing even when this Bill was passed. The main object of the Bill was to improve the efficiency of Voluntary Schools. It would lead to an increase of the number of teachers and to the improvement of the position of teachers.

Sir WILLIAM HARCOURT (Monmouthshire, W.): There is nothing in the Bill about that.

*Mr. TALBOT said the Bill provided that a due regard was to be had to Voluntary subscriptions and gave a general control by the Education Department. The right hon. Gentleman shrugged his shoulders. He remembered the right hon. Gentleman said last year that the Education Department was the best authority to whom to refer those questions.

Sir W. HARCOURT: The hon. Gentleman has misunderstood me. I meant that the Bill gives no security that the money is to be employed in increasing the salaries of teachers.

*Mr. TALBOT said that supporters of the Bill contended that Voluntary Schools should be placed on a thoroughly efficient footing—that they should be good schools in every respect. They further said that the schools had not the money to enable them to do that, and they therefore asked the Government for assistance. The Bill afforded a good illustration of the difficulty of pleasing both parties to any question. Last year the Government introduced what was called a heroic Measure dealing with many large questions connected with education. They were then told that the Bill was too large, and that if they introduced a small Bill for the relief of necessitous schools it would pass quickly. That small Bill was now before the House. But the Government were now told that the Bill was too small, and that it dealt only with a portion of the question. The position of the Government was plain. They said their object was to promote the general education of the country; they said they could only do one thing at a time; that they would first of all assist the Voluntary Schools, and then that they would assist the Board Schools—where assistance was necessary—to carry on the great work they had undertaken. It should be remembered that Board Schools and Voluntary Schools were on a different footing, and that it was difficult, owing to Parliamentary procedure, to introduce a Bill dealing with both schools on the same lines. It could not be said that the Government had violated any of the pledges they had given at the last General Election. The pledges then given only referred to the relief of the Voluntary Schools, for the question of the Board Schools had not then arisen. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Monmouthshire and himself were two of the few Members of the House who remembered the educational controversies of 1870. At that time there was a confident impression that the Voluntary Schools would be painfully or painlessly extinguished—he did not know which was the right word—as time went on. But what happened? In 1870 the accommodation in the Church of England Voluntary Schools was 1,365,000. In 1895 the accomodation was 2,702,000. Therefore instead of being painlessly or painfully extinguished, the Voluntary Schools had not only held their own, but had doubled their accommodation. That showed that the people of England desired those schools. It should also be remembered that this additional accommodation in the Voluntary Schools was provided almost without any State aid, the building grants to Voluntary Schools having ceased in 1870. For some reason or other—to his mind the reason was the strong religious convictions of the people—those schools had a great hold on public affection, and were a necessary part of the educational system of the country. If the Bill did what its supporters hoped it would do, it would promote the efficiency of those schools and enable them to carry on more effectively the great work they had undertaken. The determination to assist the Voluntary Schools was inspired by a desire to maintain religious instruction. They were often asked why they should not trust the Board Schools. No doubt the Board Schools provided religious instruction but not religious instruction on the lines that many people desired. He would point out further that there was no security in the Board School system for religious instruction. It entirely depended on the accidental majority returned after each triennial election. The result of such an election might mean the emphasising of religious instruction in the Board Schools or the annihilation of religious instruction in the Board Schools. There were in Wales 326 School Boards. Of these, 50 gave no religious instruction whatever; 62 others did not read the Bible; and 118 others did not explain it. That was an example to justify the widespread desire in the country to maintain the schools which provided religious instruction. He had no desire to put the matter in an offensive way, or in a way which gave a political aspect to the question, but he would say that, whereas one set of men looked upon religious teaching as a luxury more or less desirable, the other set looked upon religious teaching as the very foundation of their educational system. He appealed to the House to support the Bill as an honest endeavour to promote the cause of education. He maintained that the figures which were before the House showed that the Voluntary Schools formed an integral part of the educational system of the country which must survive, and the only question was in what form they were to survive. He thanked the Government for the help that they were giving to these schools—help which would tend, not only to their permanence, but also to their efficiency and to their improved management. With regard to the question of federation, he hoped that the Government would not be induced by threats to drop that part of their scheme, which would tend to liberalise and extend the administration of the Educational grant, because larger bodies were more likely to distribute the grant in a statesmanlike manner than individual schools would. For the reasons he had given, he should heartily support the Second Reading of the Bill. It had been charged against those who promoted this Measure that their object was the relief of the clergy, who largely supported the Voluntary Schools. No doubt the clergy had borne a very large share of the cost of education, both before Board Schools were in existence and since; but it was only fair that the State should give reasonable assistance to the Voluntary Schools, which contributed so largely towards the education of the country. ["Hear, hear!"]

MR. ATHERLEY-JONES (Durham, N.W.) said that the hon. Gentleman who had just sat down had attempted to draw a distinction between those who supported Voluntary Schools and those who were in favour of secular education, by saying that until the former believed that religious teaching in schools was absolutely necessary the latter regarded it as a luxury and not as a necessity. He ventured to repudiate that doctrine altogether. The great Nonconformist body had been as solicitous for the religious education of their children as the members of the Church of England were. The difference between the Nonconformists and the supporters of the Voluntary Schools was, that the former believed that that part of a child's education which would fit him to become a useful citizen might be taught him at school was one thing, and that religious education was another, and that the two classes of education ought not to be mixed up together. The Debate had hitherto proceeded upon the assumption put forward by the Government that equal justice was to be done between the Board Schools and the Voluntary Schools. But over and over again had the Front Opposition Benches asked for some assurance from the Government that the same amount of assistance would be given to necessitous Board Schools as would be given to the Voluntary Schools under this Bill. He did not deny that there was some force in that argument, or that it was the duty of the Government to have told the House what amount of assistance they intended to give to necessitous Board Schools. They were asked to give a sum of £600,000 to the Voluntary Schools, and an assurance had been given them that an equal sum would be given to the necessitous Board Schools. [*Cries of* "No!"] Well, perhaps not. The First Lord of the Treasury, no doubt, desired to do equal justice to both classes of schools, but he was not the master of the situation. No doubt he had a large majority at his back, but he had still behind him a number of hon. Members who were jealous of the Board Schools, and were desirous of impairing their efficiency. In his view the great principle upon which they ought to act was that no assistance should be given to any schools out of the public funds without such schools being subject to public control, and that the State should not subsidise any particular religious sect. In his view this Bill was a renewal of the policy laid down by Mr. Forster in 1870, which involved painless extinction of the Voluntary Schools. [*Cries of* "No!"] He should like to quote a passage from Mr. Forster's speech when he introduced his Education Bill of 1870. That Gentleman said:—

> "The education of the people's children by the people's officers, chosen in the local assemblies, controlled by the people's representatives in Parliament, this is the principle upon which our Bill is based. It is the ultimate force which rests behind every clause."

Since that time 1,300 Voluntary Schools of which 938 were Church Schools had become Board Schools, which showed that there was no very strong disposition on the part of the Church of England to resist the absorption of their children into Board Schools. If this Measure were not to be final, then the Government must come to the House and ask for more. The total cost per child in Voluntary Schools was agreed at £1 18s. or £1 19s., and of that, 6s. 9d. was derived from voluntary contributions. Therefore, the whole of the expenditure in respect of which the schools were in any true sense of the word voluntary was 6s. 9d. per child per annum. Yet the House was called upon to maintain these schools out of public funds, without any public control. ["Hear, hear!"] Did anyone in the House doubt that this increase in the grant meant a corresponding fall in the subscriptions? There was no question that subscriptions had fallen. In 1876 they amounted to over 8s. per head, but from that time there had been a steady, continuous and uniform decrease. ["Hear, hear!"]

ADMIRAL FIELD (Sussex, Eastbourne): The amount is greater.

MR. ATHERLEY-JONES: The amount was greater this year by some few pence. [An HON. MEMBER: "The total amount?"] The total amount! Yes, but the amount contributed per child was only 6d. 9d.; whereas, in 1876 it was over 8s. per head. That was a significant fact. That very day a manager of one of the chief Voluntary Schools in his constitutency told him that the subscriptions had decreased because the subscribers thought the State was going to contribute towards them. ["Hear, hear!"] He ventured to point out to those in charge of the Bill that as they had to confront an inferior education for Voluntary School children, they must come down to the House and make a still further demand on the resources of the country. In what sense were these schools Voluntary Schools? He had shown the diminished ratio of subscriptions, and as to fabrics and sites he had no hesitation in saying that to a very large, and he believed preponderating extent these fabrics and sites were contributed for by the parishioners without the smallest relation to the religious creed adopted in the schools; that was to say, the Church Schools had, to a large extent, been the creation of Wesleyans, Methodists, and Baptists. After the National Society was formed, Parliament year after year made large grants of public money for sites. What then remained of the extraordinary contention put forward that the House would not be justified in taking over the Voluntary Schools, unless they took from the ratepayer a sum estimated at £3,000,000 or thereabouts? ["Hear, hear!"] Then came the question of Catholic Schools. The opposition were twitted with drawing a distinction between Catholics and other religious communities. But there was a very wide distinction to be drawn. The parents of children belonging to the Church of England or other Protestant communities were indifferent as to the schools their children went to. ["No, no!"] That was shown by the number of Voluntary Schools that had been allowed to be absorbed into Board Schools. ["Hear, hear!"] The Catholic laity, however, were not indifferent, and they had given practical demonstration of their objection to have their children educated in any but Catholic schools by subscribing far more to the maintenance of their schools than the Protestant laity. ["Hear, hear!"] They paid their teachers higher than many other Voluntary Schools, and there was no doubt of strong feeling on the part of Catholics against their schools being absorbed into Board Schools. His opinion was that the Catholic case might be dealt with separately, because their schools were self-contained. There were no Anglican children, and no children of Nonconformists in their schools. He wished to say one or two words as to why, although he should vote against the Bill, he should not vote for the Amendment. It was because he would have no part in any legislation which gave further financial assistance to Voluntary Schools unless that assistance were accompanied by public control by the ratepayers, or, at least, by the parents. It had been pointed out that education in Voluntary Schools was defective as compared with that in Board Schools. It had been demonstrated by statistics that the standard in Voluntary Schools was inferior to that in Board Schools; but his most potent reason for voting against the Bill was that Parliament had no right to compel the child of a Nonconformist to go to a school where he was placed in a position of inequality as compared with the child of a Churchman. ["Hear, hear!"] The control he advocated was a control by the people to secure that no improper attempts should be made by managers to coerce or influence children in the direction of the Church. Complaints were heard from all sides. Pupil teachers were chosen only from Church people. That was one strong and serious objection; it was impossible for the child of a Dissenter, whatever might be his capacity, to obtain a position as pupil teacher in the school in which he was finally educated, and therefore, it was impossible for him subsequently to become a certificated master. ["Hear, hear!"]

Then the schoolmasters were in many cases required to perform functions which were not educational at all. For example, they were called upon to play the organ in church. The children were given to understand that things would be pleasanter for them if they did not avail themselves of the conscience clause. He regretted that they were not fighting this battle on the lines adopted by Nonconformists in past years. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Montrose had said that personally he was opposed to anything except secular education, but that they "must recognise facts," suggesting by that that the people of this country were willing that Voluntary Schools should be supported out of State funds without public control. That view he repudiated altogether. He believed that this movement in support of the Voluntary Schools emanated exclusively from the clergy of this country. [*Cries of* "No!" *and* "Hear, hear!"] There was no feeling among Church people, excluding the clergy, against Board School education. He regretted that the Opposition had not taken up once again the old uncompromising attitude of former occasions and had not declared that they would bear no share of the responsibility of subsidising Voluntary Schools out of public funds except on the condition of the exercise of a corresponding amount of public control.

*MR. ALFRED LYTTELTON (Warwick and Leamington) said that the two questions for consideration were, first, whether the Government were justified in dealing with the Voluntary Schools before dealing with the Board Schools; and, secondly, whether the associations for which the Bill provided were expedient and feasible. While he was warmly in favour of subsidising necessitous Board Schools, he was of opinion that the Government were absolutely justified in putting the Voluntary Schools first. These schools deserved a subsidy on many grounds, and the first was the ground of religious equality. Classes of men who had been the pioneers of education in this country and held definite opinions strongly ought not to suffer under distinct financial disability on account of the doctrines to which they adhered. The second ground was that by giving this assistance to the extent of 5s. now they would relieve themselves from the necessity of granting a much heavier subsidy later on. The right hon. Member for Montrose said that to argue in this way was to impeach the religious sincerity of the country, and pointed to the Roman Catholics as a body of men who, whether they were assisted or not, would always stand by their schools and would not abate one shilling of their subscriptions. He agreed with the right hon. Member, and recognised that it would not be correct to say that if a subsidy were not granted to Voluntary Schools the Roman Catholics and the supporters of Anglican schools would reduce their subscriptions. But the right hon. Gentleman was surely in a dilemma. Granted that the subscribers did not abate their subscriptions, but maintained them at the present level, he surely would not say, having regard to the expansion of education and the poverty and struggles of the poor who subscribed, that those subscriptions could possibly be increased in the future? Therefore for the right hon. Gentleman to refuse to assist the Voluntary Schools would be equivalent to saying—for these schools must, in any circumstances, continue to exist for a great number of years—that he was willing deliberately to condemn more than half the children in the country to receive an inferior education, merely because their parents had religious convictions. The question of subsidising necessitous Board Schools rested upon a different principle. The basis of the Act of 1870 was that local effort should be the mainspring of national education; it was then admitted that one would best serve the interests of education by giving free play to the enterprise, energy, public spirit, and patriotism of different localities. It was not contemplated that the peasant in Dorset or Devonshire, in a poor rateable area where there was no Voluntary School, should have as good an education as the citizen of Birmingham or London, or that an equally good education should be given in the rural and the urban districts. If that was true, the real ground on which they were asked to support necessitous Board Schools must be that, as they had now made education national and free by the Act of 1891, they must be taken to have intended to obliterate geographical disparities and to give to the peasant, say, in Devonshire or Cumberland, similar educational opportunities as were enjoyed by the inhabitants of prosperous urban communities. That was the only principle upon which they could maintain that necessitous Board Schools ought to be assisted, and it was a very great extension of the Act of 1870. The reasons for asking them to subsidise Voluntary Schools were very different, and it was both logical and expedient to separate the cases of the two classes of schools. It was right now to recognise that education should be national and no longer a matter of purely local concern. That was the ground upon which it could be maintained that necessitous Board Schools should be assisted. He did not think that they need be afraid of that principle, the ground upon which many of them supported the theory that necessitous Board Schools should be aided being this: that it was a moral recognition, at any rate, of the great principle that education was a national affair, and that anybody who provided for the children of the State such secular education as the State approved and certified as good, was entitled to payment for that service from the State. He was surprised to hear the right hon. Member for the Montrose Burghs (Mr. J. Morley) say something in regard to the cost of these associations. To a man of business amalgamation was usually deemed to be a measure of economy; the associations were to be voluntary and they at any rate afforded a means of buying material in a larger quantity and getting better discounts. But this proposal was not wholly experimental. The London School Board administered the finances of 488 Board Schools in London. All those Board Schools were managed by local managers, but the School Board of London was the centre to which all contributions flowed. It managed the finances of the schools, and it had been found an admirable method—economical and advantageous to the purposes of management and economy. On a smaller scale that was the proposition under this Bill. ["No, no!"] The schemes would be as good as they could be made; and what was to prevent an area like a county in which there existed a great many schools amalgamating together, and obtaining as the result of amalgamation, both the advantages of economy and administration?

MR. J. M. PAULTON (Durham, Bishop Auckland): Are they actually to manage the schools? ["No!"]

*MR. LYTTELTON said that the proposal of the Bill was that a 5s. grant should be distributed by the association. There was nothing to prevent in future, if it was found to be expedient, that the management should by consent be added to these limited powers. Speaking without any knowledge beyond what the Bill contained, he submitted that the associations had such a power, even without the Bill; they had the power to contribute knowledge to the management of each school. Let the House take an instance. In a county they had, as a rule, not many educational experts. Supposing a county to have the privilege of the residence of his right hon. Friend the Member for Rotherham (Mr. Acland). The right hon. Gentleman's services now would be allocated to the village in which he could be claimed as a resident. Under this system his right hon. Friend would of course be a member of the association.

MR. A. J. MUNDELLA (Sheffield, Brightside): Oh, would he? [*Laughter.*]

*MR. LYTTELTON thought that the public spirit of his right hon. Friend would be equal to that duty; and he would give as a member of the association the great value of his expert knowledge, which would gradually raise the tone both of the management and of educational efficiency. There would thus be a tendency greatly to liberalise and improve the general tone of those bodies. It would, perhaps, be very wrong to pool all the subscriptions in a certain area and expect them to continue at their previous level. That would be a dangerous thing to do; but in providing in the localities an association with knowledge of the locality greater than the Education Department they would establish an excellent way of satisfying the Department as to whether the true necessity of the country schools existed. No more effective check could be placed on a body of schools, some of which might be desirous to obtain unduly the assistance given by the State, than an association growing up in the locality and representative of each school. He cited, by way of illustration, an association which had been presided over by a relative of his in the Midland

Counties, in which a fund, not coming from the State had been distributed. In the first place they had called for subscriptions from the schools that could spare them. He did not think the appeal had been very successful, but they had also called for subscriptions from those who looked at the matter as a whole and not through the narrow spectacles of local attachment. A considerable number of subscriptions had been received, and when upon some unfortunate school there had descended a ukase from the Department to spend £1,000 or £2,000 on its fabric the funds received from those who loved their Faith were applied at this apposite moment, and had saved the Voluntary School from destruction. The Bill contained machinery which could undoubtedly be worked by organisations such as the Wesleyans, Roman Catholics, Anglicans, and Jews, which would secure that the money should not be wasted, but applied where real necessity existed.

On the return of Mr. SPEAKER, after the usual interval,

SIR BENJAMIN BAKER (Portsmouth) said that when the Government introduced their Bill last year he found himself in parallel lines with the hon. Member for the Edgbaston Division of Birmingham, because the experience of the hon. Member and his in educational matters had been somewhat similar. The hon. Member had been chairman for 17 years of a large School Board at Birmingham, and he had had the honour of being chairman of a large School Board at Portsmouth for 21 years continuously, and their experience and observation agreed to the extent that they thought the Measure of the Government last year was certainly a very bad Measure. He had come to the conclusion that, in the interests of education, the Measure which the Government had introduced, under very bad auspices, this year, was equally bad. He did not join those who charged the Government with sinister motives. He had been a supporter of the Voluntary Schools in Portsmouth, and had had no difficulty in working with the managers of such schools. He should also support any responsible Government in a proposition to give money, either to Voluntary or Board Schools, with due provision for its control and administration. But the present Government last year, and again this year, seemed disposed to create a feeling which was adverse to the good and successful management of the Board School system, and to the policy and practice of Boards in the past. He most emphatically denied that the statements which had been received by the First Lord of the Treasury and the Solicitor General had any foundation in fact. His Board had, for 21 years, worked most cordially with the managers of Voluntary Schools, and there had never been between them any differences of the kind which had been suggested. There had been no suspicion or jealousy, but there had always been a desire on the part of the Board to give all the assistance they could to the Voluntary Schools, and he had no recollection of any complaint being made by the Voluntary School managers as to the administration of the Act of 1870, which was now so much condemned. He believed in other places the same feeling existed; in fact, suspicion and jealousy had no existence either amongst the Boards, the managers, the children, or the teachers, but they were promoted and provoked by religious fanatics, who wished to throw an apple of discord into the schools, not finding a sufficiently large arena outside in which to fight their battles. Let him show how a borough like Portsmouth would be affected if this Bill became law. At the present time there were 23 Board Schools in Portsmouth, 54 departments, 20,971 children in average attendance, and 24,000 on the registers. £33,500 was yearly contributed by the inhabitants to education, and that sum represented a rate of 1s. in the £1. The district of Portsmouth could not be regarded as a necessitous School Board district, and therefore would receive nothing. Other places near at hand—places with 20,000 inhabitants—which had not moved a finger themselves would receive substantial grants under this Measure. ["Hear, hear!"] With regard to religious education, he asserted that no difficulty had arisen, or would arise, if the Government maintained, as he thought they were bound to maintain, that in the case of schools which were practically supported by the State, there should be popular control and popular management. Such difficulty only arose in the mind of one of an ecclesiastical bent, and who, as a rule, had very little to do with popular education. That person was generally the right-hand man of the rector or vicar who managed the Voluntary School. But if this Measure, exciting, as it would excite, popular sympathies and popular passions upon religious questions, was passed, he could not see where that definite doctrinal basis which the right hon. Gentleman the Leader of the House had asserted was the only foundation upon which grants could be made to Voluntary Schools, was to be found. He admitted that as a matter of statesmanship the Catholic Schools should be dealt with independently, but directly they widened the sphere and took, as they did take, the Church of England Schools as comprising nearly three-fourths of the Voluntary Schools, the case was altered. Did anyone assume that the Church of England Schools only contained Church of England children? Nothing of the kind. Church of England children were there, but the majority of them were not Church of England in the sense in which they recognised Churchmanship from Dissenters. They went there either because the school was very near, or because their parents were totally indifferent to the teaching which was carried on there of a denominational character. If they were going to make these schools departments of the civil service establishment, then, on the principle which governed the nation in all its administration, they necessarily demanded and must have popular representation upon the management of these schools. There was no definite doctrinal basis to be found in the Church of England Schools, and he was speaking with intimate acquaintance as a contributor and supporter of them in co-operation with the School Board system. In Portsmouth, the denominational schools were as broadly different as were the Catholic schools from the Presbyterian schools. What would be the consequence if these questions were to arise? They would be very soon taking sides, and their system would have to be enlarged, so that the management and control of the schools should not be left, as they were now nearly and would ultimately be entirely maintained at the cost of the nation, in the hands of the clerical President of the Board of Management. That they should be so left was an exceedingly dangerous doctrine to maintain, and there was a popular protest and resentment against this retrograde movement on the part of the Government, which they would not hear the last of until they had ceased to be a Government. With regard to the immediate distribution of this fund, he gave some figures which showed the self-sacrifices the population he represented had made because there was a lack of public elementary education. Then the question arose, what was a necessitous Board? A necessitous Board surely was a Board that was relatively overcharged and overtaxed as compared with other Boards. If they took a large working class community, such as Portsmouth, with its 182,000 inhabitants, most of whom were simple working people, and contributed relatively more to the school rate than did the other classes, it became unjust to leave them out of such a Measure as this with the chance of getting something, if time permitted, at the fag end of the Session. Personally, he did not think anything would be done which would be at all commensurate with the claims which such a community had on the generosity of the House. If Portsmouth had its fair share of the Imperial Grant which was proposed by this Bill it would receive £5,500. Such a Measure as this, coupled with all that was said last year in promoting a Bill, which fell to pieces almost as soon as it was brought into existence, would give a blow to education and educational progress in this country from which it would take years to recover. Look at the people who were encouraged by this Measure. A bonus was given to these people because they had done nothing, while the people who had striven and had given their last penny towards the expenditure for the education of their children, were left out with a promise of a dole. The idea of "necessitous Board Schools" was so impressed on the House that his belief was that they would have, following this Bill, a paltry and insignificant Measure that might give £50,000 or £100,000, but would not touch the question at issue.

Mr. W. F. LAWRENCE (Liverpool, Abercromby) said the School Board of Portsmouth had pretty nearly swallowed up all the Voluntary Schools in that district, and he thought the House would agree that the "necessity" was not with the Board but with the Voluntary Schools.

SIR B. BAKER said that at the present moment he had no recollection of more than one school being taken over, but certainly not more than two.

MR. W. F. LAWRENCE said the hon. Member had told them that the Board Schools educated 25,000 children, and he had had a paper put into his hand which showed that the Voluntary Schools represented only 3,900 children, and therefore he thought his statement was sufficiently accurate. When the hon. Member said there was no irritation or difficulty between the two systems it was perhaps because there had been what they saw in the Zoological Gardens—an assimilation of one system by the other. The hon. Member, like so many other hon. Members opposite, had based his opposition to this Measure largely on the ground that it did not give adequate control to any local body. He submitted that this was one of the few arguments that could be reduced to an arithmetical ratio. At present the State contributed about 35s. for every child. Under this Bill there would be another 5s. Hitherto, there had never been any complaint that the control at Whitehall was inadequate to see that this 35s. contribution was efficiently expended, and could it be argued that an addition of 5s. to that amount immediately disqualified what had hitherto been an efficient body? He was not prepared to define that night what was necessary for local control, but he submitted that if that was the best argument that the Opposition could bring against this Measure it was wholly inadequate and, in fact, somewhat insignificant. He approached this Bill as the representative of a district in which they educated a larger proportion of the children in Voluntary Schools than in Board Schools. They had 111,000 places and something like 100,000 children in the whole of the schools. Two-thirds of those were educated in the Voluntary Schools, and in view of that fact the House would see that their interest in the Bill was of the most vital character. The Solicitor General told them they ought not to grudge this 5s., because by its means they would promote the thorough efficiency of the Voluntary Schools. He heartily agreed with and endorsed what the hon. and learned Gentleman said when he affirmed that it was not the relief of the subscriber but the benefit of education which by this Bill they intended to keep in view. And if he offered any criticism of the Bill it was not because he grudged the 5s. grant, but because it was inadequate, so far as they were concerned, and did not go far enough to produce that thorough efficiency which they all so much desired. Though he voted with the greatest pleasure for the Bill, it was rather from philanthropic motives, and because he did not wish his constituency, though it would imperfectly benefit, to stand in the way of districts that would distinctly benefit by it. The difference in the cost between the two systems, Board and Voluntary, in Liverpool, was 16s. a head, so that the House would see that the promise of 5s. or 6s. was far from representing the amount of money necessary to bring Voluntary Schools up to the desired point of efficiency. He quite understood the difficulties of the Government were very great, because their followers were not entirely united on this important question, and, considering how short a time the question of rate aid had been before the country, it could hardly be expected that country districts should at once see that the interests of Voluntary Schools should certainly take precedence of their preconceived ideas. But in the north people fully believed there was no system which could adequately meet the pressing need of schools unless it was a system founded on universal subventions by the State or partial subventions from the rates. They were not afraid of that fair amount of local control to show that the ratepayers' money was properly spent. ["Hear, hear!"] He did not blame the Government that, in the present division of thought in their ranks, they should hesitate to adopt a system which he believed was the only logical system. The system foreshadowed by the Bill was rather a hand-to-mouth method, and did not really and adequately meet requirements. It did not thoroughly proceed on any principle that he considered would be likely to be permanent. He had shown how, pecuniarily, it would not meet their needs in Liverpool, and it was also obvious that the Bill would create differences of treatment between localities, and certainly would do so between schools and parishes. In such cases there would no doubt be a certain amount of questioning, and this would probably give rise to further legislation. The Bill would only be an interval Measure, and when the country came to consider the subject more thoroughly, assuredly there would be a demand for something more final in its method, something more definite in its result. The Church House scheme proceeded on a logical principle. The rate aid would have applied to only a limited section of the country, to some 612 out of 9,300 schools, and in the result, as applied to 20 important towns, 18 of these would have had rates reduced, and only two, of which two Liverpool was one, would have had their rates increased to an extent not exceeding 2d. in the pound. There was not sufficient reason for that scheme being so emphatically condemned as it had been by the country districts, for though it would not have done so much for them, it would have done much for urban districts. There was every reason to show that what was wanted was local option in regard to this question. The differences in districts were so great in different parts of the country that, however much universal handling might be desired, financial and other circumstances differed so much that local option was the only way of solving the question. He highly appreciated what the Bill proposed in the way of association, though there was great opposition to that on the other side of the House, and some opposition on the Government side of the House. But it should be remembered that, whatever the Vice President of the Council in his office might lay down to-day was capable of being altered by a future Vice President. It was really not going to have the force of law, it was a new scheme that would require thinking out. It was not a law of the Medes and Persians; it was merely giving power to the Department to draft a scheme liable to subsequent alteration. If it proved successful it would not be altered, and as experience grew, either party could make more formal what was now proposed in the nature of a rough draft. It was altogether a misnomer to talk of the Act of 1870 as a settlement. It was entirely an experiment. It was thought then, though that idea had disappeared, that it was founded on the principle of "live and let live;" but, in spite of what the hon. Member for Oxford University had said, it was not the case that Church of England Schools were in any sense in that progressive condition he intimated. True, their numbers had increased something like 100 per cent., but the chilren educated in Board Schools were increasing in a much greater ratio than the children in Voluntary Schools, and it was very clear, when you compared school districts in the north and also in London, that the proportion of children in Voluntary Schools would not increase at the same rate as those in Board Schools. How could it be so when efficiency and success were matters of £ s. d.? You cannot expect in Voluntary subscriptions that plethora of money to be found in most rated districts. The country had for years demanded relief for Voluntary Schools. The Bill of last year was rejected because it was too big, and it was right that the Government should limit their desire in the first place to Voluntary Schools. But when it was remembered what the Government last year proposed for poorer Board Schools, it was absurd to say the Government were indifferent to the claims of necessitous Board School districts. He approved of the provision for an efficient audit. It was necessary that public money should be carefully looked after, and without doubt serious difficulties had arisen from the neglect of accounts by managers. The late Vice President (Mr. Acland) had taxed the Northern Churchmen with not subscribing sufficiently to the support of their schools, but on that point he read a few figures comparing what was done in Lancashire with what had been done in London. London had 250,000 more inhabitants than Lancashire, but the school attendance was 578,000 in London and 585,000 in Lancashire. The Voluntary School children in London were less than 30 per cent. of the whole, and in Lancashire 80 per cent. of the whole. In London were provided 250,000 free places; in Lancashire 715,000. In London the proportion of subscriptions was as 46s. to 90s. in Lancashire. There was nothing to complain of in the zeal of the northern counties for Voluntary education. He cordially wished the Bill success; it was a Measure of the power of the Government rather than the extent of their goodwill. He hoped the Government would think out the great question of rate aid, for which so much could be said, and spread belief in it among country districts where there was much to be learned as to the needs of Voluntary Schools.

MR. LLOYD-GEORGE (Carnarvon Boroughs) said the hon. Member who had just spoken had made an important admission that one result of the Bill would be to create a certain amount of inequality between districts, and he gave a remarkable illustration when he said that in Liverpool two-thirds of the children attended Voluntary Schools and in London only a third; and, the payment of the grant being 5s. per child, Liverpool, in spite of the difference in population, would receive twice as much as London in contributions from the Imperial Exchequer. The Solicitor General argued that one effect of the Bill would be that the ratepayers would receive assistance, owing to the fact that, Voluntary Schools being kept in existence, School Board rates would be saved. But this was no answer to the case where you have nothing but Board Schools in a district. Take the case of three parishes, A, B, and C. Parish A was a School Board district, and B and C Voluntary School districts. The Solicitor General said that if parish A did not pay the 5s. grant to parishes B and C there was to be a School Board rate there, consequently parish A, which was already paying the School Board rate, must be taxed in order to save parishes B and C their School Board rate. That was a gross injustice to parish A, and therefore the Solicitor General had made out a case for the inequality the Opposition were attributing to the operation of this Bill. The Solicitor General said that under the Agricultural Rates Bill of last year they had already made contributions towards the School Board rates in several country districts. But that was creating another inequality, because the very districts which would receive one-half of the rates under the Agricultural Rates Bill were districts where the School Board rates were light. In the districts where they were heavy, a small pittance was received under the Agricultural Rates Bill, so that they were simply creating a gross inequality as between the various districts, which would be intensified and exaggerated by the Agricultural Rates Bill rather than improved. There was another inequality, and that was with regard to the payment of rates on Voluntary Schools. In the case of Luton, where they had a School Board district, Luton would have to pay the rates, but the surrounding districts, where they had Voluntary Schools, would be exempted from the rates. Again, take the case of Festiniog, where there was nothing but Board Schools, while in one or two of the surrounding parishes there was nothing but Voluntary Schools. What would be the result of this Bill? The Voluntary School parishes would be exempted from the payment of rates in respect of their Voluntary Schools, but the Board School districts would have to pay rates in respect of their Board Schools. By thus exempting Voluntary Schools from the payment of rates they were penalising the School Board districts in order to pay the rates of the Voluntary Schools, and were doing it entirely at the expense of the Board School districts, which were making great sacrifices in order to give children an efficient education. The hon. Member for Liverpool said they were not going far enough. He should like to ask hon. Gentlemen on the other side of the House, How far did they propose to go? What was the proposition of hon. Gentlemen opposite? Did they say that the whole of the burden of the maintenance of the Voluntary Schools ought to be borne by the country? He thought they were entitled to an answer to that question. The hon. Member for Liverpool said it was a question of arithmetic—proportion of control. That being so then he (Mr. Lloyd-George) said that the proportion of their contributions towards the maintenance of the Voluntary Schools was much higher than the proportion of control they got over these schools. The Solicitor General said the State ought to hold the balance evenly between the Voluntary and the Board Schools. Did that mean that the whole burden of the maintenance of these schools was to be borne by the State? If so he thought it was perfectly ridiculous to contend that the two systems were on the same basis. The speech of the Solicitor General, fortified by that of the hon. Member for Liverpool, had simply proved that the systems were not on the same basis. First of all they had got the very material distinction of control between them. The Solicitor General absolutely gave away the case of the Voluntary Schools. The hon. and learned Gentleman said that the crux of control was the appointment of teachers, as of course it was. The fact of the matter was that the success of a school depended far more on the teachers they appointed than on the teaching that was conveyed. In this one crux of popular control the State had not got it, but it was in the hands of one or two managers. The Voluntary Schools were in the position of private adventure schools, and they had an entirely free hand. If they did not care to accept money from the State they could refuse, and still carry on the Voluntary Schools absolutely independent of any control. There was another point where there was a considerable difference between the two systems. One system was run absolutely in the interest of one sect. He considered that to be a very material difference, and so did hon. Members opposite. So important was it, that the organ of the Church Party, *The Guardian*, last week said that if they did not get this five-shilling grant they did not consider they got adequate compensation for the amount of secular instruction they were conveying in their schools, and unless they did get the grant they would run their schools purely and simply as mission schools. *The Guardian* was the exponent of Church views on political matters. ["Oh!"] Well, he would say of the more important and the more sober-headed of the Church Party, and in the opinion of the more important and influential section of the Church Party, the most important point, after all, in these schools was not the secular instruction that was conveyed to the children, but the definite, dogmatic theological instruction conveyed to them. Here they had one set of schools run entirely in the interest of one sect, and another set of schools where one sect had no advantage over another. How could anyone contend that they were entitled to the same measure of support from the public? The House had simply to look at the way in which teachers were appointed in the different schools. Take two parishes. In one they had a Voluntary School—a Church School in

which he himself was for eight years. In that district nine-tenths of the children were Nonconformists, yet not a single teacher had ever been appointed who was not either a Churchman or did not give up Nonconformity for Churchmanship before he was appointed. The enormous preponderance of the Nonconformist population was shown by the fact that in this School Board district the Churchmen had only been able to return one member of the Board. They would have expected the Nonconformists to retaliate this—he would not say narrowness and bigotry that was displayed in the adjoining parish. But after all it was far better to trust to the people for a sense of fair-play rather than to any priesthood or any sect. What happened in that school. With only one Churchman on the School Board, the head master was a Churchman, and so was every one of the assistant masters and mistresses. A short time ago a mistress was appointed. There were several applicants for the post. One of them was a Churchwoman; she had no qualification and no certificate, but she was a good teacher, and for that reason alone she was appointed, although there were several Nonconformist competitors. But in the adjoining schools, however bright a lad might be, however excellent a teacher he might make, not a single Nonconformist boy had ever been appointed, though nine-tenths of the children were of that persuasion. He asked whether the school which practically excluded the whole of the nine-tenths of the children in the parish was entitled to the same measure of support as the school which treated every child alike without distinction of creed. This was not the only distinction between Board and Voluntary School teachers. The only service Board Schools were entitled to expect from their teachers was service directly connected with the education of the children, but teachers in Voluntary Schools were expected to play the organ, etc., act as secretary to a Church, and fulfil all kinds of onerous functions which were practically made a condition of appointment in many schools. It was not a question of religious or secular instruction but of religious and sectarian instruction. ["Hear, hear!"] The clergy were given opportunities for proselytising. In many cases the appointment of a young person to the position of teacher was subject to his becoming a renegade to the religion of his fathers. He knew something of Voluntary Schools. He attended one for eight years. ["Hear, hear!"] There was no doubt the clergy used the schools for mission purposes. They made use of opportunities among the two or three million children who attended. Why did the laity support the Voluntary Schools? Not always from religious motives. It was a question of rates. If the Voluntary Schools were closed it was said that the rates would be doubled. Much was said about the "intolerable strain" of the cost of Voluntary Schools. In one of the parishes of Carnarvonshire 30s. per head was paid in voluntary subscriptions, or four times more than the average throughout the country. In 1893 £118 was received in subscriptions. In adjoining parishes there were School Boards and rates of 9d. and 1s. If those who kept the Voluntary Schools going in the first parish abated their subscriptions where there was a 9d. rate £183 would have to be paid, and where there was a rate of 1s. £245. With the advent of a School Board the number of schools also would be increased. So it was not to promote religious education but to save their own pockets. ["Hear, hear!"] In the district of the Penrhyn quarries there was the largest voluntary subscription in Carnarvonshire. In Lord Penrhyn's own village £440 was subscribed yearly. In the adjoining Festiniog district there was a School Board, and the rate was 1s. 9d. If there had been a School Board in Lord Penrhyn's parish and Lord Penrhyn paid the rate in the same proportion that it was paid at Festiniog he would have to pay £2,188. This was the sacrifice made for religion. In Festiniog there were also higher grade schools where technical instruction was given in quarrying. They earned an average grant of 22s. 6d., and the schools in the Penrhyn district 18s. This was the test of the superiority of a school. These Voluntary Schools gave as meagre an education as the State would allow, and they paid their teachers, on whom the moral and mental welfare of three millions of children of this country depended to a large extent, stipends which their supporters would not dare to offer to the trainers of their racehorses—[*cheers*]—and said, "Look at the sacrifices we are making for religious education. The strain is 'intolerable,' and we ask you, at the expense of the people to relieve us." A more impudent, hypocritical claim was never put forward. [*Cheers.*] It was said that religious teaching in Board Schools was not definite. What was definite religious teaching? The advancement of the character of the child or the interests of a particular sect? If the character of the child was at stake there was no virtue or lesson which would conduce to the building up of sound, honest, manly character which could not be taught in Board Schools. But it was said that dogma must be taught. What was meant by dogma? He had had no definition. [AN HON. MEMBER: "The religion of the parents!"] What! When nine-tenths of the children were Nonconformists. [*Laughter and cheers.*] If the religion of the parent was to settle what should be the definite religious instruction in these schools, the controversy in Wales would soon be put an end to, for there would be no Voluntary Schools or subscriptions, but universal Board Schools down there. But if by definite religious instruction was meant religious dogma, then it was proposed that, in the most subtle science, points which were in dispute with the most powerful intellects in the world were to be submitted to the judgment of an immature child who could not understand the simplest problem in arithmetic. ["Hear, hear!"] If that was going to be the definite religious instruction, let them give it to those who comprehended it. What scientific teaching would they dare to convey in this form? Supposing it were a question of history, what would hon. Members opposite think if the majority of the Voluntary Schools were managed by Liberal Dissenters, who used books which conveyed distorted ideas of the facts of history? Supposing that in reading the history of early Christianity the doctrine that the property given to the Church was national property was inculcated into the children; and supposing the children were taught the doctrine of disestablishment and disendowment, what would be said? Let them suppose a school, the managers of which were Socialists, and that they had a catechism prepared by some Socialist Dr. Gace, who taught the doctrine that all property was simply accumulated robbery; would not they object to the sum of 35s. per child being given at the expense of the State Treasury towards maintaining schools where those revolutionary doctrines were taught? The fact was this was simply an attempt on the part of the priests to obtain their old power over the education of the people—["hear, hear!"]—but that was not the sort of instruction that was wanted in this country. They should teach the children historical facts, read the Scriptures to them, discipline their intellects, and train their moral perceptions; and then, when the children came to decide these questions for themselves, they would be able honestly to select those dogmas best adapted to the development of their natures. [*Cheers.*]

*COLONEL MILWARD (Warwick, Stratford-upon-Avon) said that in every speech that he had made during the recess he had said that a measure of justice must be given to necessitous Board Schools equally as to necessitous Voluntary Schools. [*Opposition cheers.*] As a matter of fact, the Board Schools obtained, at all events, some relaxation under the present Bill—that was to say, they obtained help with regard to the 17s. 6d. limit. ["Hear, hear!"] He did not know whether hon. Members were aware of the effect of the working of that limit. In Redditch during the last 18 months, in the very large Voluntary Schools, in each department of boys, girls, and infants, they had been able to earn the highest possible grant in every possible subject. The immediate result of this great success on the part of the teachers was that under the 17s. 6d. limit they lost no less a sum than £108. Was not that a fine which ought not to be imposed upon any school? That was simply an impossible state of things. That was how the question affected Voluntary Schools. It affected Board Schools in another way. The Chairman of the King's Norton School Board had said to him that it was a mistake to think that the 17s. 6d. limit affected Voluntary Schools only, it effected Board Schools also very largely. They were constantly running up their expenditure for the sake of getting out of the 17s. 6d. limit; they painted and repaired their schools, and bought books and materials when it was not necessary for that purpose. So that the removal of the 17s. 6d. limit was really as great a benefit to Board Schools as to Voluntary Schools. [The FIRST LORD of the TREASURY: "Hear, hear!"] The Conference at the Church House upon this subject had been of an historic character. The resolutions adopted by the Church House were (1) that there should be 6s. to all elementary schools alike; (2) that it should be paid to federations only of Voluntary Schools; (3) that there should be aid from the rates; (4) that the administration of the aid grant should be vested in federations; (5) that religious denominations should have the right to increase their school accommodation; (6) the removal of the 17s. 6d. limit; and (7) the removal of the rates. The whole of those points were to be found in the Government Bill with the exception of the fifth resolution. They had been in advance of their time in demanding aid from the rates—rate aid in School Board Districts only, and which should not exceed voluntary contributions—but it would come—["hear, hear!"]—on certain conditions. The Government Measure had the body of the Church behind it, and had, in a large measure, the support of the Roman Catholic body. He wished to speak in terms of the highest respect of that body with regard to education. They had a very difficult task to discharge. It was thought by some that Roman Catholic schools were to be found in the large towns only; but he assured the House that was not the case. There were places where there were exceedingly poor Roman Catholic schools; where the masters and mistresses were sorely underpaid, and where the priest himself had to defray nearly the whole of the cost. This was done on principle; but the Roman Catholics were never ashamed of their religion, either with regard to education or generally. Their whole education system was founded upon religion, and he was greatly pleased to see that they were satisfied with this Bill. Under it they would receive a large instalment. They hoped to receive great benefits from it. The last speaker said that the Church schools were run in the interest of a particular sect. How could that be, when it was well known that many Nonconformist children attended Church schools in districts where there were Nonconformist schools? If that was true, and it was true, how could it be said that the Church schools were run in the interest of a sect? He came now to the question of the country at large. The country believed that the denominational schools needed assistance, and that if that assistance was not given they would be broken up. He quoted figures to show how greatly in arrears some of the schools were, although most economically managed. Reference had been made to the condition of Birmingham Church schools. On this subject he had a letter from the Bishop of Coventry, which stated that the £5,000 raised in these last two years had saved 14 Church schools in Birmingham from extinction. The Bishop went on to say:—

> "We want the money for the improvement of education, for better salaries to our teachers, on whom has fallen the chief part of the intolerable strain, for saving pupil teachers from excessive drudgery, for better appliances. If the Government will enable us to do these things—and the present Bill will do so—our schools will be on a better and more assured footing, public confidence will be increased, and subscriptions will flow in in larger volume. Should the help be refused we shall be perilously near extinction all round; for our teachers will fall away, pupil teachers will be almost impossible to procure, and public confidence in our permanence as part of the educational system of the country will vanish."

They did not want money to pay off their debts, but to improve the position of their teachers, and to improve the appliances of their schools. With regard to audit, he proposed to place on the Paper an Amendment changing the word "may" into "shall." [*Opposition cries of* "Hear, hear!"] They had been told that the money would not be devoted to school purposes, and that it would not be given to the schools at all. Those were challenges which they could not possibly allow to pass by; therefore he hoped the Government would make the audit more strict. Then there was the question of representative management. [*Opposition cheers.*] He admitted there was too much one-man management in the case of Voluntary Schools. [*Opposition cheers.*] He did not look at the matter from the point of view of hon. Gentlemen opposite. They imagined that in the Voluntary Schools children were crammed, as it were, into a mill and turned out all in the same nice religious pattern. [*Laughter.*] What he meant was that the management of those schools was thrown too much upon the clergy of both town and country parishes. Clergymen of the Church of England and the Roman Catholic Church were brought up in the tradition that to teach and train the children was their duty, and they did it, and for doing it the country owed them a deep debt of gratitude. ["Hear, hear!"] But it was unfair to throw upon the clergy the entire burden of the management of the schools, and if the Government were to introduce a clause to add to the present managers appointed by the trustees of the school one half more to be appointed by the parents or by the subscribers, or, the best of all, by the village or parish or urban council—[*Opposition cheers*]—that introduction of the nominative and the elective element into the management of the schools would greatly improve the position of those schools. [*Opposition cheers.*] But he was not giving utterance to any new doctrine. He had heard it over and over again at diocesan and Church meetings. ["Hear, hear!"] They were not in the least frightened by the idea of popular control in the management of their schools. On the contrary, they hailed it. ["Hear, hear!"] He heartily supported the Bill so far as it went, but he hoped it would be supplemented by another Bill extending the benefits of the present Measure to the Board Schools. [*Opposition cheers.*]

SIR FRANK LOCKWOOD (York) said that in one sense this had been a most extraordinary Debate. The subject had now been discussed for two nights on the Second Reading of the Bill, and it had been discussed at length upon the Resolution preliminary to the introduction of the Measure. And yet during all that time the House had not heard one word from the right hon. Gentleman the head of the Department responsible for education. [*Cheers.*] That state of things was without precedent. [*Cheers.*] What would have been said in 1870 if, when a great matter of educational interest was before the House, Mr. Forster had not taken part in the Debate? ["Hear, hear!"] Why, then, did the right hon. Gentleman (the present head of the Education Department) sit dumb in the

House? [*Cheers.*] Was he right in supposing that this most extraordinary position of affairs meant that the Vice President of the Council rather agreed with the criticisms of the Bill than with the arguments in support of it? [*Cheers.*] He hoped that before the Debate closed the right hon. Gentleman would state his views in order that the House might know how far right hon. Gentlemen on the Treasury Bench were in agreement with the heads of the Education Department. This was not a domestic question, but a question upon which the House had a right to have light thrown; and he hoped the information would be forthcoming before the Debate concluded. [*Cheers.*] In regard to the speech of the hon. and gallant Gentleman who had last spoken, there was much in it with which those who opposed the Bill were in agreement. ["Hear, hear!"] The hon. and gallant Gentleman stated that when the Bill got into Committee he would put down an Amendment to substitute the word "shall" for "may." The hon. and gallant Gentleman had better be quick then, for he would find a great number of Gentlemen on the same errand. [*Laughter and cheers.*] The hon. and gallant Gentleman further stated that he was in favour of representative control.

*Colonel MILWARD: "I said "representative management."

Sir FRANK LOCKWOOD said that if the hon. and gallant Gentleman succeeded in inducing the First Lord of the Treasury, who was in charge of the Bill, to accept his views, it would greatly simplify the duties of the right hon. Gentleman. ["Hear, hear!"] The hon. and gallant Gentleman had found fault with a very able speech which had been delivered in the course of the evening in opposition to the Bill. The hon. and gallant Gentleman had rather taken his hon. Friend to task for the strength of the language he had used. But perhaps his hon. Friend had had some provocation for the strength of his language. He was not aware whether or not the hon. and gallant Gentleman had been in his place on Thursday night—if he had been he must have heard the hon. Member for the Tunbridge Division of Kent say that the position of those who opposed this Bill was animated by hatred of religious education and detestation of religious instruction, and that those who opposed this Bill did so in order to destroy religious education. He did not see the hon. Member for the Tunbridge Division in his place, but he assumed that the hon. Member had had some elementary religious education himself, though it appeared to have done very little towards fostering Christian charity in his heart. ["Hear, hear!"] For his own part, he could not help deprecating the introduction of religious discord into this discussion at all. ["Hear, hear!"] Did hon. Members think that the calm consideration of this question was likely to be forwarded by the introduction of such a topic as that? ["Hear, hear!"] He entirely agreed with an observation that had been made by the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary for the Colonies on the subject. In the very early days of the right hon. Gentleman in that House—he believed that he was reading from what was probably the first speech of the right hon. Gentleman in that House—the right hon. Gentleman had said that,

> "his experience had led him to the conclusion that the religious difficulty was not the difficulty of the parents, and that, in fact, very little would be heard of it if the priests and parsons would stand aside."

["Hear, hear!" *and laughter.*] He did not know whether that was one of the opinions that the right hon. Gentleman had changed with the advance of years. ["Hear, hear!" *and laughter.*] At all events, in 1876 those were the views held by the right hon. Gentleman, with which he was glad to say he cordially concurred. ["Hear, hear!"] For his own part he declined to be regarded as an enemy of the Voluntary Schools. He had never taken up that attitude, and he hoped that he should never do so. ["Hear, hear!"] He was one of those who were willing to admit that at a time when, to its shame be it said, the State did nothing for elementary education, the Voluntary Schools did what little was done in that direction, and therefore he was disposed to deal fairly with them; but at the same time they must not lay themselves open to the reproach that they were dealing unfairly with the other classes of schools. ["Hear, hear!"] His hon. and learned Friend the Solicitor General had drawn a very gloomy picture of the probable fate of the Voluntary Schools in the event of this Bill not being passed. His hon. and learned Friend said that unless the Bill passed the Voluntary Schools would slowly drive to their death. His hon. and learned Friend, however, must have found himself clearly in conflict with the hon. Member for the Oxford University, who asserted that the Voluntary Schools were never in such a flourishing condition, or were doing such good work as they were at present. His hon. and learned Friend had taken upon himself to repudiate the charge that the Voluntary Schools were "laggard," but it had never been urged against the Voluntary Schools that they were laggard in point of time. They had never been reproached because they did not come into existence at an earlier date than they did, but they had been and were reproached with being laggard in efficiency. ["Hear, hear!"] In fact, as regarded the Voluntary Schools, he was firmly convinced that he was more favourably disposed towards them than the right hon. Gentleman the First Lord of the Treasury was towards the Board Schools. ["Hear, hear!" *and laughter.*] The Bill proposed to alter the whole of the position as regarded the Voluntary Schools, which by having this grant made to them would be deprived of the sympathy that was at present extended to them in many quarters, and instead of making them more popular would make them most unpopular. Was the attitude taken up by the Government in connection with this matter such as they had any right to expect? How was it to be supposed that the Government were going to bring in a Bill dealing with Voluntary Schools to the exclusion of Board Schools. ["Hear, hear!"] The First Lord of the Treasury had spoken of his speeches in the country, and the right hon. Gentleman expressed his sympathy with those who had read them. He was afraid he had not read them all. [*Laughter.*] That was his misfortune. But he had read a good many of them, and there was only one which appeared to him to convey any inkling of the intention of the Government. It was delivered at either Manchester or Rochdale, and he was sure the Vice President of the Council would remember it. [*Laughter.*] The right hon. Gentleman said that he was going to cut up the Vice President's big Bill and bring in a little Bill. That was the only intimation of the kind of Education Bill that was going to be introduced. Who could have thought that in that process of dissection the right hon. Gentleman was going to cut apart that which had been advocated by persons of great responsibility and speakers of great weight as the principle to be followed?

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY: That is the only speech you have read.

SIR FRANK LOCKWOOD said that was the one which struck him as peculiarly indicating the course the right hon. Gentleman intended to follow. He supposed he was not allowed to refer any longer to that which his right hon. Friend the Member for Rotherham referred—the statutory equality statement of the Duke of Devonshire. The right hon. Gentleman's explanation was that the Duke of Devonshire was opposed to anything like an interference with what he called statutory equality. That was said in answer to the demand of the Bishops for an alteration in the law which would give them a grant in respect of Voluntary Schools. The Duke of Devonshire was under the impression that the Bishops had come to ask for some alteration in the fixed grant, and he explained to the worthy prelates that under the law he could not do what they asked because he would be disturbing the statutory equality. The Duke of Devonshire said that the Bishops did not put their case very clearly. He would like to hear what the Bishops said about the Duke—[*laughter*]—but they had not taken the public into their confidence in this matter. The Duke of Devonshire explained the law to them, as they perfectly well knew it to be, and if they had not known it to be so they would not have waited on him. But what else was there to give notice of the change of attitude of the Government? It might be said that in last year's Bill there was a departure from this principle of statutory equality. The fourth section provided that certain advantages should be given to Voluntary Schools, and a member of a School Board pointed out to the Secretary for the Colonies to what a serious inequality that provision would give rise, and this was his answer:—

"As regards the differentiation between Board and Voluntary Schools under the special aid grant, I feel there is *prima facie* much to be said on the matter, and I have no doubt this clause will receive the fullest consideration in Committee on the Bill."

That amounted to this, that that was a matter on which the Government had an open mind, and to which they would give benevolent consideration. The House had not the slightest notion of the attitude now adopted until the First Lord of the Treasury gave notice of his Resolution.

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY: I am most unwilling to interrupt the hon. and learned Gentleman, but I must point out that I said specifically on more than one occasion that the question of Voluntary Schools would be the subject, and the only subject, of the Bill we should first introduce. ["Hear, hear!"]

SIR FRANK LOCKWOOD said he of course accepted the right hon. Gentleman's statement. He was only stating what an insignificant member of the public like himself thought. If the right hon. Gentleman stated that he had said he would deal with Voluntary Schools, and not with Board Schools, he accepted his statement, and would look for the speech. They were told that they must wait, and that there was another little Bill in preparation; but the right hon. Gentleman declined to let them know what was in that Bill, and it remained in the box. He thought that everyone would agree with him, however, that a Bill on the Table was worth any number of Bills in the box. [*Laughter.*] If the right hon. Gentleman would only tell them that this second Bill would provide for an equivalent grant to Board Schools he would materially assist the progress of the present Measure. They were told that by discussing the Bill before the House they were delaying the production of the other Bill. If that were an argument of any weight all the Government would have to do would be to put down for consideration a variety of Measures which were most obnoxious to the Opposition, and to answer criticism by saying, "Your opposition is most unreasonable, because by discussing these Measures you are preventing others which will be less objectionable to you from being reached." They would not be debarred from criticising the Bill now under consideration by the Government's statement that the injustice which they were creating by it was an injustice which they hoped to remedy by a subsequent Measure. How apparent were the inequalities which this Bill would cause! In the Yorkshire towns, Hull, Bradford, Leeds, Middlesbrough, Halifax, Sheffield, York, and Huddersfield, there were 79,000 Voluntary School children and 148,000 Board School children. Under this Bill the latter would get nothing, although, if it were extended to Board Schools, they would get £37,000 a year. Lancashire, he knew, would not suffer the same amount of injustice, but he was a Yorkshireman, and as such he protested against this Bill. There never had been a great amount of friendly feeling between Yorkshire and Lancashire since the wars of the Roses. [*Laughter.*] Take the case of York. There the number of Voluntary School children was 7,621, and the number of Board School children 1,855. The former would get £1,900. He did not grudge them one penny of the money, but it was a great hardship that the Board Schools should not get the £463 to which they were entitled on a fair distribution of the money. The Solicitor General had endeavoured to justify the discrepancies shown to exist. He admired the discretion of the Government in selecting the hon. and learned Member as their apologist. It would never have done to have put up an English Member to defend this Bill. [*Laughter and cheers.*] But his hon. and learned Friend could go down to the Inverness Burghs without the slightest apprehension, for he would hear nothing about this Education Bill there. He would discuss the mussel beds of the Moray Firth or some other animating subject of that kind—[*laughter*]—and he would hear no word of reproach in respect of his action in connection with this Bill. How would the proposed grant affect the subscription lists? The Government themselves were evidently apprehensive of the result, because they had introduced the words "due regard to be had to the maintenance of voluntary subscriptions." Of course those were most ineffective and indefinite words. The right hon. Member for the Montrose Burghs made an appeal to the Government to say what those words meant; but a discretion had been shown in avoiding an answer to the question. The Opposition knew what they wanted and what they ought to have, and they knew what was the view of the right hon. Member for Dartford as to what ought to be the safeguard. The right hon. Gentleman said:—

> "It should be a *sine qua non* in all cases in which assistance was to be given to the locality that there should be some guarantee on the part of the locality that the subsisting subscriptions should be maintained."

But there was nothing of the kind in the Bill. [*Cheers.*] There was a benevolent wish that these subscriptions might be continued; due regard was to be had to their maintenance; but beyond this indefinite suggestion there was absolutely nothing in the Bill which guaranteed their maintenance even at the present rate. The Government did more than show that they were indifferent in this matter. His hon. and learned Friend complained that nothing had been said with regard to the 17s. 6d. limit. That 17s. 6d. limit was at any rate in some cases a safeguard for the maintenance of the voluntary subscriptions, and this the Government had given up. What would be the best Amendment which could be made in this Measure? The Government should call it a "Denominational Education Bill," because that title would more fitly represent its aims and objects than if they retained the present title. On the question of control his hon. and learned Friend the Member for Warwick and Leamington was under the impression that the associations were to manage the schools. His hon. and learned Friend was evidently not aware that their duty was one of distribution, and he spoke of them as "suggested associations." Of course his hon. and learned Friend knew nothing about them. [*Laughter.*] Who did? No one had been told how they were to be created, who were to be eligible for election to them, how long they were to continue, and what was to be their character. The right hon. Member for the Montrose Burghs had pressed this question, but had obtained no answer. His right hon. Friend had asked what permission there would be to "pool" the payments under the Bill. Would there be an objection to a rural dean "pooling" with an urban archdeacon? [*Laughter.*] But there had been no answer to the question. There was one good reason why those explanations could not be given—because there was no one opposite who was in a position to give them. [*Laughter and cheers.*] It was not a matter on which the Government had as yet apparently made up their minds. There appeared to be two great principles which were outraged by this Bill which the House had a right to see preserved. The Vice President of the Council on May 5, 1896, said:—

> "the principles which ought to regulate the distribution of the separate aid grant are—first, that it should be given to the schools which require aid and not to the schools which do not require aid—[*cheers*]—secondly, that security should be taken that the money so given should be used for the purpose of improving the educational efficiency."

[*Cheers and counter-cheers.*] Neither of those principles were secured by this Bill. [*Cheers.*] They were giving aid to Voluntary Schools with a free hand, and denying it to the Board Schools. ["No, no!"] Under this Bill not a halfpenny would be given to the Board Schools which the Government admitted to be necessitous. So far as efficiency was concerned the Government said in the most indefinite language that certain things should be done, but they did not make it imperative that an audit should be held. No precautions were taken to see that the grant of public money should be dispersed in the interest for which it was apparently suggested, and for the objects which ought to be achieved—namely, efficiency in our education. [*Cheers.*]

THE VICE PRESIDENT OF THE COUNCIL (Sir JOHN GORST, Cambridge University), who, on rising, was received with ironical Opposition cheers and counter Ministerial cheers, said: The hon. and learned Gentleman began his speech by a personal challenge to me which I feel it would be scarcely respectful to the House if I were not to take up. May I first correct an error into which the hon. and learned Gentleman has fallen? The Education Department of this country is presided over by a Committee of the Privy Council which has a President as well as a Vice President. [*A laugh.*] The hon. and learned Gentleman having asked that the views of the Committee of the Privy Council on this Bill should be made known to the House of Commons, I am the person upon whom that duty properly devolves; and if the House has any interest in the views of that Committee I will endeavour in a few words—

[*loud Opposition laughter*]—to make those views known. The Committee of Council are a body of very practical men, and in the discharge of their official duties they do not question whether it is desirable or undesirable that Voluntary Schools should exist. They find that more than half the children of this country are now being educated in Voluntary Schools, and it was therefore their business to do which lies in their power, and to accept with gratitude any legislation which Parliament may pass to make those Voluntary Schools efficient. [*Cheers.*] Now, some of the Voluntary Schools are, of course, equal to the best Board Schools in the education they give, but average Voluntary Schools are not so efficient as the best Board Schools, and they are inefficient for two reasons. First of all, they lack money, and then they lack organisation, and this Bill supplies both. [*Cheers and counter-cheers.*] Now, the hon. and learned Member for York was rather pathetic in the doubts he threw upon the question whether, when this money was given to the Voluntary Schools, it would not go in relief of subscriptions, and I think other hon. Members have been equally sceptical as to the ultimate destination of this money. Well, the Committee of Council think—[*laughter*]—that if the Bill were to pass in its present form they would take special power to insure that the money voted by the benevolence of Parliament would really reach the schools, because they are to have "due regard to maintenance of Voluntary subscriptions." I do not think that the prescription of any definite minimum subscription would be an advisable experiment; first, because the minimum would have a great tendency to become a maximum, and, secondly, because the conditions of districts vary so much one from another that what would be a very proper prescription in one place would be an extremely improper one in another. [*Cheers.*] Therefore the Department, the Committee of Council, think—[*laughter*]—that, if they take very good care that the fact of falling off of subscriptions without any good and sufficient reason should never be recognised by them as of itself a ground for making a grant to any school, they would be able then to secure that at all events this special aid grant had not tended to diminish the subscriptions at present given. They would have to take into consideration the possibility in any locality of obtaining adequate subscriptions, and they would take very good care that this special aid grant should supplement and not supplant the subscriptions already given in the district. Therefore I think that the present Bill will secure the object of putting larger sums of money into the hands of the managers of necessitous Board Schools—[*ironical cheers*]—and if that money is properly spent the schools will become more efficient. [*Opposition laughter.*] We are getting on step by step. Now how are we to secure, or how is the Department to secure, after this Bill is passed that this money will be applied to the proper parties? I have very often said to the House on occasions when addressing them on this subject, that the Education Department cannot of itself, with nearly 20,000 schools with which it has to correspond, discriminate between school and school, that there must be some local body to assist, and upon their advice it can discriminate between those schools which really want aid and those which do not. Last year a body was proposed, a public body, an elective body, and hon. Gentlemen opposite would not have it. [*Cheers.*] This year another body is proposed. It is to be a voluntary associated body. Speakers on the other side have complained that they know nothing of the constitution of this association. Well, the Committee of Council are not, like certain public bodies in this country, a Department which will not carry out the decisions of Parliament—they are bound to carry out the decisions of Parliament. [*Laughter.*] But until the decisions of Parliament are known, and until they see the exact shape in which this Bill will be ultimately passed, it would be somewhat presumptuous, even in the Vice President of the Committee—[*laughter*]—to put the Act of Parliament into execution. [*Laughter and cheers.*] I think I can satisfy hon. Gentlemen opposite that the task is not an impossible one, and if Parliament were to please to intrust to the body of which I am the Vice President the duty of performing that task, they think they would be able to do it to the satisfaction of Parliament and of the country. [*Cheers.*] The associations would have to be associations of considerable size. They would not be merely small groups of schools, but would represent something like a million of population. Then the governing body of these associations would be a body which would represent the managers of the individual schools. It would prevent that isolation of managers which is often legitimately complained of now, and which occasionally produces such very unfortunate results in our educational history. [*Opposition cheers.*] With the managers meeting together, bound in one common association, individual eccentricities would at least have a tendency to be suppressed. [*Ironical cheers.*] There would be no attempt to interfere with the individual management of the schools. Every effort would be made to prevent the loss of what is called local interest—["hear, hear!"]—so that the school would still be the school of the locality and the parish. But the managers of the various parishes would meet together, and so be brought into contact with one another. They would have a representative on the council of the association, and I presume that in a short time a considerable amount of experience and knowledge would be gained by the associated body, which would be of enormous value to the managers of individual schools, and would teach them better methods and encourage them in a very much improved management. The larger the association, the better would be the management, and the less would be the waste. Because it would be impossible for the Committee of the Privy Council, however wise, to discriminate between one association and another. They would have to give the same proportionate amount of special aid grant to one association as to another. They could not discriminate between the richer and the poorer, and therefore the larger you make the association the more likely they are to represent the average of the country, and the less risk of an undue amount of special aid grant going to one.

Mr. JOHN DILLON (Mayo, E.): Is there no power in the Bill to discriminate between associations in proportion to the necessities of the schools forming them?

Sir J. GORST: No, there is not; and therefore the larger the association the more likely you are to get the average level. ["Hear, hear!"] I do not know whether the hon. Gentleman can suggest any improvement by which such a power of discrimination could be exercised, but I do not see any possibility of it. ["Hear, hear!"] On the other hand, these associations must not be so large that they lose their local character, because the members of the council of the association must be in a position to estimate the relative condition of the different schools. The schools which would join the association would certainly be all the poorest schools; and I hope that none would stand out. If a great number stood out they would impose upon the Committee of Council, I do not like to say an impossible task, but an extremely difficult task which I doubt their capability of accomplishing. And the Bill is based upon the supposition that practically all schools would go into these associations. Those that stood out would be the exceptional cases; and the power in the Bill to refuse the grant to schools which did not join the association would have to be pretty freely used, so that no school would remain out without a valid excuse. [*Opposition cheers.*] These associations being so formed they would have the duty of preparing and submitting to the Department a scheme for the distribution of these grants in accordance with the terms of the Bill, so as to insure that the money would go to the schools that want it, and that it would be used by those schools for the purpose of improving education. Remember, this scheme is proposed by the association, but it is to be decided upon and approved by the Committee of Council, which is responsible to this House, and whose acts in approving or disapproving the scheme of any association can be called in question in this House. ["Hear, hear!"] The Department will have the assistance of its inspectors—men of considerable experience, spread over the whole of the country, acquainted to a great extent with the local necessities—who will advise the Department, and who will, I think, put them in a position to know whether any scheme which is sent up from any part of the country is one carrying out the designs of Parliament or not. Well, now, a scheme will not only have to indicate the amount of public money which is to be allotted to each of the constituent schools, but it will also have to prescribe the purposes for which the money so allotted shall be used by the school. [An HON. MEMBER: "Will the schemes be published?"] That is a detail I have not gone into, but I have no doubt the schemes will be published. Now, may I just remind the House—we are talking practically now; we are talking about what we have talked very little about during this Debate —[*Opposition cheers*]—may I point out to the House what these associations may recommend and what the Education Department may prescribe? They may prescribe, for instance, that schools in the area for which the association is formed shall have a sufficient number of teachers, shall have additional teachers. I am quite sure that the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Rotherham will agree with me when I say it is impossible that there can be efficient education in any school in which the teacher is entirely single-handed—["hear, hear!"] —and yet there are all over the country numbers of small schools in which the teacher is single-handed. I am sure that if hon. Members would visit one of these schools they would be astonished that any person could conduct the school under the circumstances in which he was placed. ["Hear, hear!"] Well, the association may prescribe that in every school there shall be an assistant teacher, or at least one or more pupil teachers. They may prescribe that no school is to be kept on the minimum staff required by the Department. They may raise the level of education; and I should like to say I have often heard in this Debate Members talk about the Education Department having raised the cost of education. It is not the Education Department that has done that; it is the public opinion of the country. [*Opposition cheers.*] I do not think that even in the enlightened days of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Rotherham the Department was ever very much in advance of public opinion. Notwithstanding all the eulogies heaped upon the Education Department in this Debate, I am inclined to think the Education Department have, if anything, rather lagged behind—[*Opposition cheers*]—and so far from the minimum staff being some tyrannical Measure inflicted on schools by the Education Department, it is that which I remember the late Archbishop of Canterbury, in a speech he made shortly before his death, said it was a standard to which every school ought to come—I do not recollect his exact words—and that most of the Church Schools, he was thankful to say, had arrived at it. Well, you may raise the standard. Then you may raise the salaries. ["Hear, hear!"] There are many schoolmasters and mistresses who are now receiving salaries far below those they ought to receive. ["Hear, hear!"] They are exercising one of the most important functions to society; upon their efforts depend the welfare of the rising generation, and how can poorly-fed and poorly-clad men and women fulfil duties of that kind in a manner in which they ought to discharge them? ["Hear, hear!"] I believe many hon. Members little know the enormous strain which is put upon the teacher, sometimes the solitary, single-handed teacher, especially in small village schools. ["Hear, hear!"] Then there is improved apparatus. There are desks; there are better seats; there are the little museums of objects which go so far to enlighten and enliven children in schools; there is the apparatus now necessary for the manual instruction which is prescribed in all the lower standards and is very much used in the schools; and, finally, there is the apparatus for physical exercise. Now, all those are things which the associations will recommend and which the Education Department will prescribe, and that is how this money is to go. I am quite certain that the Government—I do not know that I have a right to speak for my right hon. Friend the First Lord of the Treasury, who is not here at present —[*Opposition ironical laughter*]—but I can speak as far as the Committee of Council is concerned—any Amendment which really goes to secure that this State aid grant shall be used really for the purpose of promoting and improving the education of the country will be welcomed by the Government. [*Opposition cheers.*] Lastly, I ask what guarantee have we that the money when given will be so applied? You have got the audit. ["Oh!"] Well, if the Education Department may prescribe an audit, I think I can undertake that they will prescribe an audit, that they will take care that, in cases where schools receive this State aid grant, the grant is really applied to purposes Parliament intended. I hope I have been short and practical—["hear, hear!"]—and I hope I have not been betrayed into taking any part in the party Debate, in which I would have joined with the very greatest reluctance. I do not shine in these party Debates on education any more than the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Rotherham shines. [*Loud laughter and cheers.*] Both he and I have had a great deal too much to do practically with this question to enjoy seeing it made the shuttlecock of Parties on the floor of this House—["Hear, hear!"]—and both he and I know that 30 years hence, when the consistency or inconsistency of the Gentlemen who ornament the two front Benches will be forgotten, those children whom our legislation will affect will be the men and women upon whom will depend the destinies of the Empire. [*Cheers.*]

MR. T. LOUGH (Islington, W.) said the Solicitor General had stated that no objection had been taken on this side of the House to the fact that rates on Voluntary Schools would be paid under the Bill. For his part, he would like to take objection to that clause so long as Board Schools were not equally treated. He saw no reason why there should be any differentiation on that point any more than on others. The Solicitor General also said there was not a single necessitous Board School in London. There were, however, plenty of necessitous ratepayers in London, and if the Government put too heavy a tax on those ratepayers they would wake one morning to find that they had strained the patience of London too far. Personally he thought there was a principle that applied to Roman Catholic Schools that did not apply to schools connected with the Church of England, and he believed the London School Board had, by the provision of two or three Jewish Schools, recognised that the Jews had got a genuine grievance. But speaking generally of the country, the Church of England had got no legitimate reason to differ, so far as he knew, from the system of education that was given in their Board Schools. In the case of the Roman Catholics, however, it was not only the form of religion, so far as religion was taught in the Board Schools, that he objected to. They objected to the history that was taught in the Board Schools, and therefore he thought there was a difference in principle between the treatment of the Roman Catholics and of the Church of England Schools. There was another point, and that was that not one of the Roman Catholic Schools had been abandoned to the School Board, while about 1,200 Church Schools had been given over to the School Board. That showed the Roman Catholics held their schools with a tenacity which did not distinguish the Church of England, and that again entitled them to different treatment. He thought that in the Debate that night and on Friday night the line of cleavage had been too stringently drawn by some speakers on this side of the House. A good deal of time had been occupied by stating what he might call the extreme Radical claim with regard to education. He had got some respect for facts, and among the facts for which he had got respect was the one that the Government were in power and had got a majority of something like 140 at their back. Therefore parties should move as far as possible in the direction of meeting each other's views in discussion until the point of conflict resolved upon was reached, rather than talk of the extreme views on either side. The supporters of the Government said help was wanted for Voluntary Schools, and the Opposition did not deny that, and on certain terms would agree that help should be given to Voluntary Schools. But the Bill went further, and declared that help should be given to Voluntary Schools but none to Board Schools, and here was the point of conflict with the Government. He had heard every assurance that the First Lord of the Treasury had given; he had heard all about that little Bill yet to be brought forward; and he was not satisfied, nor was he reassured by the remembrance of the clause about Board Schools in the Bill of last year. Necessitous Board Schools were to receive £50,000, but now Voluntary Schools were to receive £620,000. He would assent to nothing except that Board Schools should be treated with absolute equality with Voluntary Schools; whatever grant per head was given to scholars in Voluntary Schools should equally be extended to

Board Schools. That was not an unreasonable position to take up. He desired to make this claim in the first place in the interest of subscribers to Voluntary Schools. The Solicitor General and the First Lord had said the Bill was not to give subscribers any relief, and the First Lord said he was not going to give any relief to ratepayers. But the ratepayer should have relief; he was hard pressed, and in this matter of education had made great sacrifices. In any arrangement made the ratepayer should not be left out. The First Lord suggested that landlords would be relieved, but he was not thinking of them. In London the landlords were not ratepayers. The rates were paid by the occupiers, and ground landlords escaped payment. He was thinking of the ratepayers, who had but small purses, from which they drew large contributions for education. He objected to the Bill because ratepayers were treated very unfairly under it. He did not object to assist Voluntary Schools on condition that Board Schools received a grant in assistance to the same proportion. He cast no reproach against Voluntary Schools; they had accomplished a noble work, and 40 or 50 years before Board Schools were in existence they alone held aloft the lamp of education in the country. In 1870, before any Board School was founded, there were 1,200,000 scholars in 8,280 Voluntary Schools in the country. It was a great work for any organisation to carry on, and he did not wish to depreciate it. It must also be remembered that Voluntary Schools received great help from the State. Constant grants were made to them. In 1870 the grant was something like 10s. per head of the children in the schools, and it continually increased until now, not including the fee grant, it was 18s. 5d. per child. There was great assistance given in the noble work Voluntary Schools had done for half a century. Voluntary Schools had great advantages in carrying on the work; the traditions of education were with them; they had as managers gentlemen trained at the Universities, who knew the value of education. No wonder they accomplished great work, and the value of it he did not wish to minimise. Then he turned to the work of the Board Schools to see how it bore upon this Measure. Notwithstanding the great work Voluntary Schools did, there was in 1870 great work to be accomplished by Board Schools. He believed that even then there was something like 1,500,000 children throughout the country for whom no provision existed in any school, and so these Board Schools came into existence. They spent at first 33s. per head per child, but now in London they spent an average of £2 10s. per head. Who was it who undertook this great work for the Board Schools? They saw the most striking contrast between those who had taken up this work for the Board Schools and the managers of Voluntary Schools. In the case of Board Schools they were only simple citizens, men who had to struggle hard for their living from day to day. They got together children and accomplished in London and other great centres noble work in organising these great Boards. He thought gentlemen who were so eloquent in praise of the Voluntary Schools ought to be able in the cause of education to spare a little sympathy for the great work accomplished by the Board Schools. He wanted to ask the House this question, what was the attitude Parliament had adopted towards those two bodies up to the present moment? It had been an entirely impartial attitude, reward being given in accordance with the quality of the work done. What was the result? When the Boards came into existence in 1872 they found that in the first examinations the Voluntary Schools were easily ahead of the Board Schools, and continued so until 1880. When the test of examinations was applied to the schools in the two systems the Voluntary Schools easily led. This was not to be wondered at when they bore in mind the facts. The Voluntary Schools had all the traditions of learning in their favour when the Board Schools were organised by new bodies which did not know much about the matter, so that for the first eight years the grants given according to results went mostly to the Voluntary Schools. At the end of eight years—in 1880—they found a change, and then the Board Schools began to take the highest grants. After they once got the lead the Board Schools never fell behind, and a list of the returns showed that on an average all over the country there was a shilling per child more earned by Board Schools according to the test of efficiency which Parliament had applied than was earned by the scholars in the Voluntary Schools. It proved that, according to the impartial test which Parliament applied, after twenty years existence of the Board Schools, they were able easily to lead the Voluntary Schools in this great race of education. The noble Lord the Member for Rochester said: "I fully admit that the secular education in the Board Schools is better than that in the Voluntary Schools." The noble Lord made several grave admissions to the House which, he thought, would hereafter be found a little disastrous to the Bill, and of all the grave admissions he thought that was the most serious. Why should not the gentlemen who had been trained in the Universities, and who were managers of private schools, still have sustained the position they occupied as the leaders of education? Why should poor citizens be able to out-distance them? The right hon. Member for the Montrose Burghs, replying to the noble Lord the Member for Rochester, said the noble Lord was absolutely sincere in everything he said in that House. He readily admitted that. He would observe that the noble Lord was also very astute, and he often made an admission of this kind to prevent it being made with a more damaging effect from the Opposition side of the House. When the word "secular" was used by the noble Lord there was a smell of brimstone about it. He wanted to see whether there was anything which made it creditable to the Voluntary Schools to be behind the Board Schools in the matter of secular education. What was the object of education by both classes of schools? It was to fit children to be good citizens. Take the test, first, of the girls' schools. A special allowance was made by the Education Department for laundry work, yet only 713 were taught it in the Voluntary Schools and 11,000 in the Board Schools. Take cookery; 33,000 were taught it in the Voluntary Schools, but 93,000 in the Board Schools. He submitted that there was a truer instinct for educating the children, and educational work was better accomplished in the Board Schools than in the Voluntary Schools. As regarded the boys, French and German were taught to only 3,000 boys in the Voluntary Schools, but to 10,000 in the Board Schools, and the students of algebra were 13,000 compared with 24,000. These were proofs of fact that there was a keener appreciation of a good education in the Board Schools, and though the traditions were all on the side of Voluntary Schools, yet the Board Schools gave a better and higher education. The noble Lord the Member for Rochester praised the religious education of Voluntary Schools. There was no test, and if there were, he believed that Board Schools, as in secular subjects, would do well, and if a definition of religion was to prepare the child to live a better life, all the subjects taught in the Board Schools eminently fitted a child for discharging his duties in later life socially and to the State. Hon. Members opposite seemed to think rates were more easily paid than subscriptions. The fact that the rate was compulsory made it a far heavier burden on the citizen. 125 Voluntary Schools had been warned for inefficiency, but only 27 Board Schools. London paid £3 8s. in School Board rate, and yet no part of England was so unfairly treated. She would pay £140,000 of the £620,000 to be allocated under the Bill, and yet she received only £40,000 in return. These rates were felt to be very heavy in London. Within the last six months, in the parish he represented a gentleman offered £10,000 to the parish to build free libraries in it if the ratepayers would adopt the Free Libraries Act; but, although this would have involved a rate of not more than a penny, and probably of not more than a half-penny in the pound, the ratepayers refused, by a great majority, to put themselves under this rate. They must agree that the work of the Board Schools was better done than that of the Voluntary Schools. If the Chancellor of the Exchequer could find £600,000 for Voluntary Schools, he could easily find £400,000 for the Board Schools. But he believed that they refused to allot this money in accordance with the excellence of the education that was given because they wished to give it rather to religious denominations. That was a bad system.

Debate further adjourned till Tomorrow.

SUPPLY [12th FEBRUARY].

Resolutions reported;

ARMY ESTIMATES, 1897-8.

(1.) "That a number of Land Forces, not exceeding 158,774, all ranks, be maintained for the Service of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland at Home and Abroad, excluding Her Majesty's Indian Possessions, during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1898."

Resolution Read a Second time, and agreed to.

(2.) "That a sum, not exceeding £5,937,800, be granted to Her Majesty, to defray the Charge for the Pay, Allowances, and other Charges of Her Majesty's Army at Home and Abroad (exclusive of India) (General Staff, Regiments, Reserve, and Departments), which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1898."

Resolution read a Second time, and agreed to.

(3.) "That a sum, not exceeding £295,800, be granted to Her Majesty, to defray the Charge for the Pay, &c., of the Medical Establishment, and the Cost of Medicines, &c., which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1898."

Resolution Read a Second time.

Dr. FARQUHARSON (Aberdeenshire, W.) said he was glad to find that the grievances of the Army Medical Department were now attracting the serious attention of the War Office, and when he told the House that the Department was seriously undermanned, that civil practitioners had to be largely used to fill up the ranks, and that only 25 candidates could be found to compete, if such a term could be justified, for 40 vacancies, it must be evident that there was something far wrong about the present system. However, he was grateful for the concessions that had been made. The arrangement of Indian pay is most satisfactory, and the reduction of Indian service from six years to five, would be well received by the medical profession, and would be most beneficial to the health of the officers concerned. He hoped that the War Office would also give sympathetic consideration to the modest plea put forward by the Army doctors for an occasional short leave for study purposes, so that they might remove the rust of foreign service and keep up to the advancing progress of professional science. But these concessions, gratifying though they were, could not be accepted as a final settlement unless to them were added the fulfilment of the strong desire of the Department for definite military titles in a definite corps, like the Royal Engineers. This worked well in Italy and America and elsewhere and was found to be most beneficial and essential on active service, now that Army surgeons were called upon to perform so many strictly military duties. The compound titles, cumbrous though they were, had worked well and were so gradually familiarising the combatant mind with the idea of militarism in connection with doctors, that no doubt before long the process of evolution would make the further stage of progress easy. In conclusion he asked his right hon. Friend to consider whether he could not improve the social position of the doctor, by attaching for a definite number of years to a regiment.

Mr. ARTHUR JEFFREYS (Hants, Basingstoke) called attention to the terrible increase of disease in the Indian Army, notwithstanding the advance of medical science and the great ability of the Army doctors. He represented Aldershot, where there were 16,000 soldiers; he had 2,000 soldier constituents, and, therefore, thought it his duty to call attention to this painful subject. The increase of a certain disease among the men in India was of the most appalling nature. Last Session he had moved for a Return on the subject; and the information given was certainly startling. Gibraltar had recently been described by the Under Secretary for War as a healthy station, and in a certain sense it was healthy. The number of men sick there in 1893 was 27 per thousand, and in 1894 30 per thousand, as compared with 16 per thousand in England. But in Bengal the admissions to hospital had increased from 449 to 500 per thousand; in Madras from 483 to 516 per thousand, and in Bombay from 436 to 544 per thousand. Therefore he ventured to call the attention of the House to this terribly increasing form of disease. The case of the West India regiment was equally bad, but he should not read the statistics. Now, what he wished to ask the Government was whether the medical department could not do something to stop or mitigate the formidable ravages of this terrible disease. It was not his purpose to suggest what should be done, but surely, at a time when they were told that it was necessary to increase the Army because it was too small, it would be much better to stop a disease which was disastrous to so many men in the Army. [" Hear, hear ! "] He thought it would be a waste of time to discuss the matter, and he simply asked his right hon. Friend whether he would give it his attention. He had no doubt he could suggest what could be done.

*THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR WAR (Mr. BRODRICK, Surrey, Guildford) said he quite realised the object of his hon. Friend behind him in bringing the subject before the House, but he was afraid the remedy for what he complained of was not in the hands of the medical officers but of that House. A change had been deliberately made in accordance with a strong expression of opinion in Parliament. That was in 1893, and in that year and since then it appeared from the statistics that there had been a development of the worst form of disease. His hon. Friend had not been quite clear as to the figures. Reference had been made to 400 or 500 per thousand, but in India the admissions during the year were not admissions of different men, but of the same men coming back to hospital on several occasions. Consequently it was to be hoped there was not nearly so large a proportion of individual cases as suggested by the figures. Still, it was so serious that the Secretary of State for India had found it necessary to appoint a Departmental Committee. Pending the Report of the Inquiry he was sure the House would not expect him to say anything further. His hon. Friend opposite had mentioned several points which he asked him to consider. They were all points of a practical nature. If it were possible to attach medical officers to regiments when they first joined it would, no doubt, have a good effect in many ways. At the same time the present system had been adopted after great consideration, and he doubted whether it would be possible to carry out the arrangements suggested by his hon. Friend. He hoped that on one or two other points his hon. Friend had mentioned he would be able to give satisfactory assurances.

COLONEL LOCKWOOD (Essex, Epping) asked whether the result of the Inquiry by the Departmental Committee would be laid on the Table?

*MR. BRODRICK: I think the question ought to be addressed to the Secretary of State for India.

*CAPTAIN PIRIE (Aberdeen, N.) said that the responsibility which this great national evil threw upon the House was enormously increased by the fact that it involved not only men but large numbers of mere boys, and he ventured to impress upon the House the gravity of the responsibility they owed to the soldiers whom they got to serve the country. While this state of things was prevalent, it was not a matter for surprise that some parents felt a reluctance to see their boys entered in a service which in so many cases caused them to end their days in hospitals and workhouses, owing to their invalided and unhealthy condition.

MR. HUBERT DUNCOMBE (Cumberland, Egremont) said he desired to ask whether an opportunity of discussing this question would be given this Session after the Departmental Committee had reported? If the right hon. Gentleman could do that he thought the Vote might pass without further protest, but if not, he thought no man who had taken an interest in the matter could allow the Vote to pass.

MR. JOHN BURNS (Battersea) asked whether the right hon. Gentleman, pending the Report of the Committee, would appeal to the medical authorities at Netley Hospital for a Report of the condition of things in that Hospital. He was informed that the condition of the troops there was too bad for words. He thought it would do no harm if a few Members of that House went down and saw with their own eyes the condition of the poor fellows in Netley Hospital.

*MR. BRODRICK said that he understood that the Indian Committee had themselves visited Netley and made investigations there. Under these circumstances he thought it only proper to await their Report before taking further steps.

Resolution agreed to.

MILITARY WORKS (MONEY) BILL.

Second Reading deferred till Thursday.

PUBLIC HEALTH (SCOTLAND) BILL.

Adjourned Debate on Second Reading (5th February) further adjourned till Thursday.

MILITARY LANDS (1892) AMENDMENT BILL.

Considered in Committee.

Clause 1:—

Committee report progress; to sit again To-morrow.

TRUSTS (SCOTLAND) BILL.

Committee deferred till To-morrow.

LAW OF EVIDENCE (CRIMINAL CASES) BILL.

Second Reading deferred till Thursday.

SUPPLY.

Committee deferred till Wednesday.

WAYS AND MEANS.

Committee deferred till Wednesday.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT (1894) AMENDMENT BILL.

Second Reading deferred till Friday.

POOR LAW OFFICERS' SUPERANNUATION (IRELAND) BILL.

Second Reading deferred till Wednesday, 10th March.

CRETE.

On the Motion "That this House do now adjourn,"

Mr. EDWARD MORTON (Devonport) said he wished to ask a question on a matter respecting which the Government, he thought, had not treated the House properly. It would be in the recollection of hon. Members that in the afternoon a question was asked with reference to the Greek expedition alleged to have gone to Crete. The Under Secretary for Foreign Affairs refused, however, to supply any information on the subject or to allow any interpretation whatever to be put upon his reticence. But at that very time the Prime Minister was making a statement in another place. Members of that House had been compelled to obtain their information from the evening newspapers. According to the published reports the Prime Minister had made the very important statements that the Powers had agreed unanimously to make a very strong representation to Greece upon what he called the "unwisdom" of its attempt, that this country was in entire accord with the Powers, that the British Government had addressed to Greece language of "great earnestness," and had practically placed the policy of this country in the hands of the majority of the Powers in regard to the treatment of Greece in view of possible hostilities. Was it impossible thus early to get a perfectly plain declaration on behalf of the Government that in no circumstances would the forces of this country be used against Greece or for Turkey in the event of hostilities? Further, there was a rumour which had created a most unfeigned feeling of delight, in his quarter of the House, at any rate, that a Greek expeditionary force had actually succeeded in landing at Canea.

The SECRETARY to the TREASURY (Mr. R. W. Hanbury, Preston): I do not think it is possible to give the hon. Member any information to-night on the points he has raised at rather an inconvenient time. But it is quite possible for him to put a notice on the Paper and to receive a reply to-morrow. ["Hear, hear!"]

House adjourned at Twenty-five minutes after Twelve o'clock.

HOUSE OF LORDS.

Tuesday, 16th February 1897.

COMMISSION.

The following Bill received the Royal Assent:

Local Government (Elections).

The Lords Commissioners were the **Lord Chancellor** (Lord Halsbury), the **Earl of Kintore**, and **Lord James of Hereford** (Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster).

House adjourned at Half-past Four o'clock, to Thursday next, a Quarter-past Ten o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

Tuesday, 16th February 1897.

PROVISIONAL ORDER BILLS.

LONDON (CLARE MARKET, STRAND) PROVISIONAL ORDER BILL.

Read a Second time, and committed.

METROPOLITAN POLICE PROVISIONAL ORDER BILL.

Read a Second time, and committed.

ROYAL COMMISSION.

Message to attend the Lords Commissioners. The House went; and, having returned, Mr. **Speaker** reported the Royal Assent to the Local Government Act 1897.

NOTICES OF MOTION.

EAST INDIA (OFFICERS OF GENERAL LIST).

Captain CHALONER (Wilts, Westbury): To call attention to the grievance of the Officers of the General List (Indian Army) in the matter of their pensions; and to move that a Select Committee of this House be appointed to inquire into their case.—[*Tuesday, 16th March.*]

IMPORTATION OF FOREIGN MANUFACTURED GOODS.

Sir HOWARD VINCENT (Sheffield, Central): That, having regard to the great increase in the importation of Foreign Manufactured Goods into the United Kingdom, and the consequent loss of employment to the working classes in Great Britain and Ireland, this House is of opinion that, on and after the 1st day of January 1898, fully manufactured goods brought into this country from any foreign country should pay a toll, for the benefit of the British labour thereby displaced, of Ten pounds per centum *ad valorem*, and partly manufactured goods a Customs toll to British labour of half that amount, and that the proceeds of this Customs toll should be applied either in the reduction of taxation upon industry, or in the promotion of trade within the Empire, or in assisting emigration to British colonies and dependencies, or in advancing commercial and technical education, or in forming the nucleus of a national fund for the granting of weekly pensions through local authorities to deserving and necessitous persons over 65 years of age incapacitated from earning a livelihood by sickness or infirmity, or otherwise utilised as may from time to time seem expedient to the Treasury for the benefit of British trade and labour, a Return of such distribution being annually presented to Parliament.—[*Tuesday, 16th March.*]

ADMINISTRATION OF CROWN LANDS (WALES).

Mr. BRYNMOR JONES (Swansea Boroughs): To call attention to the Administration of Crown Lands in Wales; and to move a Resolution.—[*Tuesday, 16th March.*]

QUESTIONS.

GERMAN-MADE TINS.

Sir HOWARD VINCENT (Sheffield, Central): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade (1) if he can state upon what grounds the Lords of the

Treasury have decided that the placing on tins imported from Germany a map of Southern India and Ceylon with the Union Jack, and below it representations of Her Majesty's Indian subjects, could not be held to convey an indication to a purchaser that the tins were British made, and coming therefore within the terms of the Merchandise Marks Act; and (2) if he can inform the House why such matters are referred to the Lords of the Treasury, and are not decided by Her Majesty's Customs and the Board of Trade, which, under the Amending Act of 1891, has to make regulations for the prosecution of offences affecting trade?

THE SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY (Mr. R. W. HANBURY, Preston): The marks of which the hon. Member complains appear to convey no indication as to the country in which the tin was made, but to be merely a part of its ornamentation. Indeed, the various types of female beauty, which have no doubt attracted the eye of my hon. and gallant friend, undoubtedly appear to indicate an origin quite distinct from this country. [*Laughter.*] The answer to the second paragraph of the Question is that, by Section 2 of the Customs Consolidation Act, 1876, the Board of Customs are "in all matters and things relating to the execution of their duties" subject to the control of the Treasury.

AGRICULTURAL STATISTICS.

MR. JAMES RANKIN (Herefordshire, Leominster): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Agriculture whether, in the forthcoming Annual Statement of Agricultural Statistics, he will give the figures of the numbers of occupiers of farms of various sizes, say those under 50 acres, between 50 and 100 acres, between 100 and 200 acres, and over 200 acres, and also state the actual number of farmers who produce wheat upon their farms?

*THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF AGRICULTURE (Mr. WALTER LONG, Liverpool, West Derby): It would not be practicable, without a special investigation of a very elaborate character, to state the number of farmers who grow wheat, and I regret, therefore, that in this respect I am unable to meet the wishes of my hon. Friend. Information as to the number of agricultural holdings of different sizes will, however be given in a special Return, which is now in the press, and it is proposed to print a summary of such information in the volume of Agricultural Returns for 1896.

LAND TAX.

MR. HEYWOOD JOHNSTONE (Sussex, Horsham): I beg to ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer if, having regard to the fact that in the new assessments to Land Tax which have been made in consequence of the Finance Act, 1896, many properties have been charged in respect of which Land Tax has not hitherto been paid, he will cause a copy of the register of redeemed Land Tax, so far as it affects any parish in England and Wales, to be supplied to the parish council (or meeting where there is no council) on application by them to the Commissioners of Land Tax?

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Sir MICHAEL HICKS BEACH, Bristol, W.): When the Land Tax on any property is redeemed, a particular description of the property is deposited with the clerk to the local Commissioners of Land Tax. There is also the general register of redeemed Land Tax at Somerset House, which may be inspected by any interested person. In these circumstances, I do not feel that I should be justified in sanctioning the trouble and expense which would be required in order to comply with the hon. Member's wishes.

PATRIOTIC FUND.

MR. HUDSON KEARLEY (Devonport): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Admiralty whether application has recently been made to the Admiralty by the Commissioners of the Patriotic Fund, inviting them to intrust to the Commissioners for administration certain Naval or Greenwich Funds; and, whether any decision has been arrived at; if so, will he state the nature of it?

THE FIRST LORD OF THE ADMIRALTY: Some discussion has taken place on the point raised in the first question of the hon. Member. The Admiralty have fully considered the subject, and have decided that it would not be desirable to transfer to the Commissioners of the Patriotic Fund the administration of any of the Naval or Greenwich Hospital Funds now under their control.

VACCINATION (REPEATED PROSECUTIONS).

MR. THOMAS BAYLEY (Derbyshire, Chesterfield): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether his attention has been called to the fact that Frederick Pearse, of 63, High Street, Andover, has been prosecuted 63 times for the non-vaccination of his children, and has paid upwards of £42 in fines and costs, and that, notwithstanding the unanimous recommendations of the Royal Commission on Vaccination against repeated penalties, the said Frederick Pearse was committed to Her Majesty's prison on the 10th instant in default of payment of a further fine; and whether he will consider this case, with a view to the release of the prisoner?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE HOME DEPARTMENT (Sir MATTHEW WHITE RIDLEY, Lancashire, Blackpool): My attention has been called to the case of this man. I can see nothing in the facts stated to justify me in advising any interference.

ANGLO-FRENCH POSTAL CONVENTION.

SIR CHARLES DILKE (Gloucester, Forest of Dean): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Admiralty whether the Admiralty was consulted as to Article IX. of the Anglo-French Postal Convention, signed 30th August 1890, which refers to navigation in time of war?

THE FIRST LORD OF THE ADMIRALTY: The article in question being practically identical with similar articles in the Postal Conventions between Great Britain and France, which had been in force from 1833 to 1891, the Admiralty were not consulted on the subject before the Convention of 1890 was signed.

KERRY BOG SLIDE.

MR. JAMES ROCHE (Kerry, E.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland (1) whether he will recommend the Commissioners of the Congested Districts Board to favourably consider an application made to them, a copy of which has been sent to him, to open up the district of the recent bog slide in Kerry by constructing a short road which, besides being of great utility, will contribute somewhat to the present support of the poor labourers in the neighbourhood, who are now very much in need; (2) whether he is aware that the Earl of Kenmare, the landlord, has offered gratis the lands required for the proposed works; (3) whether he will direct that a re-valuation, for rating purposes, shall be made of the lands that were partially and entirely destroyed in time for the striking of the rate for 1897; and (4) whether he is aware that a Commission, appointed for the purpose in 1811, recommended that the sum of £56 should be spent by the Government in draining this bog, as it was at that time in a dangerous condition, and that attention was repeatedly drawn to that recommendation?

THE CHIEF SECRETARY FOR IRELAND (Mr. GERALD BALFOUR, Leeds, Central): The Congested Districts Board are unable to undertake the particular work suggested in the first paragraph. As I have already explained, however, they hope to erect a bridge over the ford which has been swept away, and they would also be prepared under certain conditions to consider the carrying out of certain other specified works. I have no knowledge that the fact is as stated in the second paragraph. As to the third paragraph I am advised that no change in the value of land can legally be made under the annual revision of valuation, and that whilst, under existing statutes, it is open to a Grand Jury to apply for a re-valuation of a county, barony, or Poor Law union, there are no funds out of which the expenses of a re-valuation can be defrayed. Regarding the last paragraph of the Question, it is not the fact that the Commissioners appointed to inquire into Irish bogs recommended that the sum of £56, or any sum, should be expended by Government in the drainage of this bog. On the contrary, the Commissioners contemplated the drainage and improvement of Irish bogs generally by means of loans, by individuals or associations of individuals, and the Commissioners in their Report of 1814 submitted an estimate of £1,325 for the improvement of the bog known as the Quarries Bog, and which appears to be identical with that mentioned in the Question.

SCHOOL ACCOMMODATION, SOUTHPORT.

MR. HENRY J. WILSON (York, W.R., Holmfirth): I beg to ask the Vice President of the Committee of Council on Education, in view of his reply to applications from Southport for about 1,200 free places in schools, the Department wrote in November last that 302 free places were available in two Roman Catholic schools; that a school in process of building would provide a number of free places in the Marshside district, but that 350 free places would still be required in the centre of the town, will he state whether he has taken any, and what, steps to secure the provision of these 350 places; and what is being done for the Marshside children pending the erection of that school?

THE VICE PRESIDENT OF THE COUNCIL (Sir JOHN GORST, Cambridge University): More than 200 of the 350 free places have already been granted at the existing schools, and the managers have undertaken to supply the remainder on application by the parents. I understand that the Marshside children are attending North Meals and other neighbouring schools.

MR. HENRY J. WILSON asked if he understood from the right hon. Gentleman that practically at this moment there was accommodation for all the children?

SIR J. GORST: Yes, Sir.

LOAN FUND SOCIETIES (IRELAND).

MR. J. SWIFT MACNEILL (Donegal, S.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland (1) whether his attention has been directed to the case of the Ballinamallard, County Fermanagh, Loan Fund Society against James M'Gee and others, under the Loan Fund Act (6 and 7 Vic. c. 91), heard at last Irvinestown Petty Sessions, where Mr. Jones, resident magistrate, calculated that the borrower (M'Gee) had paid in interest and fines £7 odd on a £3 loan that had been out for 10 years; and (2) whether any steps will be taken to protect borrowers like M'Gee from the excessive charges of these Loan Societies, constituted under the Charitable Act aforesaid?

MR. GERALD BALFOUR: The facts are correctly stated in the first paragraph. The case of this borrower is an illustration of the system that has prevailed in many loan funds in Ireland of renewing loans which are altogether or partly in arrear as to repayment. The matter was fully investigated by the recent Committee of Inquiry into the working and management of loan funds, and the Loan Fund Board have now under consideration the Report of the Committee.

"FELON CONVICTS."

MR. E. H. PICKERSGILL (Bethnal Green, S.W.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what meaning is attached by the officers of convict prisons to the expression "felon convicts" in the Standing Order, which states that in case of absolute necessity it is lawful to shoot at a felon convict if his escape cannot otherwise be prevented?

SIR MATTHEW WHITE RIDLEY: A "felon convict" means, and is understood by the prison officers to mean, a convict who has been convicted of felony. Steps are taken to keep such convicts separate from those who have been convicted only of a misdemeanour.

MR. PICKERSGILL: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether a prison director, and, if so, who, has held an inquiry into the circumstances of the attempted escape of convicts from Dartmoor Prison on the 24th December last; whether he has received a report, and, if so, will he lay it upon the Table; whether he proposes to take any further action as regards the warders who killed the convict Carter; and what punishment has been awarded to the convicts Goodwin and Martin respectively for their attempt to escape?

SIR MATTHEW WHITE RIDLEY: Yes, Sir; by my directions a special inquiry was held by the visiting director of the prison, at which evidence was taken on oath, and a report made to me by him. It would not be in accordance with the usual practice or with the public interest that a confidential report of this character should be laid on the Table. After carefully considering this report and the evidence given at the inquest, I came to the conclusion that there was no sufficient ground for taking further action as regards the warders, who, in very difficult circumstances, appear to me not to have fired at the convict until the moment came when his escape could not otherwise have been prevented. The trial of the convicts Goodwin and Martin has been postponed, Goodwin up till now having been detained in the hospital.

GOVERNMENT POWDER MAGAZINE (PURFLEET).

MR. PICKERSGILL: I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for War whether his attention has been drawn to the report of a great fire in an oil store on the Essex shore at Purfleet, on the 11th ultimo, when it appears that the Government powder magazine was in danger, which was averted by the wind veering to the west; and whether, having regard to the fact that this powder magazine, which, it is understood, is the largest in England, is in close proximity to the stores of two oil companies which contain hundreds of thousands of gallons of oil, he will favourably consider a proposal to remove the magazine to a more suitable locality?

*THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR WAR (Mr. BRODRICK, Surrey, Guildford): The Secretary of State is advised that the powder magazine was not in any danger from the late fire at the oil stores, as high ground protects it in that direction. The removal of the magazine is not considered necessary or desirable.

FRIENDLY SOCIETIES (RULES).

MR. W. J. GALLOWAY (Manchester, S.W.): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury whether the Government will introduce a Bill this Session to abolish the statutory declaration now necessary before a magistrate upon the alteration of the rules of a lodge of friendly societies; and whether, in the event of the Government being unable to introduce a Bill themselves, they will give facilities for passing into law such an Act of Parliament if introduced by a private Member?

MR. HANBURY: The subject of dispensing with the statutory declaration before a magistrate and substituting some equally effective procedure is now being considered. It is possible that no fresh legislation will be necessary.

NATIONAL TEACHERS' PENSION FUND (IRELAND).

MR. D. MACALEESE (Monaghan, N.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland if in any scheme which may be devised to settle on a secure basis the Irish National Teachers' Pension Fund, he will consider the advisability of making provision for compassionate grants to the wives and families of teachers whose demise antedated but a few weeks the period of service which would have entitled them to pensions?

MR. GERALD BALFOUR: The question of revising the regulations concerning the National Teachers' Pension Fund is now engaging the attention of the Government. The suggestion of the hon. Member will be considered, but in saying this, I must not be taken as expressing any opinion on the merits of the suggestion?

NEWBLISS COURT-HOUSE (ORANGE LODGE).

MR. MACALEESE: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland if he will place upon the Table of the House the Correspondence which has taken place between the Lord Chancellor of Ireland and the Newbliss magistrates regarding the holding of an Orange lodge in the Newbliss court-house?

MR. GERALD BALFOUR: I have already explained to the hon. Member the substance of the correspondence referred to. It does not appear to me to be of sufficient public importance to justify its being laid on the Table of the House.

CLONBAIN "WHITEBOY" CASE (CORK ASSIZES).

Mr. J. C. FLYNN (Cork, N.): I beg to ask the Attorney General for Ireland, in reference to the Clonbain case tried at the winter assizes in Cork, whether he can explain why District Inspector Cograve took possession of the notebooks of the Constabulary bearing upon the case; and, without disclosing the contents of said notebooks, if he can say whether the entries made therein had any bearing upon the question of time, in view of the fact that the conviction of one of the prisoners, Daniel Buckley, was owing largely to a matter of time?

***The ATTORNEY GENERAL for IRELAND** (Mr. J. Atkinson, Londonderry, N.): The hon. Member's Question is, I think, based on a misconception. The District Inspector got possession of these notebooks in the preparation of the case for the prosecution, as it was his duty to do. I have already explained in answer to the hon. Member's Question of yesterday that the notes in these books were made by the two policemen who were summoned as witnesses for the accused. The contents of the notebooks could not, therefore, have properly been given in evidence by the Crown save upon the cross-examination of these witnesses. This cross-examination became impossible, owing to the fact that the policemen so summoned were not examined by the defence. The notebooks were in Court, and would no doubt have been used by the Crown on cross-examination had the defence by the examination of these witnesses given them the opportunity, which it did not. I must, therefore, beg to decline to state what were the contents of these notebooks or on what they bore.

EDUCATION VOTE.

Sir JAMES FERGUSSON (Manchester, N.E.): I beg to ask the Vice President of the Committee of Council on Education what number of School Boards have claimed payments from the Education Vote under Section 97 of the Education Act, 1870; what amount has been paid; and, whether such claims are on the increase?

Sir J. GORST: Three hundred and eighty-four Boards sent in claims for the year ending at Michaelmas, 1895, and £39,152 has been paid in respect of those claims. The claims for the year ended at Michaelmas last have not all been received; but it is expected that they will show an increase, as the Debates of last Session made several Boards realise the existence of Section 97 for the first time.

MONIFIETH POLICE COURT (CONVICTION FOR SLEEPING OUT).

Captain SINCLAIR (Forfar): I beg to ask the Lord Advocate if his attention has been drawn to a sentence inflicted on Wednesday last at the Monifieth Police Court upon four young lads, who are said to have committed the offence of sleeping in an open hay shed and, having received the punishment of a fine of 10s. or 14 days' imprisonment, to have gone to prison in default of payment; and, whether the Secretary for Scotland finds himself able to take any steps in regard to the case?

***The LORD ADVOCATE** (Mr. Graham Murray, Buteshire): As the hon. Member is aware, this Question was only put down last night. Enquiry is being made into the circumstances of the case by the Secretary for Scotland, who will communicate with the hon. Member on the subject.

SCHOOL BOARD ELECTION (SCOTLAND).

Mr. J. CALDWELL (Lanark, Mid.): I beg to ask the Lord Advocate if he can explain how it will be possible, in the event of a scrutiny, to determine how the elector voted, and the effect of the vote upon the election, having regard to the terms of Section 5, Schedule B, of the General Order regulating triennial election of School Boards in Scotland, issued by the Scotch Education Department in October last?

The LORD ADVOCATE: The General Order does not contemplate a scrutiny in the case of elections in parishes.

CRETE.

Mr. JAMES O'KELLY (Roscommon, N.): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether the Government will instruct British Consuls to prevent any British vessels carrying Turkish troops to Crete?

*The UNDER SECRETARY of STATE for FOREIGN AFFAIRS (Mr. G. Curzon, Lancashire, Southport): We have no reason to believe that any such action is contemplated by the Turkish Government, and, therefore, no instructions appear at the present stage to be necessary.

Sir WILLIAM HARCOURT (Monmouthshire, W.): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether he would state to the House what action had been taken since August last to give effect to the arrangement made by the Powers for the reform of the Turkish administration in Crete; and how soon after the arrangement was made the reforms agreed upon were put into operation?

*Mr. CURZON: The reforms decided upon by the Powers were finally agreed to by the Sultan on August 27th last, and were gratefully accepted by both sections of the population in Crete when promulgated there at the beginning of September. Steps were at once taken to put them into operation. In accordance with the first provision a Christian Governor-General was appointed for five years with the consent of the Powers, and was given powers over the troops in case of trouble. In accordance with another provision, the public offices were divided in the proportion of two-thirds Christian to one-third Mussulman. It was also provided in the scheme that commissions of European officials should go to Crete to organise the gendarmerie and the judicial administration. These commissions were duly appointed, and reached the island in December. The foreign gendarmerie was constituted, and an Englishman was appointed temporary commander. The Judicial Commission was also conducting its labours when, in December, disturbances again broke out. The chief remaining provisions of the scheme of reforms which related to the convocation, session, and powers of the National Assembly had not yet become operative, since the time for the summons of that body had not yet occurred. Finally, under the scheme the Powers assumed the responsibility for its execution.

Mr. JOHN ELLIS (Nottingham, Rushcliffe) inquired when the House would be in possession of the Blue-Book containing the actual text of these reforms?

*Mr. CURZON: I answered that question yesterday. I hope it will be ready in the course of a week.

Mr. FLYNN: May I ask whether the right hon. Gentleman is aware that the first of these reforms, that in relation to the appointment of a Christian Governor, has since been violated by the Turkish Government?

*Mr. CURZON: No; the hon. Member is inaccurate in that statement. A Christian Governor-General was appointed with the sanction of the Powers for five years. That Governor-General has since resigned, but the stipulations in the scheme were fully carried out.

Mr. T. P. O'CONNOR (Liverpool, Scotland): Will the right hon. Gentleman say whether it is not the fact that the Christian Governor-General made frequent complaints of embarrassment—

*Mr. SPEAKER interposed, and ruled the question out of order, as not arising out of the Question on the Paper.

Mr. T. C. H. HEDDERWICK (Wick Burghs): I beg to ask whether the British Commander at Canea threatened Prince George of Greece, that in the event of his executitg the orders he had received from the King and the Greek Government, he would be compelled to use force against him, and, if so, under what authority he acted thus?

*Mr. CURZON: I have received private notice from another hon. Member of a Question in similar terms which I will answer at the same time. Her Majesty's Government have not been informed of the orders given to Prince George of Greece, but they believe that he was instructed to prevent the landing of Turkish reinforcements in Crete. The British Admiral cannot have used any such language to Prince George as is suggested in the Question, Her Majesty's Government having throughout dissuaded the dispatch of Turkish reinforcements, of which, indeed, there appears to have been no intention.

Mr. T. P. O'CONNOR: I beg to ask whether the Foreign Office has received confirmation of the alleged firing by the Greek warship *Miaulis* upon the Turkish troopship *Fuad*; and whether it was true that the captain of one of Her

Majesty's ships threatened the captain of the *Miaulis* that in future he would use force, if necessary, to prevent such action?

Mr. CURZON: We have been informed that the *Fuad* was fired upon by the Greek ship *Miaulis* while leaving Candia on the 12th inst. It is not known that any intimation of the nature described was made by the captain of one of her Majesty's ships to the commander of the *Miaulis*; but in pursuance of the agreement between the Governments of the Great Powers that their naval commanders in Cretan waters should be authorised to concert together to prevent any action that might lead to the outbreak of hostilities, the captain of her Majesty's ship *Trafalgar* gave an assurance to the Governor of Candia on behalf of the Powers that the *Fuad* would be allowed to proceed without hindrance.

REGISTERED LETTER ENVELOPES.

Mr. PATRICK O'BRIEN (Kilkenny): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury, as representing the Postmaster General, whether, as letters posted in the ordinary way in registered envelopes cost the sender three pence and the receiver a penalty of four pence, he will consider the advisability of having a notice printed on the official registered envelopes to warn the public that if such letters are posted in the ordinary way without a receipt being obtained, the receiver will be charged a penalty of four pence?

Mr. HANBURY: The official registered envelopes already bear a printed notice to the effect that they must be handed to an officer of the Post Office and a receipt obtained. The Postmaster General does not think it necessary to add anything further to the warning. In the case described by the hon. Member the charge made on delivery is two pence, not four pence, namely—the difference already paid and the penalty of four pence.

SCOTS GREYS.

Mr. C. L. ORR-EWING (Ayr Burghs): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for War whether it will be possible, under the new scheme for re-organising the cavalry, to retain grey horses in the Scots Greys?

***Mr. BRODRICK**: The intended re-organisation of the cavalry will not prevent the Scots Greys retaining their grey horses. No question is likely to arise about them for about thirty years.

VOLUNTARY SCHOOLS (SCOTLAND).

Mr. VESEY KNOX (Londonderry): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether any provision will be made during the coming financial year for an additional grant to Scotch Voluntary Schools, having regard to the fact that Episcopalians and Roman Catholics (the latter alone numbering one-tenth of the population) have to pay rates for the support of Presbyterian schools in addition to subscriptions to their own schools?

The FIRST LORD of the TREASURY (Mr. A. J. Balfour, Manchester, E.): I do not think it will be convenient to give the details of the proposal in regard to Scotland until the time for introducing the Bill arrives.

Mr. KNOX: Then there will be a Bill dealing with the question?

The FIRST LORD of the TREASURY: Yes; as has already been said, the position of Scotland with relation to this subject is under the consideration of the Government.

FINANCIAL RELATIONS (GREAT BRITAIN AND IRELAND).

Mr. KNOX: I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury (1) what is the meaning of the phrase "local services" in the proposed reference to the proposed new Commission on Financial Relations, and whether it is the intention of the Government to indicate by the terms of reference that expenditure on *e.g.*, the Irish Constabulary is not expenditure in which England and Scotland are interested, but that expenditure on all purposes outside of the United Kingdom is expenditure common to England, Scotland, and Ireland; (2) whether he will so alter the terms of reference as to enable the Commissioners to divide expenditure into three classes, that in which Ireland only is interested, that in which Great Britain only is interested, and that which is common to Great Britain and

Ireland; and, (3) whether, as to the third head of the reference, he proposes that the new Commission shall accept the conclusions arrived at by the previous Commission as to the taxation and taxable capacity of Great Britain and Ireland, or does he propose that the new Commission shall inquire again into those subjects?

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY: The questions raised in the first two paragraphs of the hon. Member's question are precisely those which it is intended the Commission shall include in their inquiry. As to the last paragraph of the question, it is left to the decision of the Commission whether they will accept the conclusions of the majority of the late Commission so far as they bear on the subject of the new inquiry, but as all the information that can be provided about the estimated taxation of Ireland and Great Britain was laid before the late Commission, it may be assumed that the new Commission will not find it necessary to go into that question again.

MR. J. J. CLANCY (Dublin County, N.): I beg to ask whether the terms of reference to the proposed new Commission on Financial Relations were intended to cover an inquiry into how much of the total expenditure which the State provides for purposes considered common to the United Kingdom is actually expended in England, Scotland, and Ireland respectively; and, if not, whether the proposed terms of reference will be so altered as to enable that point to be investigated by the proposed new Commission?

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY: I know nothing in the terms of reference to the Commission which will preclude that inquiry in the event of their thinking that inquiry relevant.

RATING COMMISSION.

MR. GEORGE WHITELEY (Stockport): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury (1) whether he can give to the House any information as to the progress made in their investigations by the Rating Commission; and (2) whether he can hold out any hopes that the Commission will be able to issue any Report during the present Session?

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY: The Commissioners on Local Taxation met in the autumn, and decided upon the character of the information it was desirable to secure from certain Government Departments and public bodies, and they appointed a committee to arrange the precise form in which the information should be communicated. The information required will be largely composed of statistics from the various departments, and will require considerable time for preparation. The regular sittings of the Commission have been arranged, and they will proceed to hear witnesses at an early date.

MR. G. WHITELEY: The right hon. Gentleman has not answered the last paragraph of my question.

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY: I thought my hon. Friend would infer from my statement that it is hardly likely the Commission will so far complete their labours as to enable us to deal with their Report this Session.

CRETE.

MOTION FOR ADJOURNMENT.

MR. T. P. O'CONNOR rose in his place, and asked leave to move the Adjournment of the House for the purpose of discussing a definite matter of urgent public importance, viz., "the present critical position of affairs in the Island of Crete, and the conduct of Her Majesty's Government in reference thereto;" but the pleasure of the House not having been signified

*MR. SPEAKER called on those Members who supported the Motion to rise in their places. Not less than 40 Members having accordingly risen,

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That this House do now adjourn."

MR. T. P. O'CONNOR justified the course he had adopted by the strong feeling which the condition of affairs in Crete had excited in this country. The first observation he had to make was that last evening, when the First Lord of the Treasury and the Under Secretary for Foreign Affairs were asked questions with regard to the present condition of this burning question, they replied that they did not consider it would be to the public advantage to make any observations or explanations on the subject. [*Ministerial cheers.*] In making that reply the Government evidently had the approval of hon. Gentlemen opposite, but they had not the approval of the Marquess of Salisbury, the head of the Government—[*Opposition cheers*]—for, almost at the very moment when the Government as represented in that House were refusing any information whatsoever with regard to their policy on the ground of its disadvantages in the interest of the public, the head of the Government was making a statement which, if not a full, was certainly a considerable enunciation of the policy of the Government. [*Cheers.*] The statement of the Prime Minister, summed up, was to the effect that everything was going all right in the island of Crete until the people and Government of Greece were unwise enough to intervene. He should like to know what was meant by the observation that things were going on all right until the Greeks were unwise enough—

*Mr. SPEAKER: Order, order! The hon. Member is not in order in referring thus to a speech delivered in the other House. He will be in order in referring to the fact that a statement was made, but not in commenting upon it.

Mr. T. P. O'CONNOR said the statement had been made that things were going on all right in the island of Crete until the intervention of Greece. He took up the position that if it had not been for the intervention of the Greek troops the condition of Crete would have gone from bad to worse, and the very first gleam of real light they had seen for the last six months in the condition of that island had been this intervention on the part of the Greek people and Greek Government. Further, he said the affection, admiration, and approval of the overwhelming mass of the people of this country were behind the Greek people. ["Oh!"] He was interrupted by the hon. Gentleman, who thought it becoming a Member of that House to accept a decoration from the present ruler of Turkey, and he ventured to think the hon. Gentleman's opinion on this question was just as little representative of the opinion of the country generally as his action in accepting that decoration. They had heard that evening from the Under Secretary a statement of the reforms which were recommended and agreed to by the great Powers. The right hon. Gentleman said very truly that these reforms were welcomed by both parties in the island of Crete. He thought the right hon. Gentleman would also confirm the statement that the Government of Greece strongly advised the people of Crete to accept these reforms and work them as best they could. What happened with regard to the reforms? They had heard that a Christian Governor was appointed, but he had left the island, having found it impossible to govern. This Christian Governor complained several times to the representatives of the Powers that he was embarrassed and obstructed, and practically made powerless in carrying out the reforms, the Powers had recommended, and he (Mr. O'Connor) would make the further statement that the disturbances which had prevented the carrying out of these reforms were initiated by the Mussulman inhabitants of Crete, and were encouraged, inspired and commanded from the Yildiz Kiosk. The right hon. Gentleman opposite shook his head, but he should be very much surprised if he could contradict this statement. The Ottoman Commissioner in the island confessed to more than one representative of the foreign Powers that these disturbances were initiated by the Mussulman inhabitants of the island, and were inspired from the Yildiz Kiosk. The Turkish Government themselves laid the blame for the disturbances, not so much on the Mussulmans, not even on the Christians on the island, so much as upon the great Powers who insisted on reforms being carried out in a Mussulman population which that Mussulman population showed themselves determined to prevent. That was the answer always given by the Porte to any proposal of reform. Let him describe what the position and history of Crete had been until the present state of affairs. There had been no less than ten insurrections in the island since 1831. In the course of a Debate, he thought in the last Session, the Under Secretary stated that these disturbances were to be laid as much at the door of one section of the population as at the other. He did not know whether the right hon. Gentleman would repeat that statement to-night. He knew that the

Member for the Ecclesall Division of Sheffield would state it, but he was appealing to responsible men. Anybody could form his conclusions as to who were the aggressors in the island when they had a small minority on the one side enjoying all the power, free to rob, outrage and kill, and on the other hand a large majority of the people, of a different religion, subjected to all these outrages without any form of appeal or means of having justice done to them. The state of Crete had been a constant state of chronic insurrection, because it had been in a state of constant and odious serfdom. What made the matter worse was that the condition of the people of Crete was imposed upon them, not by their own will, but in spite of their own sacrifices and efforts. At the end of the Greek War of Independence Crete was just as independent as any other Greek island, but she was driven back by the action of the Powers of Europe into servitude; and he dared say in this, as in other crises where the Turkish Empire was oppressing Christian subjects, this country had a large responsibility in the matter. What relief had the people of Crete got from this constant state of affairs? They had had promise after promise of reforms but not a single one had been carried out or attempted to be carried out, and if they had once more, by the action of the Mahomedans and the Turkish Government, been driven into revolt, it was because they had come to the conclusion that all chance of reform rested in the strength of their own right arms alone. He came to the action of Her Majesty's Government. It was stated that everything was going on all right until the intervention of the Greek troops. But in what way? Massacres, outrages and pillage were going on. There was not a Cretan in the island the honour of whose wife or daughter, or the safety of whose life, was protected by any adequate means on the part of the Turkish authorities, and the Cretans had the one choice of submitting to degrading servitude or rising against the Mahomedans. Under these circumstances the Greek Government, not acting upon its own initiative, but in obedience to an irresistible impulse on the part of its own people, thought it time to take action. Was there a man in that House, except the hon. Member for Sheffield, who would rise up and say a word of blame was due to Greece for taking this action? The Greeks of the Continent and of Crete were joined by the ties of blood. They were the same race, and spoke the same common language. Under these circumstances the Greeks would have been less than human beings if their blood had not been stirred by the outrages suffered by the people of their own blood in Crete. What was the conduct of Her Majesty's Government? As far as he was able to gather from the telegrams, a good deal of initiative in the matter had been taken by the Government, though the complaint they had frequently had to make of the present Government was in other cases when atrocities were being committed by the Turks on Christian subjects, that it was wanting in initiative. Apparently, when the people of Crete were to be stopped from meeting with their saviours and fellow countrymen, they found on the part of the Government new acting and initiative which were not altogether to their credit. He was glad the Under Secretary was able to contradict the statement with regard to the interview which was alleged to have taken place between the British Admiral and Prince George. He was sure the report of that interview sent a thrill of disgust and indignation throughout the masses of the people of this country. The right hon. Gentleman, however, was not able to contradict the statement as to the action of the British commander with regard to the Greek vessels. The statement was that the British commander had not threatened to fire upon the Greek vessels, but had declared that the Turkish vessel would be allowed to go over its course. If he was rightly informed, the work in which the Turkish transport was engaged was in carrying troops from one part of the island to the other. He condemned any assistance being given by the British commander in the transport of Turkish troops to be used against the Cretans who were struggling for liberty. He asked whether the men-of-war of the different Powers were to be removed when order was restored and the Cretans to be driven back under Turkish Government. [*Cheers.*] He hoped the Government would give an explicit declaration that, as far as they were concerned, the Cretans would never again be subjected to Turkish rule. If such an assurance could be given it would allay much of the anxiety that existed and disapprobation that was felt of the policy of the Government. [*Cheers.*] He begged to move the Adjournment of the House.

Mr. JOHN DILLON (Mayo, E.), in Seconding the Motion, said Lord Salisbury's statement in the House of Lords had been interpreted by the Press and public opinion in this country as an expression of the determination of the Government to use the force of England to compel the Greeks to withdraw from the action on which they had embarked. *The Times* that morning, commenting on Lord Salisbury's statement, said the Greeks had been guilty of "a most unadvised act" and practically of "a crime against civilisation." *The Times* went on to say—and this was the natural interpretation of Lord Salisbury's statement—that the labours of the Powers "appeared to be on the eve of bearing fruit."

> "The reforms had been sanctioned and were being carried into effect. Suddenly the Greek Government, urged on by the demands of the people and apprehensive perhaps of the operations of secret societies, decided to take the Cretan question into their own hands."

It was added that the Powers were united in condemning this act."

> "Lord Salisbury has stated in plain and impressive words what is the judgment of the Powers on the action of the Greeks. All of them, he says, 'without exception,' were of opinion that the dispatch of Greek ships and troops was 'a most unadvised act.' So soon as they heard it was in contemplation they protested and expressed their opinion 'in very earnest language' to the Greek Government."

What was the crime of the Greek Government—a crime for which the public opinion of this country would universally thank them? They had broken up the concert of Europe—[*cheers*]—which had condemned the unfortunate people of Crete for months, without hope of relief, to massacre and chaos, the like of which, except in Armenia, had not been seen in any country of the world. ["Hear, hear!"] What good had the "concert of Europe" ever done for the population of Crete? Within gunshot of men-of-war sent by the Powers atrocities had been carried on for six months, Canea was in ruins, and the Christian population had been hunted like dogs out of the place. He pressed for a specific declaration that the arms of England would not be used to turn back the forces of the Greeks. In this matter they, on the Opposition side of the House, spoke the opinion of the overwhelming majority of the English people. Greece, in interfering on behalf of the Cretans, had run the risk of having her kingdom invaded by hordes of barbarians. The verdict of civilised mankind would be that Greece alone of all the European Powers had thrown selfishness and self-interest behind her to help those who were allied to her by blood and race. It might be foolish in a certain sense, but he believed that the voice of Europe, weak as it had shown itself in dealing with the Armenian and Cretan questions, would not tolerate the invasion of Greece by Turkish armies, and if the Sultan was so ill-advised as to declare war against Greece he would bring about the absolute ruin and final end of his own cursed sway. The House of Commons were at least entitled to as much information on foreign affairs as the House of Lords. ["Hear, hear!"] The business of the House of Commons, in the view of the present Government, was "not to reason why," but to find the money. [*Laughter and* "Hear, hear!"] Whatever other Powers might do he hoped it would be understood that the forces of England would not be used to resist what the public opinion of this country heartily approved—the action of Greece. [*Cheers.*]

The FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (Mr. A. J. Balfour, Manchester, E.): Sir, I rise to deprecate, not in the interests of the Government, but in the interests of the Cretans, of the Asiatic subjects of the Porte, and the interests of Europe, the continuation of this Debate. [*Cheers.*] We feel sensible, of course, that the policy of the Government in foreign as in domestic affairs should be reviewed, and is liable to be reviewed by this House, and we should always be ready, to the best of our ability, to deal with and meet charges of maladministration, whether at home or abroad, which may be made against us. But a heavy weight of responsibility rests upon any assembly which, like the British House of Commons, uncontrolled by outside power—which must shape its action entirely in accordance with its own views of what is right or wrong—which has the power of pressing the Government for information at a time perhaps when information should not be given, and the power of discussing policy at a time when policy ought not to be discussed; and I do ask the House to exercise now that self-control which it has so constantly exercised in the past—["hear, hear!"]—and defer to a future occasion the condemnation of the Government—if the Government is to be condemned—or at all events a discussion of the policy the Government are pursuing in this grave and difficult crisis in our foreign affairs. After all, even the two hon. Members who have just spoken must realise that but one of two policies is open to the Government—the policy of letting matters go on in the Turkish Empire as best they may, and the policy of attempting to reform, as far as reform is possible, the unhappy condition of the various populations in that Empire by the united action of the Powers. ["Hear, hear!"] The hon. Gentleman would like to see, apparently, Europe exercising all its influence to prevent the Turks from doing anything in Crete against the Greeks, but to allow the Greeks to go in—[*Opposition cheers*]—not as the mandatories of Europe, but on their own authority, to carry out reforms in their own way. I am not going to discuss which of those two policies is the right one, but I warn the House that the second policy is a policy which would lead you straight on to a European war. [*Cheers.*] It is absolutely impossible that you should keep the Concert of Europe going for some purposes connected with the Ottoman Empire, and not going for all purposes. It is perfectly impossible that you should attempt at Constantinople through the concerted action of your ambassadors to introduce reforms in the Asiatic and European provinces of Turkey, and at the same time tell the Sultan that Crete is outside the sphere of the operations of the European Powers, that we are not going to allow him to govern a portion of his dominions, that we are not going to govern it ourselves, but that we are going to leave it to chance and to the operation of Powers irresponsible in the matter. You cannot adopt that policy. If you mean to do what the hon. Gentleman purposes we should do, the inevitable consequence will be that the Concert of Europe will be broken up, that all the hope which we may legitimately found on that policy will be disappointed, and that the last chance of reforming the Turkish Empire will have disappeared—[*Opposition laughter and Ministerial cheers*]—and that the one result will be that that Empire will fall to pieces—[*Opposition cheers*]—not by the peaceful growth of free institutions within its limits, not by the spread of civilisation from one end to the other, but by the operation of a European war the consequences of which no man can foresee. [*Cheers.*] There are Gentlemen opposite of infinite courage, who are prepared to face that result with great equanimity, and to face it apparently in the interests of humanity and in the interests of peace. We think that neither the interests of humanity nor the interests of peace are the natural fruits of the policy which they would recommend. We are pursuing a policy essentially based on the united action of the European Powers; we may be right or we may be wrong; we may be successful or we may be unsuccessful; but the very worst thing that could happen would be that we should attempt to carry out half that policy and half some other policy—Heaven knows what it is—pressed upon us by hon. Gentlemen opposite. We have made our choice, and we mean to abide by it. [*Cheers.*] We have come deliberately to the opinion that the sole possibility of peacefully solving this problem, if a solution be possible, is by the instrument of the European Concert, and we will not be responsible for any step by which that concert would for a moment be endangered. ["Hear, hear!"] That, Sir, is the policy of the Government. We believe it to be a policy justified not merely by European considerations based on the interests of the five great Powers of Europe, but we believe it to be a policy with which the whole possibilities of growth and prosperity in the East of Europe and in the Turkish dominions of Asia are intimately bound up. If I ask the House, as I do now earnestly ask, not to indulge in a discussion which must either be purposeless or useless, or which, if it is to endeavour to extract pledges and promises from the Government, or information as to pending negotiations, must end in endangering that concert which we believe carries with it the only hope for our foreign policy in the future—["hear, hear"]—I shall not, I suppose, be suspected of standing up here to defend the government or the misgovernment of any portion of the Turkish Empire. I presume that even gentlemen who are most ardent in their desire to see the whole of the Eastern world involved in flames will not believe, at all events, that if I take a different view, I take it because I am less anxious than they that the cause of civilisation should prosper in those territories. But I think I may appeal, if not to them, at all events to the Leaders of the Opposition, to wait before they condemn the Government, to wait before they criticise the Government, to wait even before they cross-examine the Government, until the crisis in which we are involved in connection with Greece and Crete at this moment has passed away. I trust and believe that that day will not be far distant, and when that day comes, we shall be glad to give a full account of our whole conduct in connection with this matter, and to defend ourselves, not merely before this House and before the country, but before the civilised world, whose interests we are helping to support. [*Cheers.*] At any rate, we feel it is not in our power to prevent the Debate from going on—we cannot silence hon. Gentlemen opposite if they choose to speak—yet we shall not permit ourselves to say anything, or to be dragged into saying anything—[*cheers*]—by which the main lines of the public policy of this country can for one instant be endangered. [*Cheers.*]

*Sir WILLIAM HARCOURT (Monmouthshire, W.), who was received with Opposition cheers: The right hon. Gentleman has appealed to those who sit upon this Bench in this matter. I think we are entitled to say that in dealing with questions of foreign policy we have not endeavoured to embarrass the Government. [*Ministerial cheers.*] Since I have been in this House I have never taken that course, but there is one thing upon which I think we must come to an understanding with the Government. I put a question to the right hon. Gentleman yesterday as to whether he was prepared to make any statement with reference to the condition of affairs in Crete, and he gave me the answer that it was not possible to make any statement at all. I was ready to accept that statement from the right hon. Gentleman, but to the surprise of everyone that course was not followed by the head of the Government and the Foreign Minister in another place. [*Cheers.*] I have heard Mr. Gladstone in this House and out of it condemn the principle of having the Prime Minister and the Foreign Minister in one person in the House of Lords, as that makes it impossible for the House of Commons to receive that information which it ought to receive with reference to critical conditions of foreign affairs. I suppose that the right hon. Gentleman, when I put that question in identical terms with that put to the Prime Minister in the House of Lords yesterday, would have understood from the Prime Minister that he was not going to make any statement upon the subject. But a statement was made in another place, and it is a remarkable fact that the only statement that has come from the six Powers of Europe with reference to the policy that is being pursued in Crete was made by the Prime Minister in the House of Lords yesterday. Is it to be accepted that in a critical condition which the right hon. Gentleman had told us may lead to a European war—that a statement which affects the whole of the foreign situation shall be made in such a manner that we cannot examine it. [*Opposition cheers.*] Sir, such a position is intolerable. [*Renewed cheers.*] Everybody is to know it except the House of Commons; Europe is to know it; the British public is to know it through the Press, and here we who represent the people in the House of Commons are not to know anything whatever about it. That is a situation which we cannot accept. ["Hear, hear!"] What is the substance of that statement? I cannot refer to it in detail, but as I understand it the substance of that statement is a condemnation of Greece. If that is the policy of the Government—and I have heard of no other policy—if the policy of the Government is simply a condemnation of the conduct of the Government of Greece, in my judgment that does not represent the opinion of the English people. [*Cheers.*] I remember an adjective celebrated in the history of this country applied to an event which mainly conduced to the establishment of the independence of Greece—I mean the battle of Navarino—when the Duke of Wellington, I think in the King's Speech, described that as an "untoward event." That untoward event, as we know, ended in the independence of the Greek kingdom. Now, Sir, we have another adjective which may be compared to that of the "untoward event"—I think it is called "unadvised action." If you mean to have silence, if you mean to have no discussion, then abstain from statements of this kind. [*Cheers.*] But if you are going to give the impression to Europe, and to Great Britain, that the spirit by which you are actuated is simply a spirit of censure and hostility to the Greek nation, and to the Greek populations wherever they are situated, I think we are bound to say that that is a policy of which we do not approve. [*Cheers.*] I do not desire to discuss to-night the policy of the Government; I shall say nothing at all about it. I do not desire to disturb the Concert of Europe; I hope that Concert will prove more efficient than it has shown itself to be recently, whether it be in Asia or in Crete. We have been told to-night by the Under Secretary that arrangements were made in August last for reform in Crete. Six months have expired, and I cannot say that we have any assurance that those arrangements have been productive of any beneficial effect. There was a Concert of Europe, no doubt. The right hon. Gentleman has talked of the action of this country in regard to the Turkish rule. I will not go into that matter now except so far as to refer to the famous phrase employed by Lord Beaconsfield in reference to the Treaty of Berlin, when he said that the removal from Turkish rule of the provinces of the Balkan peninsula was the consolidation of the Turkish Empire. [*Laughter and cheers.*] If the Government will still pursue that policy of the consolidation of the Turkish Empire by a progressive removal of Provinces from the Ottoman dominion, I think they will be pursuing a very beneficial policy. [*Cheers.*] I confess I do not desire now to question the details of the negotiations that are in progress between the Government and the Great Powers of Europe. I only hope that they will have results which may conduce to the freedom of Christian populations. [*Cheers.*] I express an earnest hope that that will be the spirit in which the Government will embark upon these negotiations. I greatly desire that the Government will remove the impression unfortunately made by the statement of the Prime Minister yesterday in the House of Lords that the spirit which actuates the conduct of the Government is one simply of censure of the Government of Greece. [*Cheers.*] I trust also that they will not have recourse again to that inconvenient and most unconstitutional proceeding of the Prime Minister, but that they will make their statements in this House which we can understand, and as to which, when they are made, we can, in this House if necessary, call for further explanation. [*Cheers.*]

MR. HENRY LABOUCHERE (Northampton) said the right hon. Gentleman the Leader of the Opposition had very clearly stated the unfair and unconstitutional action of Her Majesty's Government. Yesterday, question after question was asked in the House as to what was actually going on in Crete, and the answer in every case was that the Government had no information. Yet, at that very moment, in another place, the Prime Minister was declaring the policy of the Government in regard to Crete, and today, when they protested against that declaration, they were told that they must not discuss it or deprecate it, and that they must defer criticism to some other occasion. When that other occasion came, what was going on now in Crete would be an accomplished fact. What would be the use of criticising then? What they wanted to do was to make it clear to the Government that they, representing as they did a very large amount of public opinion in England, protested clearly and distinctly against the Government taking action, whether in Crete or elsewhere, with the Great Powers or without the Great Powers, to maintain the Turkish rule in any part of Europe. The policy of the Government in regard to all these matters had been a policy of reticence and secresy in the House of Commons. Last August the House was told that arrangements had been come to in regard to Crete. Yesterday the Under Secretary for Foreign Affairs told them that a dummy of the correspondence between the Great Powers was then laid upon the Table. But the right hon. Gentleman admitted that he had infringed the Rules of the House by not having until that moment placed that correspondence in the hands of Members of the House. The explanation given by the right hon. Gentleman was that he had to obtain the consent of other Powers to permit this country to know what negotiations had taken place with them in regard to Crete.

*Mr. CURZON: The hon. Gentleman has misunderstood me. We did in the case of the Cretan Blue Book what is invariably done in the case of every Blue Book that is laid before the House. The Dispatches giving the opinions of foreign Ambassadors or Governments are always referred to them for confirmation before they are published. That is what was done in this case.

Mr. LABOUCHERE: The right hon. Gentleman stated yesterday in regard to those papers—

*Mr. SPEAKER: Order, order! I must say that this discussion in regard to what took place yesterday as to the Papers is remote from the urgent matter of public importance which is under discussion.

Mr. LABOUCHERE said he would pass to the urgent matter of public importance, which was what was taking place now in Cretan waters. They read in the newspapers—for the newspapers were the only source from which they could get information—that the commander of the Greek Navy was told that if that Navy attempted to stop Turkey from landing troops in Crete, that action would be resisted by the Great Powers, including England. It was against that action that they protested. [*Cheers.*] It must be understood that the Greeks of Crete were not asking for reforms. They thoroughly distrusted, not only Turkey, but the Great Powers of Europe. They wished to strike to be free themselves. [*Cheers.*] They were not asking for paper reform; they demanded their independence. At the present moment they held the whole country of Crete, with the exception of two or three towns, and these were being besieged by them, and if they were only left to deal with the Turks, they would certainly vanquish the Turks. It was said that the Great Powers were landing troops in Crete to maintain order. What was called order there was Turkish Government. [*Cheers.*] For his part, he would welcome a revolution in any part of the Turkish Empire, and he rejoiced when he saw any portion of the Turkish Empire taken away from the Sultan's authority. [*Cheers.*] While the people of Crete were fighting the Turks, the Great Powers looked on and did not move. But when they found that the Cretans were likely to achieve their independence, and when that brave little Power, Greece—whom he honoured—was going to the aid of the Cretans, the Great Powers interposed and said that they would not allow it. The Great Powers went hat in hand to the Sultan and implored him to carry out some reforms. But they had paper schemes of reforms again and again in Turkey and no good had resulted. Let it be thoroughly understood by Her Majesty's Government that, so far as the Radicals were concerned, they were not going to look on quietly while these proceedings were taking place, both in Parliament and outside Parliament. They would protest against any action of the Government on behalf of Turkish rule in any part of Europe. [*Cheers.*]

*Sir ELLIS ASHMEAD-BARTLETT (Sheffield, Ecclesall) said he should certainly observe the request made by the Leader of the House, and would not say a single word about the Policy of the Government. He only rose to refer to some misstatements which had been made by the hon. Gentleman who had opened the discussion, and which he thought it would be most unfair to Turkey to allow to go uncontradicted. It had been asserted that the Christian population of Crete had been subjected to the most grievous attacks and outrages at the hands of the Mussulmans. That statement was, in regard to the present period, absolutely untrue. The hon. Member had not given a single fact in support of his reckless assertions. No attacks had been made by the Mussulmans on the Christians of Crete. There was a Christian rising in Crete which was supported from abroad by money and arms, and the first operation of the rising was to attack and drive nearly the whole of the Mussulman population of the interior from their homes to the coast of Crete. If those unjust statements were allowed to go forth from the House of Commons uncontradicted they might have a very deleterious effect on the fortunes of the Christian people in other parts of the Turkish Empire. In Crete the Christians were four to one as compared to the Mussulmans, and were well able to take care of themselves. The question at issue there was between Mussulmans and Christians, and not between Greeks and Turks. The Cretan Mussulmans were Greeks by blood. The cause of the rising was religious animosity. But, whatever might be the case in Crete, the Christians in other parts of Turkey were at the mercy of the Mussulmans. If it were to go forth to those Mussulmans that the House of Commons accepted false and distorted charges against them without any proof as to their truth, and refused a hearing to the sufferings of the Cretan Mussulmans, the Mussulmans in other parts of Turkey might be driven to despair, and that despair might lead to the most terrible misfortunes to the Christian populations of Turkey. Though his voice might be the only one raised in support of justice to the Mussulman population of Crete, who to-day were the victims, and who were in reality the persons subjected to outrage and persecution, he would still do what he could on their behalf. His voice would be raised, not only on behalf of justice to the Mussulman, but in the true interest of the Christian population of Turkey.

MR. T. P. O'CONNOR said that he desired to withdraw the Motion.

Motion, by leave, withdrawn.

MOTION.

MERCHANT SHIPPING.

Bill to amend the Merchant Shipping Act, 1894, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Willox, Sir Charles Dilke, Mr. W. F. D. Smith, and Mr. Stock; presented accordingly, and Read the First time; to be Read a Second time upon Wednesday, 5th May, and to be printed.—[Bill 135.]

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE (EXEMPTION FROM THE STANDING ORDER).

Motion made, and Question put,

"That the Proceedings on the Second Reading of the Voluntary Schools Bill, if under discussion at Twelve o'clock this night, be not interrupted under the Standing Order Sittings of the House."—(*First Lord of the Treasury.*)

The House divided:—Ayes, 250; Noes, 128.—(Division List, No. 29.)

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

VOLUNTARY SCHOOLS BILL.

Order read, for resuming Adjourned Debate on Amendment proposed to Question [11th February], "That the Bill be now Read a Second time;"

And which Amendment was, to leave out from the word "That," to the end of the Question, in order to add the words "no Bill will be satisfactory to this House which does not provide for Board Schools as well as Voluntary Schools."—(*Mr. McKenna.*)

Question again proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question."—Debate resumed.

MR. C. A. CRIPPS (Gloucestershire, Stroud) thought he might say that on the Unionist side they considered the Government Measure from this point of view, namely, whether the proposals if sanctioned would conduce to the preservation and maintenance as part of our educational system of the religious or denominational element, which they considered an integral part—indeed, he might say, the most important part. It was said that there was no opposition on the other side of the House to what was called religious education, and the issue raised was this—that although general religious education would receive the support of hon. Members on the other side of the House, yet the proposals of the Government, being of a denominational and sectarian character, and implying the use of public funds for denominational and sectarian education—it was mainly on that ground that the opposition arose. Perhaps the most remarkable statement that had been made in that Debate on the other side of the House was one made by the right hon. Member for Montrose. The right hon. Gentleman represented what he might call the arguments for secular as opposed to religious education, and yet the right hon. Gentleman admitted that, although he had not changed any of his own views upon this most important point, the current of English opinion was against him, and that he was bound to recognise, not only the popularity of the denominational system, but the demand of the English people for its preservation. The right hon. Gentleman referred to one reason for that state of things, saying that the popularity of the denominational system at the present moment was due to the energy and generosity of those who supported it. But another reason might be added. They saw in the growing desire of the English people to maintain the denominational system the benefit that had been derived from the progress of education itself. It was a remarkable fact that as education had progressed so had the popularity of denominational education grown. In our great secondary schools, which were the glory of the educational system of this country, there had always been a system of definite religious denominational education, and as education had spread and knowledge had advanced the same idea had grown in relation to our primary schools, that no system was perfect or satisfactory which did not give due scope and development to denominational and religious education. He wished to allude here to one criticism that had been advanced on the other side of the House with reference to what was called "definite religious instruction." That was instruction in distinctive *formulæ*, whether they were those of the Roman Catholic Church, of the Anglican Church, or of the larger Nonconformist bodies. He repudiated as unworthy the suggestion that had been made that instruction in distinctive *formulæ* had anything to do with the narrow bigotry which had been attributed to denominational education. It was one thing to be educated in distinctive religious *formulæ* and quite another to be educated in a narrow bigotry. It being desired that the system of denominational education should be preserved, the question arose—how was that desire to be given effect to? As the Vice President of the Council had said, they must have money and organisation. The intolerable strain of which they had heard so much was by itself a sufficient justification for the proposals of the Government; but far more important was the question of efficient education. Far more important was the necessity that the education given in our denominational schools should be equal in quality and efficacy to that supplied in School Boards. He did not believe that anyone had studied this question without coming to the conclusion that if our denominational system was to be preserved it was necessary that its efficiency should be increased and that additional money should be spent in connection with it. The real question that arose was as to the source from which the money ought to come. His own view was that they must look mainly, if not entirely, to the resources of the State. They should recognise that national education was a national matter, and the necessary controlling of such recognition was that the national funds should be used in order to provide an efficient scheme of national education. There ought to be as nearly as possible an equally efficient system of education throughout the country. The poor districts ought, as far as possible, to be provided for in the same way as the rich were. If that were admitted it could be seen that this provision must be made out of national funds. Of what avail would it be to propose levying further rates upon districts where the resources of the ratepayers were already strained to the utmost? It appeared to be thought by some hon. Members that in this matter the distinction between taxpayers and ratepayers was not of great moment. That was an error, for the rates were derived from certain sources exclusively, being raised on about half the property in this country, and for this educational purpose every kind of property ought to be equally and fairly taxed. The advocates of State aid did not put the interests of the ratepayers before the interests of the children, and it was not true that in the South and West of England they had taken a selfish or benighted view of this question, as had been suggested in the Debate. They took their stand first on the principle that the funds ought to be provided out of the National Exchequer, and, secondly, that if recourse were had to the ratepayer at all, he must be given a full measure of local control, and that his aid could not be asked for simply denominational or sectarian purposes. He supported cordially the proposals of the Government on this ground among others, that they had recognised the true source from which these funds must be derived, the only source to which on principle they should go, the only source which in the future could preserve our schools, both as denominational and Voluntary. He proposed now to deal with some of the arguments of hon. Members opposite. It was, in the first place, suggested that the proposal of the Government was not in accord with religious equality. All Members on his side of the House would disagree with any policy which, in their view, did not treat fairly all religious denominations and sects. They were as deeply pledged to the principle of religious equality and believed in it as fully and completely as any hon. Member opposite. What were the Government doing? They were not giving money to one sect or denomination; they were treating all sects and denominations on the same basis, on the same principle, thereby showing that they appreciated the true spirit of religious equality. The hon. and learned Member for South Shields brought forward this question of religious equality more than any other hon. Member opposite. He spoke of what he called sectarian endowment, and the hon. Member appeared to him to found his case on the narrowest and most intolerant form of bigotry. The hon. Member said:—

> "My objection is not to the giving of so much money to any one sect with which I may agree; my objection is that I should be called upon to provide endowment or assistance to any denomination or sect of which I am not a member myself."

Surely that was a spirit of bigotry and intolerance in its truest sense. What was the spirit of tolerance in this matter? It was to recognise that the members of other sects and denominations had the same right to assistance, the same claim, either on the national fund, or whatever the fund might be, as they were putting forward in this particular sect or denomination to which they might happen to belong. He noticed that the hon. and learned Member criticised very strongly what he called the principle of concurrent endowment. If they were to have a religious equality in the sense of helping religious life and education, it was necessary to have this concurrent endowment, which treated all sects and all denominations with the same respect, and gave them the same power as they claimed in respect of the sect or denomination to which they themselves belonged. The next argument brought forward was that of financial injustice. This argument might have been formulated, and perhaps it would have been well founded, had the proposals of the Government been limited to the Voluntary Schools of the country; but when, in accordance with the promise of the Government now made, they were going to give the same support to the necessitous schools, whether Voluntary or not, how could it be said that the proposals of the Government taken as a whole had the impress of financial injustice? He was not aware what the proposals of the Government might be as to necessitous schools; but it was easy to see in what direction they must be made. Section 97 of the Act of 1870 dealt with necessitous schools; and in the progress of time there could be but little doubt that Section 97 did not meet the difficulties of the present day. But if they extended the principles of Section 97 to the cases to which it might apply, either by amending the Section itself or producing a new Measure, they would then do for necessitous schools what the Government was doing for Voluntary Schools—recognising the new conditions, and recognising them, providing sufficient financial support. There were two other points which hon. Gentlemen opposite had dwelt upon. One was the question of popular control. It was surely very important that this question should be fully understood. A large number of Members speaking from the Opposition side said that they were unwilling to see the settlement of 1870 disturbed. What was the settlement of 1870 on this point? The settlement of 1870 was this, that where support and funds were given to our schools from the Exchequer, no representative or local control of any kind was conceded; and the same principle had been embodied so far as our educational policy was concerned, from 1870 up to the present time. If there was any question of increasing or extending Parliamentary control, he thought for his own part that ought to be done in the fullest and amplest measure. Was it to be said now for the first time by those who were supporting the settlement of 1870 that the provision of additional funds from headquarters was to give a claim for local control in respect of denominational schools? This was a most crucial point. If hon. Gentlemen desired to upset the settlement of 1870 let them say so; but the settlement was a great Liberal Measure. As to associations of schools, he judged from the letters he had received that this point in the proposals of the Government had been misunderstood. The association or federation was limited to the question of aid grant only; it did not affect in any way the ordinary management of the Voluntary or Denominational Schools as carried on at present. Just as it might be of the greatest advantage (he believed it would be) that for the purposes of distribution of this aid grant they should have a federation of associations, so on the other hand he looked upon it as a great matter of moment that local interests should be preserved and local management should go on practically as it was at present. The object of this federation was not to interfere with local management; in discriminating in connection with the distribution of the aid grant it was necessary that the Education Department should have the assistance which could only be given to it by means of those voluntary federations and associations. This Measure had been referred to as an instalment; in some senses all Acts of Parliament might be referred to in that language; but it gave to our Voluntary and denominational Schools a support which it was necessary they should have at the present time. It was a large Measure to give £620,000 to our Voluntary and denominational system. Let the House accept it in no grudging spirit; let hon. Gentlemen recognise that it would preserve and maintain what they desired most—namely, their denominational schools as an integral part of their great educational system. If they looked to the future it was perhaps in another direction they would want the proposals of the Government to supplement it. Most people were agreed on one point—that this question would never be settled until a limitation was defined as between primary education on the one side and secondary education on the other. They did not want that definition or limitation in the sense of cutting down the level of education in their primary schools. They wanted that education should be kept up, and they wanted to increase it in the direction of a great system of secondary education. Let that definition be given as soon as might be. When it was once made they might finally know what the needs of their Voluntary and denominational Schools were. Until then they could have no finality, whether they appealed to the National Exchequer or to the taxes of the ratepayer. But once have that matter dealt with and settled, then this other question could be dealt with finally; and for all time they could have a system of education suitable to all wishes in this country, and carried on in a higher grade, first in the primary schools and next in a large scheme of secondary education.

Mr. A. J. MUNDELLA (Sheffield, Brightside) said the hon. Member in his opening remarks stated that the difference between the two sides of the House was that, while one side desired to preserve religious education, the other side was in favour of secular education. Personally he had taken an interest in this education question ever since he had been in the House, and long before he entered Parliament. He had always desired for the people the best education that could be given, as well as education religious in its character. He had advocated those views at a time when he had been met with a great deal of hostility by right hon. Gentlemen who were now Members of Her Majesty's Government. He did not understand on what ground the hon. and learned Member believed that they were hostile to religious education.

Mr. CRIPPS: I said just the contrary. Various hon. Members opposite had disclaimed any hostility, and I accepted that disclaimer.

Mr. MUNDELLA said the hon. Member added that as education had progressed in this country so had the popularity and the desire for denominational education. He joined issue on that statement. He denied that the number of the Voluntary Schools was due to a demand on the part of the parents for denominational education. It was due to a great deal of sectarian zeal, and to the fact that the Education Act did not allow a school to be set up where there was already sufficient Voluntary School accommodation. In 8,000 parishes the people of this country had no choice whatever but to send their children to Voluntary Schools. He took his part in the discussions in this House on the Act of 1870. Hon. and right hon. Gentlemen opposite seemed entirely to have forgotten what was the very basis of that Act. Mr. Forster claimed, in his opening speech, that the relation of grants to local effort should be in the following proportion:—10s. local subscriptions, 10s. fees, and 10s. grant. But in the course of that Measure through the House it underwent a certain amount of modification, and, as a great concession, which was accepted most thankfully by the other side of the House, the conditions were extended to one-half local effort and one-half Government grant. That went on until 1876, when the Conservative Government were in, and the local subscriptions were very much higher than now and much more real. ["Hear, hear!"] They were honest cash subscriptions, which, he was afraid, now they were not. In the discussions on that Measure they had the introduction of the 17s. 6d. limit by Lord Sandown, which the Solicitor General came down last night to denounce. The Solicitor General was a Scotchman, and in Scotland they had the 17s. 6d. limit. If the 17s. 6d. limit was bad for England, he supposed it was equally bad for Scotland, and he supposed also the Government would repeal the 17s. 6d. limit for Scotland as well as for England. And yet, when he was Vice-President of the Council, there was nothing about which the Scotch Department stood more firm than the 17s. 6d. limit. He had never been a great advocate himself of the 17s. 6d. limit. For one reason, it discouraged teachers who sought to achieve good results; and, for another, it had done more to encourage fraud than anything else in connection with the Education Act. If the subscriptions could be scrutinised, and put under different heads, it would be a revelation to the House to know the actual amount of cash subscriptions which came into the reckoning. Cardinal Vaughan recently published an article in the *Dublin Review* on this subject, in the course of which he says:—

> "It is true the Blue Book shows an increase of subscriptions, but this is easily explained by the fact that the Department has allowed a charge for rent, and that this amount has been transferred to the subscriptions account in order to diminish the 17s. 6d. injustice."

No money passed the £100 would be charged for rent, and it appeared on the other side of the account as voluntary subscriptions. He had even seen addresses by dignitaries of the Church, in which they had intimated to school managers how they could elude the 17s. 6d. bugbear. The hon. and learned Gentleman said the Opposition were hostile to the religious character of the schools, and he pointed to the religious education in Scotland under the Act of 1872. The hon. and learned Gentleman must know that no clergyman in Scotland could enter the schools to control the religious education or interfere with the teachers. Let him consider the advantages Scotland had over England—that in Scotland the grant was 21s. 7d. for every child, whereas in the Voluntary Schools in England is was only 18s. 5½d. Those 3s. meant a great deal in the difference between English and Scotch education. And what was it due to? Not to denominational zeal; not to voluntary effort, but to universal School Boards. [*Cheers.*] If they could have the Scotch system in England he should only be too delighted, and he was quite sure that, in the matter of religious teaching, they could so arrange matters as to satisfy all reasonable consciences. [*Cheers.*] As to parents objecting to the religious teaching given in the Board Schools, he was at the Education Department for five-and-a-half years, and never heard of the withdrawal of a child from religious teaching, except in the case of the child of a Jew. And now the Government were about to abolish the 17s. 6d. limit, and at the same time they were abolishing the last condition which attached to Government grants. It would be well if the right hon. Gentleman would listen to what the present Archbishop of Canterbury said on the 17s. 6d. limit before the Royal Commission. He said:—

> "While the extinction of the 17s. 6d. limit may be considered a matter of detail, the limit of the total grant to the amount raised in the

> locality is a matter of principle. The duty of providing and maintaining a good system of elementary education is essentially a local duty. The central Government may aid the discharge of this duty, but it cannot undertake it alone. There is no security for efficiency without interested local supervision; there is no security for economy without the vigilance of those who bear the burden of the cost. We cannot recommend that in any case the grant of the Department shall exceed the amount provided on the spot, nor is it, in our judgment, a sufficient reason for overriding the principle that the people on the spot are unwilling to contribute enough."

The Government were abandoning all that. After this Bill had passed, there would be no reason why a Voluntary School should have any subscriptions at all, if they could be maintained by the grants, new and old, and by the fees, obtainable from the parents. Whence came this demand for increased grants? Not from all Voluntary Schools. He had that morning received a circular from the Wesleyan Education Committee, which protested against this grant, unless it were accompanied by adequate and representative public management, and by provisions forbidding the imposition of ecclesiastical tests on the teachers. Was it not scandalous that these tests had not been dealt with before? Only the other day a question had been asked about four teachers who were dismissed, not for incompetence or bad character, but because they would not sign a contract to become communicants of a particular Church. This sort of petty tyranny prevailed under the one-man system of management to a much greater extent than was supposed. The British and Foreign School Society joined with the Wesleyans in the protest against this grant, except under reasonable conditions. There were at present 1,800 schools maintained by these societies, and they contained 451,000 children. They demanded local control, public audit, and the abolition of ecclesiastical tests to the teachers. They objected to the new bodies which were to control the distribution of the grant. Was it, then, to the credit of the Church of England that these great demands should come from her alone? If those who built and maintained their own chapels and paid the stipends of the ministers, did not ask for further aid for their schools, why could not the Church of England find enough money for her schools? The strain was not on the subscribers, it was on the teachers in the Church Schools; and if it were not for the way in which the school system had grown up in Lancashire and Cheshire, this new demand would never have been heard of. The Solicitor General had spoken of the competition of the Board Schools and the demands of the Education Department. The Vice President had dealt with the latter plea; and as to the former, subscriptions were lowest where School Boards did not exist. It was impossible to look into the state of the schools in Lancashire and Cheshire without wondering how the Lancashire Members could make these demands. The average voluntary subscription throughout the country was 6s. 9d. per child. In Accrington it was 3s. 10d.; in Ashton-under-Lyne 2s. 1d.; in Blackburn 1s. 11d.; in Chorley 1s. 6½d.; in Oldham 1s. 9d.; and in Preston 1s. 9¾d. These were the towns in which there was no School Board at all.

SIR FRANCIS POWELL (Wigan): Are those the figures for 1893?

MR. MUNDELLA: Published in 1894, the latest available. Preston was the largest town in the kingdom without a School Board—[MR. TOMLINSON: "Hear, hear!"]—and what a misfortune for the children of Preston that must be. This was a typical town which had had 27 years' entire freedom from the school rates; though he was bound to say that the Catholic schools subscriptions were 10s. a child more than those of the Church Schools. Though the Catholics were the poorest people, their schools were the most efficient schools in Preston. In his last Report, Mr. Iles, the inspector, said:—

> "In Preston it is difficult to understand how the children can be taught in existing schools without continuing to overcrowd the class-rooms, and without involving an improper strain on the teacher. In some cases class-rooms are made to contain more than double the nominal capacity on the eight square feet basis. . . . This state of affairs is intimately connected with the past history of the Preston schools. Until comparatively recently, many of the schools (other than Roman Catholic) were farmed. Consequently the teaching staff, the apparatus, and the buildings were all starved, and naturally there were no subscriptions. In many cases the resulting low ideals remain. In such schools there is no effective management. The managers regard the building from a Sunday school or concert point of view, forgetful of the fact that at a concert everyone wishes to hear, whereas in a

school each class should be separate. The day school maintains itself and the building for five days of the week, and sometimes pays a substantial rent for a discarded chapel as a schoolroom in addition."

He would like to draw attention to another point in connection with the state of things in Preston. The chief inspector, Mr. Iles—

"considers that defects of management have largely caused the present state of secular attainments in Preston, which are below the general standard of the country, and says that visits without notice disclose the fact that in some Church Schools the religious instruction is considerably curtailed or completely omitted for the five or six months immediately preceding the annual inspection."

It was to preserve such schools that this grant was to be made. Let him contrast the state of things in Preston with that in Sheffield. Preston had 17,000 children in attendance. In 1870 Sheffield had 12,000 children on the rolls of public elementary schools. They had since then built Board Schools for 40,000 children. The Voluntary Schools provided accommodation for 23,000 children, making a total of 63,000 children. There were more than 60,000 on the rolls, and about 55,000 or 56,000 in average attendance. They had done all this at great expense to the ratepayers. They gave the best education, or almost the best education, in England; and it cost 1s. 1¼d. in the pound. The working men of Sheffield felt the burden of the rates as heavily as those in any school district in England. One shilling and a penny-farthing in the pound on working men whose rates now amounted to 8s. in the pound, was a very heavy burden; and yet Preston was to get out of this grant £4,200 for 17,000 children, while Sheffield, with its 60,000 odd children, was not to get one farthing —nay, more, Sheffield was to be taxed to provide the money for Preston. [*Opposition cheers.*] Was that substantial justice? [Mr. TOMLINSON: "Hear, hear!" *and laughter.*] The hon. Member for Preston cried "Hear, hear." He supposed it was the religious education that was so important, but let him state what was the kind of religious education given in the Sheffield Board Schools. He asserted without hesitation that the religious instruction, if by that was meant sound Biblical and moral instruction, given in the Sheffield Board Schools was far superior to the religious instruction given in the average Voluntary Schools. The religious instruction in their Board Schools was not given by little pupil teachers, it was not suspended for five or six months at a time, but it was given regularly, systematically, by certificated teachers, men who were capable of instructing children in religion. The Rev. Samuel E. Keeble, the York diocesan inspector, reporting upon the Sheffield Board Schools, said:—

"I have again to report that I found the Biblical instruction in the schools examined by me most satisfactory. This year I have examined thirteen schools, no one of which was visited by me last year. The results in these compare favourably with the results in those visited last year. In every school without exception, I found a high standard of excellence. The work of the syllabus had been everywhere carefully and conscientiously done. The moral tone of the teaching and of the schools was high—indeed may be said to be, without exaggeration, Christian."

What more could be said? The same thing took place in numbers of Board Schools throughout the country, indeed he challenged contradiction when he said there was better religious instruction given in Board Schools than in the average Voluntary Schools. [The FIRST LORD of the TREASURY, who had been absent for some time, now returned to his place.] He was sorry that the right hon. Gentleman the Leader of the House was not in his place to hear the facts in relation to Preston and Sheffield. [The FIRST LORD of the TREASURY: "It was not my fault."] He knew the right hon. Gentleman could not always be in attendance; but, nevertheless, he was sorry the right hon. Gentleman had not heard that Sheffield, which had made great effort to provide a good and sound education for its children, was to get nothing, while Preston, where some of the schools were almost beneath contempt, was to get £4,200.

THE SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY (Mr. R. W. HANBURY, Preston), who was received with cheers and laughter, said he did not know whether the right hon. Gentleman made that statement with regard to all the schools in Preston. He admitted that up to a couple of years ago a certain number of the Voluntary Schools were dealt with on a system which he did not for a moment support. They were farmed out. The Roman Catholic Schools, however, were amongst the best in the country.

MR. MUNDELLA said he had already stated that. [*Cheers.*] It was the Church of England schools he was talking about; and they received 1s. 9¾d. per head per child, while the Roman Catholic schools received upwards of 10s. per head. Last year the Solicitor General treated with great levity the statement of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Montrose that there were 1,000 schools that had no voluntary subscriptions whatever. The hon. and learned Gentleman said it was an accidental case, and they were not the same schools year by year. Many managers and teachers confessed that they carried on their schools without a farthing subscription, and even without a visit from the clergyman. Yes, it was too common in the country. Talk about local control being mischievous! There was nothing so needful for the encouragement of the teacher himself as local control. ["Hear, hear!"] According to the Return published in 1894, the last accessible Return, there were 1,061 schools which received no subscriptions, 674 which had subscriptions of less than 1s., and 1,967 which had subscriptions of from 2s. 6d. to 5s. But where were the subscriptions the worst? He had already said it was Lancashire. He would give another case. It was only within the last year or two that the town of Birkenhead had had a School Board. A School Board, after many years of conflict, had been forced upon it, and it was high time it was. ["Hear, hear!"] What was the state of things in Birkenhead? In 1894 there were 19 Church schools, with a total average attendance of 9,301 children. The Government grant was £8,528, and the fee grant £4,650—a total of £16,600. The new grant would add £2,320, so that £18,320 of Government money would go to the 16 schools. What were the voluntary subscriptions to those schools? £486, or 1s. 0¾d. per head. Sheffield which paid 1s. 1¾d. in the pound, and had brought up their Voluntary Schools to a state of efficiency such as they had never attained before, was to receive nothing. A few years ago the Sheffield Voluntary Schools got only 13s. per head per child, but now they very nearly reached 19s. per head, and yet it was said it was the policy of the School Boards that ruined the Voluntary Schools. Bolton had a School Board, and a very efficient one too. The Voluntary Schools there got 8s. 9d. per head, in comparison with Preston's 1s. 9d. How was that accounted for? It was simply that there was a wholesome competition between Board Schools and Voluntary Schools. He believed that the more money was granted to the Voluntary Schools by State aid the more the subscriptions to those schools would disappear. ["Hear, hear!" *and cries of* "No!"] An hon. Member had asked what were the proportions of subscriptions in Yorkshire. He would take four southern and four northern counties in comparison. In Hants, Surrey, Sussex and Wilts the voluntary subscriptions were 10s. 0¼d. per head of the scholars, while in Lancashire, Cheshire, Stafford and Yorkshire they were only 4s. 11¾d. per head, or less than half; and the results would be much the same if worked out on the basis of population. Here, again, was evidence of indifference among Churchmen in regard to the schools. ["Hear, hear!" *and cries of* "No!"] Then, with regard to the unequal rating of the Board and denominational schools. Here, again, there was a great injustice inflicted on the Board Schools. He held a table in his hand, prepared by a friend, showing the difference in the way those two kinds of schools were rated. The table dealt with 15 school districts in the neighbourhood of Sheffield, and showed that the net rateable value per scholar accommodated was 50·8d. in Board Schools, and only 10·7d. per child in denominational schools. In Sheffield the Board Schools were rated at 5s. 9¼d. per child, and the sectarian schools at 1s. 1¾d. Was that not an injustice to the Board Schools? ["Hear, hear!"] The fact was that everything possible was done by the Party to which hon. Gentlemen opposite belonged to prejudice the Board Schools, and he believed that, if the Board Schools had received the encouragement they ought to have received from the clergy of the Church of England, elementary education in the country would have been in a much more advanced condition than it now was. [*Cheers.*] Hon. Members opposite must admit that the average education in the Voluntary Schools was miserably low. [*Ministerial cries of* "No!"] He knew and readily admitted that there were many excellent Voluntary Schools, but the average education in them was low, and Parliament would have a great deal yet to do before they brought both Board Schools and Voluntary Schools fully up to the existing demands of industrial and intellectual competition. ["Hear, hear!"] He thought also the House was left much in the dark with regard to the proposed new associations of schools. It might be inferred from the speeches of the Solicitor General and the Vice President of the Council that they would be clerical and diocesan organisations, that the diocese would be the area, and that the area would contain about one million inhabitants. [The First Lord of the Treasury: "They will not be clerical organisations."] Well, large numbers of people would be thankful if it were not so. Would any Minister rise and explain clearly to the House that it would not be so? Were they to be elected? Would some Minister rise and tell the House? He confessed that he shared the distrust of clerical control and of secular education which had been so forcibly expressed by the hon. Member for the University of Dublin, and he believed, with him, that the intellectual results of sectarian education were always inferior in character. ["Hear, hear!"] He wished that clergymen should take a full part in the management of schools, but he strongly objected to their being the sole and dominating factors of the Voluntary Schools of the country. [*Cheers.*] Such a system would be dangerous to the schools and the peace of the country, and injurious to the Church itself. No worse service could be rendered to the Church than to set up everywhere diocesan boards to control the education of the country. He knew many gentlemen who had been almost the sole props of good rural schools who would not consent to take part in, or to be controlled by, such clerical organisations, and it would be a great misfortune to lose the support and the active services of such men in the cause of elementary education. ["Hear, hear!"] He earnestly hoped, therefore, not only for the sake of the teaching in the schools, but for the sake of the schools themselves, that this part of the scheme of the Government would be abandoned, and that some sort of local control would be substituted for it. In conclusion, he desired to say that he was convinced that to make the schools more dogmatic and sectarian than at present, or even to keep them as dogmatic and sectarian as they now were, would be mischievous to the cause of education. Matthew Arnold knew more about schools abroad than any other man who ever served the Education Department. ["Hear, hear!"] He went repeatedly to France, Switzerland, and Germany, and carefully examined the schools of those countries, especially from the point of religious education. He would quote what Matthew Arnold said of the Prussian schools:—

> "The schools," he said, "deserve their high reputation. One thing particularly struck me in the popular schools—the religious instruction. It occupies an important place in them, it is compulsory, it is extremely well given, though too dogmatic. Now, they tell you that two-thirds of the North German parents are Socialists and atheists, yet their children have to undergo this strong religious teaching, and, what is more, they seem to enjoy it. They must undoubtedly retain something of it, and it will have a conservative effect. So that I am convinced that the revolution will not be imminent in Germany—not even after they have lost Bismarck and the Emperor William."

A truly catholic religious education was far less likely to be repugnant to the minds of the parents than the dogmatic teaching which they were now forcing on the children in thousands of parishes and in thousands of schools. Was it not deplorable that they should be discussing this question of sectarianism, that they should be fighting for clerical domination and clerical schools when everything around them warned them that the greatest danger that Englishmen had to encounter to-day was the tried and proved intelligence of those who had had greater educational advantages than they had given to the English people? If they meant to do justice to their people, if they meant to equip them so that they might fairly discharge their duty in life, be good subjects and fit to govern the Empire, they must make them as intelligent as any other people in the world. ["Hear, hear!"] This Bill was not the way to do that. This Bill was a retrograde step, and it was deplorable that at the end of the 19th century, instead of improving and raising their education, they should be lowering it. [*Cheers.*]

Sir FREDERICK MILNER (Notts, Bassetlaw) said that, as representing a constituency in which there were no fewer than 60 Voluntary Schools and only seven

Board Schools, he felt bound to say a few words in hearty support of the Government's Measure. He would submit that the Amendment now before the House was purely an obstructive Amendment. ["Hear, hear!"] At any rate, it rested with hon. Gentlemen opposite whether the object they pretended to have at heart was accomplished or not. The Leader of the House had given them a positive assurance that a Bill would be introduced dealing with necessitous Board Schools, and passed into law unless the Government were prevented doing so by the dilatory tactics of hon. Gentlemen opposite. ["Hear, hear!"] He confessed he had some sympathy with those who desired to see more representative local control in their schools, but this Bill did provide adequate representative control. Personally he should like to see every Voluntary School in the country adopt, of its own accord, local control, and he hoped both Churchmen and Nonconformists would come to see how greatly it was to the advantage of the schools to adopt this system, and that in time it would become universal. ["Hear, hear!"] This Bill had been brought in to meet a very urgent and pressing necessity, which was the saving from extinction of schools upon which millions of money had been spent, not one farthing of which had been contributed by the ratepayers, and in which a magnificent work for education was going on long before the State ever thought it its duty to teach its children to read or to write. [*Cheers.*] Nothing showed more the energy and the liberality Churchmen had shown than the fact that not only the number of their schools but the number of scholars attending their schools, and their annual subscriptions, had gone on increasing year by year. But even the longest purse must be emptied in time, and unless some very prompt and effective aid were rendered it was an absolute necessity, however willing Churchmen might be to sacrifice themselves, that many of the Voluntary Schools must be closed. It was absolutely impossible for Churchmen and the members of other religious bodies to go on keeping up their schools at the present increased yearly requirements so long as the whole of the money from the rates was given to Board Schools and reasonable assistance was not offered to Voluntary Schools. The hon. and learned Member for York gave them some figures last night about the schools in that city. York was a very good test of the value of this Bill. When he first knew York the attendance rate was 2½d. The school rate was now five times that amount, and threatened to be higher still. Yet there were only 1,855 children in the Board Schools, who got the whole benefit of this rate, and 7,621 children in the Voluntary Schools, whose parents had not only to contribute the greater part of this rate, from which they derived no benefit whatever, but to keep up their own schools as well. ["Hear, hear!"] Was this what they called "statutory equality"? It was not his idea of justice. [*Cheers.*] The hon. and learned Member for York complained that the Voluntary Schools would receive £1,900 from this grant.

SIR F. LOCKWOOD: I did nothing of the kind. I congratulated the Voluntary Schools of York on receiving the £1,900, and I said I thought they thoroughly deserved it.

SIR F. MILNER said the hon. and learned Member did say that the Voluntary Schools would receive £1,900, and that under the Bill the Board Schools would receive nothing, although they should receive £463. Well, considering that the Board Schools were now receiving the whole of the 11d. rate, which was being paid by the parents of the 7,621 children who were in the Voluntary Schools, he thought that this was a bare measure of justice. ["Hear, hear!"] The case of the Voluntary Schools at York now was an absolutely desperate one. The subscribers had been making sacrifice after sacrifice, but they had now come pretty well to the end of their tether. The Bill introduced by the Government came in the nick of time to save these schools from extinction, and poorer ratepayers from the crushing, overwhelming rates that would, in consequence of such extinction, be imposed. The people would not be grateful to the man or the party who attempted to deprive them of this great boon. He really had no patience with those hon. and right hon. Gentlemen who talked about this benefit being a dole to parsons and landlords; they seemed to have parson and landlord on the brain. It was all very well to use such language on election platforms; and last year the Rating Bill was spoken of as a dole to landlords, who, it was said, would raise their rents in proportion to the reduction in rates. Those who made these statements, however, could not produce any instance of a landlord having done any such thing. Now the alarm was raised that this subvention would result in the reduction of school subscriptions. But was it likely that the men who had sacrificed millions of money out of love for education of the children of the country in their own religious faith, would be so foolish as to take advantage of this grant to reduce their contributions to the cause they had at heart? No; this timely help would stimulate the friends of Voluntary Schools to renewed exertions to bring these schools to the highest pitch of efficiency, and justify the Government which had given this assistance. He was perfectly conscious of the fact that if, in consequence of this help, the zeal of friends of Voluntary Schools should diminish and subscriptions cease, then the doom of these schools would be sealed, and hon. Gentlemen opposite would enjoy the satisfaction of seeing them squeezed out of existence; but the Government that allowed this to be done without giving help would be likely to be itself squeezed out of existence. It had been said that school teachers were opposed to this Measure. It happened that he for many years had had considerable connections among school teachers, and had taken considerable interest in their condition and grievances. He had recognised that they had been badly treated by the State, and teachers knew that in him they had a warm advocate of their rights. Communications he had received from teachers in different parts of the country showed clearly that they warmly welcomed the proposals of the Government, and only wished that they went a little further. In his own constituency a meeting of teachers unanimously approved the Bill, expressing an opinion that it would do a great deal of good to Voluntary Schools, would put them in a secure position, and enable them to provide better teaching staffs and more efficient education. And that was the object with which the Government made these proposals. It would pass the wit of man to adduce any argument that had not already been used half-a-dozen times in these Debates. He urged the Government to persevere, to stiffen their backs, and to put down anything in the nature of obstruction by using all the forms of the House for the purpose. He urged all those who were in favour of the principle to give their loyal support to the Government, and not to indulge in carping criticisms of the Bill. No one could contend that it was perfect, complete, and exhaustive, and the Leader of the House would admit its incompleteness. But unfortunately, in these days, when obstruction had been made a fine art, when hon. Members with sufficient persistence and skins thick enough could "stick up" legislation for weeks together, it was necessary to undertake legislation piecemeal, as in this instance. He hoped the Bill would receive the hearty, loyal support of all Members on the Ministerial side of the House, and true friends of education on the other side, so that the Government would be enabled to pass the Measure into law before 31st March. He was perfcetly certain that if the Government pressed on with the Measure, they would find, when the advantages of the Bill became known to the ratepayers, it would be gratefully accepted by the country, and in any event the Government would have the satisfaction of having made an honest, earnest attempt to deal with a question beset with many difficulties.

MR. T. P. O'CONNOR was unwilling to stand between the House and other Members specially qualified to speak on the subject, but as the representative of a constituency where the deepest interest was taken in educational matters, he felt it his duty to trouble the House with a few observations. He was not able to take up exactly the same position as the spokesmen of either of the two parties to this conflict over the Measure. On the one hand, he was unable to take up the position occupied by the Solicitor General; and, on the other hand, he found himself in some disagreement with some of his Friends on his own side of the House. In the course of his able speech, the Solicitor General, while very ably defending the right of Voluntary Schools to have this assistance, seemed to ignore some of the criticisms which had weight against the Bill; he seemed to be struggling against a strong current of feeling when he said not a word in favour of some form of popular control over State-assisted Voluntary Schools. The objection was not a sound objection that the only point of control of any value was the appointment of teachers. With that he entirely disagreed, and was glad to find that the head of the Catholic Church in this country had emphatically declared that, so far as Catholic Schools were concerned, he had no fear whatever of any form of popular control, with, of course, safeguards necessary in the case of all denominational schools. Of course it would be absurd for the managers of Voluntary Schools to give up the appointment of teachers; but, at the same time, a body representing parents and, to some extent, ratepayers, might usefully deal with such questions as the efficiency of schools, the health of schools, and the audit of accounts, which should not be left to a one-man management. The Solicitor General made no allusion to grievances of Nonconformists in those 8,000 parishes of the country in which there were Church of England Schools only. Would any fair-minded man say it was fair that children of Nonconformists should be sent to these schools without any protection whatever for their religious teaching and the doctrines their parents professed? It had been said that these doctrines and opinions were not interfered with, but he received a statement of that kind with some incredulity. As an Irishman, he could speak with experience of the history of education in his own country. In Ireland there had been many forms of education, and many forms of schools—the Erasmus Smith Schools, the Ranelagh Schools, and the higher education at Trinity College, in which, though it was represented there was no interference with the Catholic religion, there was such an overwhelmingly dominant Protestant atmosphere that Catholics could not avail themselves of the education given. In fact, in Ireland they were familiar with exactly the same state of things existing in those 8,000 English parishes, for Catholic children were exposed to the dominating influence of a single denomination, and he, as an Irishman, fully appreciated and sympathised with the grievance of Nonconformists. He regretted that for Parliamentary and tactical reasons the Bill did not deal with necessitous Board Schools, and feared that the course adopted would give strength to the conviction in the country that the Bill was a two-edged weapon—of defence for Voluntary Schools, of offence against Board Schools. He had read speeches from Liberal politicians declaring that Irish support of the Bill would be at the risk of loss of Home Rule and other measures in which Irishmen were deeply interested. He regarded that as an ignoble and a stupid argument. Were Irishmen to sacrifice their most profound religious convictions to serve the political interests of their country? It might be asked what right had the Irish Members to interfere in the discussion at all. Their countrymen formed two millions of the population of England, and two millions of the population had some right to have their voices heard on a Measure dealing with the population of the country as a whole. And, furthermore, these two millions of people had upon this question of education convictions as strong, and had proved these convictions as nobly, as any other body in the country. He was glad to find the universal testimony which was now given to the conviction and the self-sacrifice which the Catholics of Great Britain had shown upon the education question. He listened with some amusement to the interruption of the Secretary to the Treasury to the speech of his right hon. Friend the Member for Sheffield (Mr. Mundella). The right hon. Gentleman was drawing rather a dark picture—the accuracy of which he was not able either to confirm or deny—of the state of the schools at Preston, and the right hon. Gentleman got up and controverted that statement, not by a statement with regard to the condition of the Church schools at Preston, but by a statement in regard to the Catholic schools in that town. He did not know whether he was to judge of the effect of that interruption by the omission as well as by the positive statement, whether he was to regard it as an admission that the Church schools were not in a very satisfactory condition, as well as a statement that the Catholic schools were.

Mr. HANBURY: What I said was that up to two years ago the Church of England schools were not in the position in which I would like to see the Voluntary Schools. Since then, however, they have been put into an efficient condition, and a sum of £25,000 has been spent upon them. The Roman Catholic Schools at Preston have always been in a first-rate condition.

Mr. T. P. O'CONNOR said he was glad to have been interrupted by the right hon. Gentleman. He thought it was a little scandalous that 1s. 9¾d. should be the amount of the subscriptions of the richer portion of the community, as compared with 11s. 9d. which was the amount of the subscriptions of the Catholics of the community. His hon. Friend the Member for Carnarvon Boroughs (Mr. Lloyd-George), who made a speech against the Bill, with some portions of which he sympathised, asked whether anybody could state what definite religious doctrine meant. He was not going to interfere with the disputes between Protestants and Protestants, but he thought that nobody could have any doubt that a Catholic could define what he meant by definite religious instruction. Between Catholics and all forms of the Protestant creed there yawned the impassable gulf of dogma. Take the teaching of the Bible. That raised the whole question which separated the Catholic Church from the Protestant creeds, namely, whether the Bible was to be interpreted by private judgment or by the exposition of a divinely appointed Church. And, therefore, it was impossible for the Catholic ever to send his child to the Board School, however slight the religious education in that school might be. The Catholic parent demanded that his child should be brought up in a Catholic atmosphere, and that in the school there should be not only a definite teaching of the dogmas of the Church to which he belonged, but also all those emblems and other signs which were part and parcel of the religious training of the Catholic child. Reference had been made to the Scotch system. There were in Scotland some School Boards that consisted entirely, or almost entirely, of Catholics; that was to say, parishes in the Highlands where still the Catholics remained almost the entire population. That was the case in Movar and Barra. A Scotch friend of his, a Member of the House of Commons and one of the staunchest friends of Home Rule, made an observation to him the other night to the effect that it was most unfortunate that the Catholics took up this position on the education question, as undoubtedly it alarmed the Protestantism of Scotland, and in that way seriously embarrassed the cause of Home Rule. Let him put before the House the Catholic and the Scotch case, or rather the Catholic case and the Protestant case. There was not a single Catholic teacher in any Protestant school in Scotland. In Barra there was one Protestant in the whole population, and that Protestant was the schoolmaster of the Catholic school, and, therefore, when his Scotch friends remonstrated with him, he was tempted to answer that the Irish people should stand by their convictions, but that really Scotchmen ought to get rid of some of their prejudices. Would this Bill entirely remove the Catholic grievance? He would take a case which happened to be Scotch. It was a case which corresponded to many cases in England. He meant the case of Port Glasgow. There they had a population of 15,000 people. The Catholic population was 5,000. There were three Board Schools in this town and one or two Catholic schools. The rates were £1,650 a year, or £500 a school. The Catholics paid all the expenses of their schools except the State grant, but in addition they paid one-third of the expenses of the Board Schools. Did they call that equality? He called that gross inequality between Catholics and Protestants, an inequality which was rendered more obnoxious by two facts. The first fact was that the Irish third formed the poorer part of the population. There was a second and more astonishing fact. The First Lord of the Treasury and the Solicitor General called attention to the circumstance that people, especially on the Liberal side of the House, were in the habit of representing education in Scotland as non-sectarian. It was nothing of the kind. Why, the Shorter Catechism was as dogmatic as any book that was ever taught to youth, and the Shorter Catechism was taught in every Board School in Scotland. ["No, no!"] How many exceptions?

An hon. Member: Only a few.

Mr. T. P. O'CONNOR: In 95 per cent. of the Board Schools of Scotland definite dogma was taught. And now look at the Catholic position in Port Glasgow. Catholics were not allowed to get anything out of the rates for the teaching in their own schools because it was dogmatic, but they were compelled to pay for the teaching in the Board Schools although it was dogmatic; the one difference being that the Protestant dogma was taught in one set of schools and the Catholic dogma in the other, and Catholics were fined, not because they taught dogma, but because they happened to be Catholics. The Irishmen in England, Scotland, and Wales were mostly working men. They had built all their own churches, they had built all their own schools, they supported their own clergymen, they had a number of charitable and religious organisations to support, and he thought he was under the mark when he said that there was scarcely one of these men who did not subscribe to various religious purposes a shilling a week, or on the average one-twentieth of his entire earnings. The Catholics maintained their convictions at their own expense, and in spite of the temptation of better and more efficient education at the expense of the ratepayers in the Board Schools. He submitted that Irish Catholics deserved sympathy for the inflexible staunchness with which they had stood by their schools through generations of hardships and persecutions. It showed that when Irishmen formed convictions, personal or political, no power on earth would change them. Would this Bill permanently help Irish Catholic schools? The Vice President of the Council on Education mentioned that the money to be allocated would be spent in raising the standard of education and the number of teachers' apparatus necessary for manual instruction and physical exercises. All these things he said the association of schools would recommend, the Education Department would prescribe, and this was how the money would go. [*Ministerial* "Hear, hear!"] Precisely; or what became of the 5s.? It would not be a penny too much to supply all these additions to the existing requirements. For the reasons he had indicated, he was unable to accept the Bill as a final or satisfactory settlement of the question. He would have preferred a scheme giving larger assistance to Voluntary Schools made palatable to the country by admitting the system of popular control. ["Hear, hear!"]

Sir ARTHUR FORWOOD (Lancashire, Ormskirk) said the right hon. Member for Sheffield had occupied some time of the House in comments upon the religious education given in Voluntary Schools, and he understood him to say that if he had his way he would not have any school, associated in any way with a religious denomination, receiving public money.

Mr. MUNDELLA said the right hon. Gentleman was under an entirely wrong impression.

Sir ARTHUR FORWOOD said that he was glad he had given the right hon. Gentleman opposite an opportunity of disabusing him of an impression created by reason of his remarks upon the teaching of dogma and other matters in our national education. The right hon. Gentleman also favoured them with many statistics. He had not been able within the short time at his command to investigate all the figures the right hon. Gentleman gave as to Lancashire and Sheffield, but he did find that in the Report of the Education Department for 1895-96, the benighted town of Preston, which starved its schools and was so unfavourably compared with Sheffield, raised voluntary subscriptions amounting to 5s. 6d. per child, while Sheffield raised only 3s. 9d. Lancashire contrasted in population more nearly with London than with any other area, and although Lancashire had six Voluntary Schools to one Board School, whereas the converse was almost the case in London, and although Lancashire had agricultural districts where children had a long way to go to school, whereas London schools were close at hand, yet the school attendance in Lancashire was 80·67 as compared with 80·72 in London. These figures must impress the House that Lancashire had given as great attention to the educational wants of her population as the great Metropolis. ["Hear, hear!"] He regarded the education of the people in the sense of a public obligation, not as a local, but as a national charge. He maintained that education was a national defence against crime, ignorance, and vice, and that good education was necessary for the purpose of placing the population in a position fairly and properly to compete with other nations. They ought to ensure greater uniformity in regard to education, and avoid the great disparity between one School Board and another. As regarded expenditure for education, if the cost came from the National Exchequer, and the standard was fixed by the Department, depend upon it the Department, whilst being liberal in laying down what should be the standard, would guard the country against excessive extravagance that was too often found in local schools. For example, education in Portsmouth was conducted at a cost of 36s. per head; in Brighton the School Board spent 56s.; in London 68s.; whilst the average for the Voluntary Schools throughout the country was from 35s. to 40s. Many Members on his side of the House held the opinion that if a further sum was granted from the National Exchequer it must mean greater public control. He had no fear of any greater public control. ["Hear, hear!"] The grants were given purely and solely from the standpoint of the standard obtained by the children. The Government made a contract with the managers of the schools precisely in the same way that the Admiralty made a contract for an ironclad. He welcomed the Bill because it was a satisfactory advance in the direction of making the cost of school maintenance a national burden, and he also considered that there should be as nearly as possible equality of treatment between Board Schools and Voluntary Schools in respect of any grants coming out of the National Exchequer. The Duke of Devonshire, in a speech upon this subject, which he read in *The Times*, said it was not proposed by the Bill to depart from the principle of statutory equality, as regarded State aid, between Voluntary and Board Schools. That exactly expressed his sentiments as regards State aid. He only wished the noble Lord had supplemented it by a further expression of opinion, that if the Exchequer could not find all the money necessary for the maintenance of the schools, then there should be rate aid. Holding that education was a national charge, he thought there should be rate aid. He hoped the Government Bill for Board Schools would deal liberally with them. In the meantime, he was bound to say that, while that Bill would be welcome assistance to the ratepayers, he felt the present Measure would give them substantial assistance. If something in the direction of the Bill did not pass into law, he did not hesitate, speaking of his knowledge of a very large district, to say that a very large and growing number of Voluntary Schools would be closed and Board Schools have to take their place. It was impossible for Voluntary Schools in great urban constituencies to continue to struggle on as they had done, largely at the expense of the health and time of the much-abused clergymen of the district—["hear, hear!"]—for, as they were situated in the poorest districts they could not continue their existence without some substantial aid from the Government. Mr. Morley called attention to what he described as the unfairness created by the Bill, as between district and district, and instanced Nottingham. If the Voluntary Schools of that city were closed the education of 12,000 children in them would cost the ratepayers £30,000, so that aid from the Government saved that very substantial sum to the ratepayers. The same remark might be applied to Newcastle. As regarded Liverpool that city occupied the proud position of educating the largest number of children in Voluntary Schools in any school district in the United Kingdom. No fewer than 63,000 children were educated in Liverpool Voluntary Schools, compared with 30,000 in Liverpool Board Schools. The additional cost to the ratepayers, if some assistance such as that proposed by the Government were not given, would be over £100,000 a year. He unhesitatingly stated that the larger portion of the Voluntary Schools in that city would have to be closed if the present competition with the Board Schools went on without some further assistance from the National Exchequer. He had some objection to offer to the Bill. He did not see the necessity for the words—"due regard being had to Voluntary Schools." He did not know what interpretation would be put on these words, but the question for the Government was whether or not the education was to be to a certain standard, and if it was, the Government ought to be satisfied; and how the means to supplement the Government grant were obtained should not be a question raised on this Bill. In fact, these words were absolutely in contradiction to the removal of the 17s. 6d. limit, and were reimposing that limit in an indirect manner, which would do injury to the schools in poverty-stricken districts. Full justice had not been done on this question of voluntary subscriptions, for he considered that the cost of the land and of the fabrics had been too little regarded. That cost was a capitalised subscription. ["Hear, hear!"] From the public point of view they had to look at what the value would be had Board Schools to replace Voluntary Schools, and he estimated it, according to the average School Board expenditure on such matters, at present at something like 15s. to 20s. per child, according to the district. Therefore, he maintained that the Voluntary subscriptions, whatever they might be to-day in cash, ought to be regarded as supplemented by this capitalised subscription of 15s. to 20s. per child. ["Hear, hear!"] That meant that the Voluntary Schools had contributed a sum of £3,000,000 a year that would otherwise have been chargeable to the ratepayers, and he would put that sum, for the sake of comparison, against the amount of £2,000,000 a year now paid in school rates, as it would show that the value of the sites was a very important factor that ought to be considered. It ought to be borne in mind that new conditions of expenditure had been made, which might absorb all the grant now proposed to be given. He approved these conditions, which were all for the improvement and encouragement of education, but they must not lead managers into supposing that the 5s. would all be available for present purposes. He strongly supported the Government's proposal for the federation of schools, believing it would have a good effect on managers and in the employment of teachers. There was another point in the Bill which he did not quite understand. It was limited to "necessitous schools." What was the meaning of these words? There were very few Voluntary Schools that were not necessitous, and these few were probably endowed. But a very wide latitude might be given to the interpretation of these words by the Department. He supposed the 5s. grant would be given, per head, over the area of the proposed federation, and the council of the federation would be left unfettered, in doling out the grants to schools as they were more or less necessitous. He should like some further information on this point. He thanked the Government for what they had done, and hoped they would behave equally liberally to the Board Schools. He could only regard the Measure, however, as an instalment of what the nation must ultimately do in regard to education.

On the return of Mr. SPEAKER, after the usual interval,

MR. R. W. PERKS (Lincolnshire, Louth) said the calculations which had been indulged in as to the cost to the country of the abolition of the voluntary system were singularly futile. If they desired an illustration of the absurdity of those calculations and the ease with which they were refuted, they had only to refer to the statement made a few nights ago by the Colonial Secretary that the substitution of School Boards for the present voluntary system in Birmingham would mean a rise in the school rate of Birmingham of from 1s. to 1s. 9d. in the £. That statement was at once controverted by the Chairman of the Birmingham School Board, who, with a more accurate knowledge than the right hon. Gentleman of the rateable capacity of the city, showed that the right hon. Gentleman was wrong in his figures by £63,000 a year, and that in the event of the Board Schools receiving the same assistance from public funds, as it was proposed to give to the Voluntary Schools, the rate would be only 1s. 2½d. or 1s. 3d. in the £. The House might, therefore, discard the bogus figures put forward to delude the people of the country that the substitution of Board Schools for Voluntary Schools would lead to so large addition in taxation. The Bill had been described from the Government Benches as a small temporary Measure; and the introduction of a number of supplementary Bills was foreshadowed. There was to be a second Bill to give grants to necessitous Board Schools, a third Bill dealing with the Scotch portion of the question, a fourth dealing with the Irish portion, and a fifth dealing with secondary education. Besides all these, the noble Lord the Member for Rochester had told the House that there were to be other Bills to carry out the particular views of his friends. There was, accordingly, before the House a formidable vista of educational measures for some time to come. This Bill was unpopular in the country. There had been no expression of popular approval of the Bill in any part of the country. What School Board had sent a petition to the House in favour of the

Bill? Not a single one. What Town Council had passed a resolution in support of it? Not a single one. It had received no commendation from any body of teachers. The two representatives of the teachers in the House had denounced it as an imperfect and an unjust Bill. But he spoke for a large section of the community who did not belong to the Established Church; and he was sure that hon. Members who were in that communion would give every consideration to those views. It had been already pointed out that the Nonconformist Churches took a considerable share in the elementary education of the country long before the Education Act of 1870. At the present time the Nonconformist Churches provided for the religious instruction of not less than 3½ millions of children in their Sunday schools. The Nonconformists had, therefore, reasonable right to be heard on any question affecting the religious education of the children of England. ["Hear, hear!"] The particular Church to which he belonged —the Wesleyan-Methodist—had just instituted an inquiry as to the number of their children at present receiving their education in Church of England schools, and they found that in 6,701 National Schools, under the control of the National Society, there were no less than 240,000 Wesleyan-Methodist children. Why were these children in those schools? Not because their parents wanted them to be there, but because they were forced into the schools by a most unjust construction of the Act of 1870. ["Hear, hear!"] In 311 villages in Lincolnshire and the two adjacent counties there were no less than 14,000 Wesleyan-Methodist children who had no choice but to attend Church of England schools. The Wesleyan-Methodists only represented about 28 per cent. of all sections of Nonconformity, so that it would be apparent that there were in the schools of the Church of England, roughly speaking, 700,000 to 800,000 children of Nonconformists out of an average attendance of 1,850,000 or thereabouts. There were many towns where there was practically no choice. In Southport, where there were only two or three large landowners —one a Roman Catholic and the other two Churchmen—it was a common form in the leases that the land should not be used for denominational day schools in connection with the various Dissenting bodies. There was a large Nonconformist population in the town, and there were nine Church schools, three Roman Catholic schools, two British schools, and one Wesleyan school. In Cambridge there were no less than 19 Church schools, one Roman Catholic, and one British school. Consequently, there was only one school in that town which in any way met the requirements of Dissenters, though they formed one-half of the population. ["Hear, hear!"] In Salisbury there were seven Church schools and one Roman Catholic school, and the children of Dissenters were forced into those denominational or sectarian schools. ["Hear, hear!"] This all arose from the extraordinary and unexpected interpretation of the Act of 1870, which gives existing sectarian schools the prior right of supplying a deficiency in school accommodation. These figures at once disposed of the doctrine that increased accommodation in Church schools was a test of their popularity. He had a list of 40 villages and towns where Church and Board Schools had been running side by side. Six years ago there were 25,000 children in the Church schools and 23,000 in the Board Schools. To-day there were 40,000 in the Board Schools, and only 1,000 more in the Church schools. That showed that when the population had a choice between schools under the control of the clergy and Board Schools, they preferred the latter, because they were more independently controlled and afforded a superior education. That was one of the reasons why the Wesleyan body, which used to be considered Conservative, especially on education questions, had completely veered round and passed the strong resolutions which had been sent to every Member of the House. ["Hear, hear!"] Wesleyans had always, as far as their own schools were concerned, been ready to accept real local control. ["Hear, hear!"] They had asked for the establishment of School Board and unsectarian schools within reasonable distance of every child. He had received a letter from a clergyman in his Division, which showed that the clergy of the Church were not so much alarmed at the prospect of village School Boards. This gentleman expressed the hope that this Bill would not pass in its present form. He found a School Board established in his parish when he came to it, and he had always been satisfied with it. He had been chairman of the Board School for the last six years, and the school was in a very high state of efficiency—["Hear, hear!"]—and the schoolmaster was a first-rate man. From experience, he said, he was a thorough supporter of the School Board system, and he could see no justice in the provisions of the present Bill, and wished its opponents all success. ["Hear, hear!"] The hon. Member for the Ormskirk Division spoke of the great sacrifices made by Church-people in the erection of schools. He had the honour, some years ago, to represent various railway companies, and a common subject of discussion was, should they subscribe towards the erection of Voluntary Schools? The directors did not care two pins what were the religious opinions taught in those schools; but they subscribed because they did not want to be rated. ["Hear, hear!"] Another point was, that these schools were used for a variety of purposes not educational at all. They were told that the town of Preston—Proud Preston it was called—subscribed 1s. 9d. a head towards the maintenance of religion in elementary schools. What did they get for that 1s. 9d.? They got the use of the schools for a variety of extraneous purposes—bazaars, theatrical performances, concerts, Sunday schools. All that ought to be borne in mind when people talked of the sacrifices of the Church for the sake of religion. ["Hear, hear!"] The Bill of this year was described the other day by a leading member of the Church of England as a "better-than-nothing" Bill, just as the noble Lord the Member for Rochester described last year's Bill as a bad Bill, badly drafted. They made no provision for those vital requirements which the Free Churches thought absolutely essential. There was no security that this money would be given for increased efficiency. He was delighted to hear the Vice-President indicate several important heads in which this money might be expended—additional teachers, larger salaries, a higher standard of education, and school appliances. That was all very good; but what was to become of the 5s.? Should the 5s. cover all of those? There was no guarantee in the Bill that the money would be so applied. These were all romantic myths at the present moment. They were all fancies of the Vice-President. There was no security that they would be carried out. The present Vice President of the Council of Education would no doubt exert himself to insure the proper application of the money, but Governments came and went, and there was no permanent security that the money would be so used. The Bill provided no protection against the hardships to which Nonconformists who desired to become teachers were now exposed. A farmer living in a village near Louth had written to him informing him of the following facts:—There were 58 children in the village school, of whom 14 were the children of Church-people, and 44 the children of Nonconformists. A girl wanted to become a pupil teacher in the school, as she would get £10 a year in that position, but she was told that if she was appointed she must give up attending a Nonconformist chapel. His informant described the position as that of a "tied teacher." They had all heard of tied public houses, but a "tied teacher" was, he thought, a new expression. Nonconformist pupil teachers who wanted to become teachers in National Schools had to choose between their occupation and their places of worship, and that assuredly was a grave hardship. The Bill made no provision for effective audits, and as accounts were often "cooked" for the purpose of showing revenues that did not really exist, that was a grave blemish. On the subject of the federation of schools, against which the Wesleyan body had protested, the Vice President of the Council had twitted the Opposition for not having accepted the scheme of last year. The right hon. Member said that the bodies under which these federations were to work according to last year's Bill were public, elective, democratic bodies, and that now the Opposition were face to face with an institution which was not public, not elective, not democratic. Who were to elect these associations? They had not been told.

Sir J. GORST: Oh, yes; I said that the idea was that the association should be elected by the managers.

Mr. PERKS: It is not in the Bill.

The SOLICITOR GENERAL (Sir Robert Finlay, Inverness Burghs): You have it in the Bill that the governing body is to be representative of the management.

MR. PERKS asked who were the managers of these Voluntary Schools? How were they chosen? They could not be considered a representative body. Then they were not told upon what principles these federated bodies were to act. Last night they were told that the Department intended to "boycott" those schools which would not subject themselves to the control of these clerical associations and Diocesan educational bodies. Was it the intention of the Government to set up these Diocesan Boards as rivals of that useful institution the National Union of Teachers? They had not been told what the powers of these associations were to be. The Bishop of Winchester had lately taken part in, what he termed, a peculiar ceremony. It was the transfer of a Board School at Farnham to Church management. There was great danger that these Diocesan associations would use their powers and funds for the purpose of crushing out Board Schools in village districts, and that by capturing the School Boards or bribing the electors they would strive to bring these schools into the fold of the National Society. The Bill was unquestionably a sectarian Bill, and had been framed to a large extent in the interests of that section of society which was supposed to be one of the great bulwarks of the Conservative Party. The Bill in short proposed to set over our Voluntary Schools bodies composed of men belonging to the class that had ever been inimical to real education, reform, and progress.

LORD WARKWORTH (Kensington, S.) said that his constituents would welcome the proposals of the Government as an honest attempt to redeem the pledges made on their behalf at the General Election. A peculiar characteristic of the present Debate as conducted by hon. Members opposite was that the interests of the children and the question of the efficiency of their education had been almost entirely lost sight of. ["Hear, hear!"] This was not a Bill, as the Opposition averred, for the relief of the subscriber; it was a Bill for increasing the efficiency of education. It was neither the intention nor the desire of the supporters of the Government that the pecuniary relief provided by the Bill should go into the pockets of the subscribers to Voluntary Schools; but if hon. Members opposite believed that such a result would follow, let them wait for the Committee stage, when they could move Amendments designed to prevent any such consequences. But, although the Archbishops and Bishops had expressed their desire that subscriptions should not only be maintained at the present level but should be increased, he regarded that pronouncement as a very great concession, and not as a declaration of obligation. The responsibility cast upon the voluntary subscribers by the Act of 1870 was precisely the same as that Act cast upon the ratepayers. He thought then they had a right to ask hon. Members to explain, if it was right to relieve one class of the community, namely, the ratepayers, of their responsibilities under that Act, why were they to be told that any relief accruing to the voluntary subscribers under this Bill was a monstrous invasion? [*Cheers.*] The other night the right hon. Member for Montrose Burghs said that the State adopted an attitude of perfect neutrality with regard to the two classes of schools. He thought that this was a most misleading and inaccurate account of its attitude. The right hon. Member for Wolverhampton said that the Voluntary School subscriber had no more claim to relief than the subscriber to a hospital; and the right hon. Gentleman looked upon the Voluntary Schools in the light of a charity and the Board Schools in the light of a national obligation. But this was not dealing with the two classes of schools on a footing of equality. Surely they might ask hon. Members to press their logic to the legitimate conclusion, and to admit that equality of treatment carried with it equality of relief, and that there was no shadow of justification on the merits of the case for introducing in this Bill a clause providing that the relief should not go to voluntary subscribers. ["Hear, hear!"] One of the great defects under the present system was that they not only dealt unfairly with different classes of ratepayers, but, as between different classes of children, some of them were penalised according to whether they were born in a rich or a poor district. But that was not an equality which they would remedy by a fixed grant under the

Bill. He did not believe that they would ever obtain that equality until they had not only drawn a definite distinction between primary and secondary education —which ought to have come first and not second—but until they had placed primary education on the Imperial Exchequer. Hon. Gentlemen stated that whenever they returned to power with a surplus their first step would be to try to nullify the effect of this Bill by giving further relief to the Board Schools; and the right hon. Member for the Montrose Burghs stated that he still adhered to the idea that one undenominational system should be the only one recognised by the country. Some hon. Members had also said that their ideal was the painless extinction of the Voluntary Schools, and if they were to introduce this Bill they would insist on the accompaniment of a provision for adequate popular control. ["Hear, hear!"] Why did they make the demand for popular control? They made it because it meant control over the payment of teachers, because they meant to use it as an engine for the destruction of the denominational character of the schools. [*Cheers.*] But if they were to carry out their own policy they would be seeking to carry out a system of test in its most odious form, and the application of that test was to be made the claim to equal treatment. If there was one subject put clearly before the electorate at the last election it was that denominational education under its present system of management was to be no disqualification to perfect equality of treatment. They had heard a great deal about the position of Wesleyans and other Nonconformists, how they had made enormous sacrifices to maintain their schools, that they repudiated the aid offered under this Bill; and they had been asked why the far richer Church of England should demand this relief. But the Wesleyan community had abandoned a great many of their schools; in 1894 they abandoned 29 schools. If they were content to abandon those schools they were perfectly logical in not wanting this relief from the State because they already had a denominational system of their own which was practically endowed by the State. That was a reason why the Wesleyans did not want the extra endowment, but that was not the position of the Church of England. They repudiated the teaching given by the Board Schools, not because they did not represent their views, but because the Board School system did not afford any guarantee that they should be enabled to give any religious teaching at all, and where it was given they thought that it was not the kind which the children ought to receive. Therefore, they claimed as a right that they should be given that amount of assistance which should prevent them from the necessity of abandoning their schools. [*Cheers.*] In answer to the argument of the right hon. Member for the Montrose Burghs, he might retort by asking, even supposing it were true that the rich members of the Church of England were not so alive to their responsibilities as they should wish them to be in contributing so much as they ought, was that a reason why they should punish the children? [*Cheers.*] He had never understood before until the argument was put in this form by the hon. Gentleman opposite that the rights of the parents and the fulfilment of national obligations were to be dependent on the charity of the rich. ["Hear, hear!"] He welcomed this Bill partly because it attempted to carry out the spirit of the Act of 1870, by dealing with the unfair advantages which the Board Schools at present possessed. He welcomed the provision for the association of schools contained in the Bill. He believed it would enable them to distribute the grant more equally to the needs of the different schools than hitherto. He welcomed it also as a temporary Measure. He did not believe the Bill was anything more than a temporary solution of the difficulty, and he looked forward to the time when his Party would have the courage to deal with the present system, which had become obsolete, and which by the confession of its own supporters could only be maintained by successive doles from the Exchequer, and would put in its place a clear and intelligible system making the whole of our national education a first charge on the public Exchequer. [*Cheers.*]

*MR. J. H. YOXALL (Nottingham, W.) wished to take the House away from the polemics and politics of the noble Lord in order to consider the practical questions suggested by the speech of the Vice President of the Council. With the State-aid grant, according to the Vice President, the Committee of Council were to bring about certain reforms in the management of schools. He hoped the Vice President would be able to do all he proposed to do, but the ideas of the right hon. Gentleman were not embodied in the Bill. Unless they were so embodied there was no security whatever that those admirable ideas would be carried out. But even if they were placed in the Bill in the shape of specific Amendments, and if it were determined to spend the money upon the purposes indicated, the money was entirely inadequate. To take the first thing referred to by the Vice President, the single-handed schools alone would require some £300,000 out of the £600,000. One-half of the money would go in that provision alone. Next they were told that the money was to be used in giving better salaries to the wretchedly-paid teachers in the Voluntary Schools. The whole grant would not suffice to do that. The Government were going to give, as a whole, 5s. per child, but the deficiency between the Board School and the Voluntary School was 12s. per child, and of that 9s. per child came out of the pockets of the Voluntary School teachers. How, therefore, the purposes of the Vice President were going to be defrayed out of a grant of 5s. per child he entirely failed to see. There was nothing in the Bill or in the speech of the Vice President which would prevent the money being spent more and more upon rates, taxes, fuel, lighting, and cleaning. They must give the district auditor power to go behind the strict legality of a charge and ask himself: Is this not only a legal but a reasonable charge? They did not give the auditor that power, and therefore these unfair charges would continue to go on. He would give a few examples. Take a large school in Lancashire. The accounts of the school, according to a return submitted to this House in 1894, showed that the cost of teaching was 25s. per child, while 20s. per child was spent on fuel, lighting, cleaning, and rent. Take the case of St. Andrew's, Grimsby. Last year, and for several years, it received £1,000 of public money. The contribution to the expenses of the school from other sources was £10, and the charge upon the school income for rent was £125. What was there in the Bill or in the statement of the Vice President to prevent that £125 becoming £250? There was no safeguard and no assurance. They were pouring this money into a sieve; they were providing more money in the shape of rent, lighting, fuel, and cleaning for the churches and chapels in connection with those schools. He saw not long ago on the door of a school a copy of the balance sheet for the year. He copied down two items:—"Salaries of teachers, £170," "Fuel, lighting, cleaning, and rent, £174"—and he knew from his own personal knowledge that for fuel, lighting, and cleaning a charge of £30 or £40 would be really a fair charge. The rest passed to purposes entirely outside the school; it was not given to the salaries of teachers; it went into parochial funds to be spent upon—whom? He left the House to judge. ["Hear, hear!"] In nearly all cases the cost of warming, lighting, and cleaning the building was charged wholly on the day school account; in some cases an attempt was made to bring about a balance of justice by making payments to the day school account in respect of lighting, cleaning, &c., incurred by the use of the premises for other purposes than those of the day school. Take a case near London. There a Sunday school met twice on the Sunday, 104 times in a year—a school containing several hundreds of children. How much did they suppose the Sunday school paid towards the day school expenses? £5 a year. But there was an evening continuation school which met 24 times in the year, for two hours at a time, and which contained about 20 children. Yet this school, maintained entirely out of public money, was made to contribute for fuel, gas, and cleaning £25 a year. Parliament might give £6,000,000 or £16,000,000 in additional grants, but they would not improve education in the Voluntary Schools unless regulations were laid down in the Bill to prevent the leakage of the money from the purposes of education to all sorts of purposes, proper in themselves, but not educational. There was only one thing to prevent that leakage, and that was to give some direct public representation on the management of the schools. Why did not School Boards offend in this way? And he challenged the production of a single case. It was simply because they were public institutions with the light of publicity on them. He knew that hon. Gentlemen opposite did not approve of this misuse of public money voted for education; and he asked them to believe that popular representation—which need not interfere with the denominational character of the schools—was the only remedy. On some Protestant and Catholic schools this representation had already been given. Then as to the teachers in the Voluntary Schools, no one approved of their being badly treated, but the Vice President had repeatedly declared that the Department had no authority to interfere. Until representatives of the public were placed on the managing Committees it would be impossible to prevent teachers—blameless in life, and efficient in their profession—from being dismissed by a single man or a small non-elective Committee for other than educational reasons. In the very school of St. Andrew's, Grimsby, which he had already mentioned, the mistress of the girls' department became engaged to one of the curates in the parish. But the Vicar did not approve of it, and the curate had to leave, and the mistress of the school was dismissed. He gave this merely as an instance of what went on in these schools, and of what would go on in them as long as no representative element was introduced in the Managing Committees. As to the question of these associations, unless the Education Department were empowered to prevent it, a large proportion of the £600,000 would go, not in school expenditure at all, but in the official expenses of these associations. They were evidently to be diocesan, and would cover two or three counties each. There were diocesan boards at present which were maintained out of Church funds and subscriptions. He hoped that these would not in future be financed out of the State grant.

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY: It is quite impossible under the Bill.

*MR. YOXALL said that under the Code it would be perfectly possible to pay the expenses of the organising master and the diocesan inspectors out of this money. The Preston Voluntary School Committee formed a Federation, which drew up rules; and under these power was given to rent an office, and appoint a secretary, an organising master, and other paid assistance. It was impossible to have the schools of these counties organised without paid assistance, travelling inspectors, and so on, and that would take a large slice out of the money that ought to go to the schools. Last year the London Diocesan Board gave, in aid of poor schools, £2,265, though that sum was inadequate, and the schools were now practically starving. He agreed that the Voluntary Schools did need more money; but he wanted the money voted to reach them, and not to be spent in machinery. The expenses of the London Diocesan Board last year were—School inspection staff, £662; office staff, £441; rent of office, £70; office expenses, £71; printing, £120; inspectors' postages, £20; total, £1,384, which included the cost of inspecting the schools in religious knowledge. If the aid grant were divided in the same proportions as in the case of the London Diocesan Board, 60 per cent. would go in expenses, and only 40 per cent. would go in actual aid to the schools. He hoped that in Committee clauses would be inserted to safeguard the schools against such a possibility.

*MR. JEBB (Cambridge University) said that hon. Gentlemen opposite talked at one moment as though they were entirely in the dark as to what the machinery of the Bill would be, and at another moment they talked as though a careful scrutiny of its provisions enabled them to forecast with absolute precision its disastrous operations. They ought to choose whether they would pose as agnostics or Jeremiahs. He was not so sanguine as to suppose that the very few observation with which he should trouble the House on the machinery of the Bill were likely to be satisfactory to his hon. and right hon. Friends opposite, but he ventured to think that they might at least suggest an answer to some of the questions which had been raised in the course of the Debate. Now, the cardinal feature of the machinery of the Bill was, of course, the principle of association for the Voluntary Schools. ["Hear, hear!"] It appeared to him it was not adequately recognised by hon. Gentlemen opposite that some such grouping of Voluntary Schools as was proposed was a matter of necessity for the purpose of distributing the grant. There were upwards of 14,000 Voluntary Schools, and the grant was to be given according to the needs of schools. It would be practically impossible for the Department to deal individually with the varying needs of 14,000 schools. The whole country would be too vast an area of comparison. For comparison and discrimination there must be limited areas, but these areas must not be too small. And, why? Because too small an area might fail to be representative of the average need. Therefore the Department had a veto on proposed areas. It had been suggested that no area should be smaller than a million of acres or a million of population. In the case of Church of England schools the obvious area was the diocese. He observed that the very mention of the word "diocese" appeared to excite apprehensions and suspicions in the minds of hon. Gentlemen opposite. [*A laugh*]. The diocese was recommended not only by its relation in size to the different districts of the country, but also, of course, by the existence of those diocesan boards to which his hon. Friend the Member for Nottingham had just referred. What would the procedure be? Each diocese was divided into rural deaneries. The managers of Voluntary Schools in each rural deanery would meet and nominate a certain number of representatives on the governing body of the association for the diocese. But the constitution of this governing body was subject to the approval of the Department. For example, the Department might require that the governing body should include a certain proportion of laymen. It could decide whether the governing body should have the power of co-opting additional members. His right hon. Friend the Member for Rotherham predicted a "limited clerical control." He forgot that the control in the formation of these governing bodies rested, not with the managers of Voluntary Schools, but with the Department. Did he think, then, that the Department over which he had presided had a blind and exclusive preference for a limited clerical control? It was urged that there ought to be "a popular representative" element on these councils of the associations. Those who made this claim seemed to mean that there ought to be such an element on the managing body of the individual Voluntary School. But the proposal in the Bill had nothing to do with the managing bodies of the individual schools. [*Cheers.*] It did not deal with them. It simply provided that these individual bodies should nominate representatives on the councils of the associations for the purpose of submitting schemes for the allocation of the grant. The subjection of these councils to the approval of the Department was the public guarantee that they should be suitably constituted. Ought the association to have been made compulsory? The reason against making it so was that a particular school might have a valid reason for declining to join. One such reason was noticed in the Bill. It might be locally isolated in respect of its denomination. A Roman Catholic school should not be forced to join an association composed wholly or mainly of Anglican schools. Another case was that of a Voluntary School which did not want the grant. For such a school, the federation should be optional; even though there might be reasons which would induce it to join. But, it must be asked, was it likely that large numbers of schools would stand aloof? It was *not* likely; because associated necessitous schools would get more, on the average, than non-associated; and an unassociated school would run the risk of getting nothing, if its reason for not joining would not bear strict examination. The Bill had taken the right course in making association, not, indeed, compulsory, but in the highest degree advantageous. Now what was the function of associations? They were to submit schemes for distributing the grant among their schools according to need. The Department could check this scheme at every point. It had exact local knowledge, through returns from the schools, and through its inspection. The Bill directed it to aim, not merely at relieving needy schools, but at increasing their efficiency. When it was said that this plan opened the door to favouritism and jobbery, there was not a shadow of ground for the charge, which was really an imputation on the Department. How would it be possible to have a better guarantee than the stringent control of the Department gave against the misapplication of this money? But the use of the associations would not be confined to helping the Department in the distribution of the grant. Incidentally, they would be of great educational value. By bringing the managers into common counsel and common action, they would quicken the local interest in educational work. They would tend to keep up the amount of voluntary subscriptions. They would tend to raise the standard of efficiency. [*Cheers.*] All friends of education must rejoice to see Voluntary Schools delivered from the evils of isolation. Did hon. Gentlemen grudge Voluntary Schools some portion of the advantage which Board Schools had derived from School Boards? Union was strength in all things. In educational matters it was both strength and light. But a more sweeping objection had been taken to the machinery of the Bill. It was objected that it left too great a discretionary power to the Education Department, and that in doing so it gave it functions which found no analogy in the functions which the Department had hitherto exercised. Hitherto, it was said, the Department had had only to administer certain fixed rules embodied in a Code. He wondered whether those who urged this remembered the history of the Department. It was created in 1839 by an Order in Council establishing a Special Committee of the Privy Council, when a special staff of officials was engaged. For 21 years after that there was no Code at all. The Department merely published occasional Minutes, thus formulating from time to time the rules to which experience gradually led it. These Minutes were first collected and arranged as a Code in 1860, when Mr. Lowe was Vice-President. During those 21 years, from 1839 to 1860, the Department was exercising, under greater difficulties than would meet it now, a larger range of discretionary power than this Bill conferred on it. It was performing, in regard to all the Elementary Schools of the country—which then were all denominational, most of them under the National Society, or the British and Foreign School Society—tasks certainly not less difficult or delicate than any that now fall to it in respect of Voluntary Schools. ["Hear, hear!"] In particular its task was to foster local effort and to develop local responsibility. It proved equal to that work. ["Hear, hear!"] There was no reason to doubt that it would prove equal to this, for which all its traditions had moulded it, and for which its accumulated experience had equipped it. ["Hear, hear!"] Objection had been especially taken to the fact that the Department was instructed by the Bill to have due regard to the maintenance of voluntary subscriptions. This, it was said, was not strict enough. In reply, it might be asked—was any one prepared to suggest a cast-iron rule as to the amount of such subscriptions to be exacted, which would not operate unjustly in many places—being impossibly severe for some places, perhaps unduly lenient for others—while in all it would be liable to frequent readjustment and revision? ["Hear, hear!"] It should be remembered that as to two-thirds of the whole population of the country, the same ratepayers who paid for the Board Schools included the subscribers to the Voluntary Schools. ["Hear, hear!"] That very inequality in the incidence in the education rate which hon. Gentlemen opposite denounced, was one of the reasons why it would be unjust to demand a fixed and uniform proportion of subscriptions. This was pre-eminently a matter which should be left to the discretion of an impartial Public Department, armed with accurate knowledge of local circumstances, qualified by long experience to decide fairly, and responsible to Parliament and to the country. [*Cheers.*] In conclusion, he would state as shortly as possible what he apprehended to be the main issue before the House. Public opinion demanded that Voluntary Schools should continue to exist at the side of the Board Schools. ["Hear, hear!"] The number of children attending both classes of schools was the proof of this. [*Cheers.*] The so-called compromise of 1870 would not have lasted as long as it had done but for the existence of the Voluntary Schools. ["Hear, hear!"] Each of the two sets of schools declared a grievance and put forward a claim. These claims, however, were distinct in kind, and different in their bearing on education. For the Voluntary Schools, it was urged that, with their present resources, very many of them could not meet the increased demands of the Department, and many of them were threatened with extinction. The Educational Department had raised its demands; and rightly so, in obedience to public opinion; but, for that very reason, the Voluntary Schools were entitled to increased consideration by the State. ["Hear, hear!"] It had been denied that they had suffered from the competition of Board Schools. It had been denied that such competition depressed them even in School Board areas. As to non-School Board areas, how, it was asked, could there be competition at all? Those who spoke thus seemed to mean competition for pupils. But there was also competition for teachers. ["Hear, hear!"] And this competition for teachers—which went to the very core of a school's efficiency—was necessarily not confined to School Board areas. It covered the whole educational market. It affected districts where there were no Board Schools. Higher salaries meant, as a rule, more efficient teachers. ["Hear, hear!"] More efficient teachers meant an increased power of earning Government grants. And thus the command of the rates helped the Board Schools to get more from the Exchequer. "Hear, hear!"] There was no class of teachers in the country more deserving than the teachers in Voluntary Schools. ["Hear, hear!"] They had often made large sacrifices. He hoped that one result of further aid to Voluntary Schools would be to improve the position of the teachers. [*Cheers.*] There was another reason why the relative depression of Voluntary Schools claimed consideration by the State. The power of many of their supporters to contribute was limited by the fact that they also paid rates for the support of Board Schools. They formed, in fact, a large portion of those very bodies of ratepayers for which Gentlemen opposite demanded relief. The right hon. Member for Wolverhampton had used an argument on this point which he wished to notice. The right hon. Gentleman said that the payer of a School Board rate, who also subscribed to a Voluntary School, had no more right to complain than a man had who paid a Poor rate and also subscribed to some charity. But the analogy between the two cases was limited to the fact that the Education Rate and the Poor rate were alike compulsory. ["Hear, hear!"] Private charity was optional. But the State compelled a parent to send his child to some Elementary School; and if he could not conscientiously use a Board School then he must use a Voluntary School. ["Hear, hear!"] Then as to the grievance under which it was contended the School Board system laboured. He granted that in regard to certain School Board districts there was a reasonable grievance. Let them take a School Board area where the rateable value was low and the population dense—conditions which often went together. There was a rate, let them say, of 2s. or 3s. in the £. The ratepayers there certainly had a strong case for claiming some relief, when it was considered how unequally the burden of the Education rate is distributed over the whole country. ["Hear, hear!"] The ratepayers in one place might be paying six times, or even twelve times, as much as those in another place. But he would remind the House that this was altogether a ratepayers' question. ["Hear, hear!"] It was not a question, as in the case of the voluntary system, which affected the efficiency of the schools. The relief claimed was not for the School Board or for the Board Schools, but for the ratepayer. Nothing could imperil the efficiency of the Board Schools, much less their existence, short of a general strike against the Education Rate. So long as that rate was levied, the Board Schools were safe. Let them be quite clear as to this fundamental difference between the case of the Voluntary Schools and that of the Board Schools. In the case of needy Voluntary Schools, the question was whether one indispensable element in our primary education should or should not be preserved. In the case of School Board areas, where the rate was oppressive, the question was not whether the Board Schools should or should not remain efficient—they were bound to remain so—but whether their efficiency should be maintained at a cost to the local ratepayer which was greater than could fairly be cast upon him. Justice in this case did not require that a necessarily equal sum should be given in precisely the same form of grant to Voluntary Schools and Board Schools alike. ["Hear, hear."] Justice demanded that an adequate measure of assistance should be given in each case, and in a form suited to the particular circumstances of each case. To the Voluntary Schools they must give such graduated aid as would preserve them all in efficiency and save the weaker among them from extinction. To the ratepayers who paid for the Board Schools they might also give relief according to the amount and the produce of the rate in different localities, so as to redress in some measure at least the great inequality in the pressure of this burden on different parts of the country. But to mix up these two perfectly distinct problems was not to observe the principle of equality. It was rather to aggravate the inequalities which already existed. It was not to dispense even-handed justice; it was rather to obscure the very first conditions on which in this case true justice depended. The two problems being distinct, the machinery required by them distinct, and the Bills therefore necessarily distinct, the only question that remained was, which of the two Bills should have precedence? He answered that that Bill deserved precedence which represented the greater educational urgency. ["Hear, hear."] The Bill for the Voluntary Schools represented the greater educational urgency, and should therefore come first. ["Hear, hear."] He should welcome, as heartily as any man in any part of the House, the introduction of a Measure for the relief of those ratepayers on whom the incidence of the rates was oppressive. Meanwhile he should vote with entire confidence for the Second Reading of this Bill, in the belief that it was vital to the welfare of their system of national education. [*Cheers.*]

Sir HENRY CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN (Stirling Burghs) said that the few remarks which he would address to the House would be devoted principally, if not exclusively, to that question of equality between the two classes of schools with which they had to deal, to which his hon. Friend who had just sat down had devoted his concluding observations. He was satisfied he should be confirmed when he said that the announcement of the provisions of this Bill was received in the greater part of the community with surprise and even amazement. There was a well-known saying, applied to a great European family which had occupied a prominent place in history for many generations, that they learned nothing and forgot nothing. Her Majesty's Government had somewhat improved on that condition of mind, because it seemed to be true of them that they learned nothing and forgot everything. [*Laughter and cries of* "Oh!"] One would have thought that the legislative events of last year were striking enough to have impressed themselves upon any mind, and one would naturally have expected that her Majesty's Government would have learned the very easy lesson which those events were calculated to teach. Why was it that the Education Bill of last year had to be withdrawn amid circumstances of discomfiture, of disappointment, and even, he might say, of humiliation? What was the outstanding defect which wrought the ruin of that Bill? What was the taint which, not only to the regular Opposition, but to the great majority of the House and of the country, vitiated the possibility for good which that Bill might have been believed to contain? It was the inequality of its dealings with the two great classes of schools which they had in this country. *(Cheers.)* It was the unfairness and even hostility towards the system of Board Schools which could be read within the lines of the Bill if not actually expressed in the Bill, and which were even more unequivocally displayed in the utterances of some of its more ardent supporters. *(Cheers.)* And if the right hon. Gentleman opposite had been an apt pupil in the school of affliction through which he had passed—*(laughter)*—if he had been wise to discern the sign of the times—surely he would have endeavoured, above all things, to avoid the rock upon which he made shipwreck last year, and he would have endeavoured, not only fully to recognise this principle of equality of treatment of the two classes of schools, but even to raise no suspicion that there was any intention of its being departed from. ("Hear, hear?") The right hon. Gentleman was sincerely, even ardently, anxious to give financial assistance to Voluntary Schools. Did he not see that the easy way, in fact the only way, in which he could attain that object speedily would have been to avoid this suspicion of inequality, and yet, after pondering upon the matter during the whole of the Recess, he introduced a Bill which exhibited this characteristic even more flagrantly than the Bill which was rejected last year. *(Cheers.)* He confessed he could not admire the tactics of the right hon. Gentleman, merely regarded as tactics. He spoke of the right hon. Gentleman because he had made himself personally and specially responsible for this Measure. [The FIRST LORD of the TREASURY: "Hear, hear!"] They did not know how far they could speak of the two Members of the Government who had a direct official responsibility in connection with this subject. They did not know how far they were associated with the right hon. Gentleman. They could not speak of the Vice President because they did not know where to find him, either in a physical or in a moral sense. [*Laughter.*] He was now here and now there—now in one part of that House and now in another; now writing in one magazine or in another, but never, until last night, taking any part in the explanation of this Bill to the House. ["Hear, hear!"] He had become, in fact, a sort of Parliamentary will-o'-the-wisp. [*Laughter.*] And he did not know that any great satisfaction would be derived by Her Majesty's Government from the defence he made of the Bill yesterday when he spoke. ["Hear, hear!"] He said nothing of the Amendment now before the House. He said nothing of the main points of attack which had been directed against the Bill, but he wove a hypothetical web which, with his great powers of ingenuity, he embroidered with all sorts of gorgeous colours, showing what the educational associations might become if he had a hand in their formation and direction. And he observed that his hon. Friend, the Member for Nottingham, and even the hon. Gentleman who had just sat down, appeared to have taken that declaration of his opinions very much as if they were part of the Bill now before them, whereas, if there was any force in it at all, this was an entirely new Bill. [*Cheers.*] The right hon. Gentleman invented it out of the somewhat nebulous proposition which the Bill contained. He remembered the time when, if an hon. Member responsible for the Department affected had made such a Bill at that box, some one would have been ready, and with some show of justice—and probably the House would admit that it was a reasonable thing to do—to move that the Bill, after the second reading, should be committed *pro forma* in order to insert the Amendments foreshadowed by the right hon. Gentleman. ["Hear, hear!"] If they turned from the right hon. Gentleman to a more august quarter, where the Lord President sits apart, on Olympus, controlling, with no direct responsibility to the country, at once the education of its children and the defence of its empire—[*laughter*]—if they ventured to turn to him, he was afraid they would get no further or better guidance. Last year the Lord President laid down a proposition that was received with satisfaction by the country at large when he made a strong declaration in favour of the statutory equality of Board and voluntary schools. "Statutory equality" was a good mouth-filling phrase, but he doubted very much whether the Duke of Devonshire, when he chose that imposing adjective, had the slightest conception of what immense use it would be to him before the year was out. Just imagine where he would have been if he had not used it, because the other day, when the necessities of the Measure required that he should be put forward to disclaim the ordinary meaning which everybody had put upon that inconvenient dictum, he was able to whittle away the substance by giving some small technical interpretation to his adjective. ["Hear, hear."] He explained with elaboration that when he spoke of statutory equality he meant it only in some departmental sense. It was not very well done. Among the many admirable qualities with which the Duke of Devonshire was endowed, and which were nowhere better appreciated than in the House of Commons—among those admirable qualities there could not be included, he was afraid, facility in the splitting of straws. [*Laughter.*] He was not good at quibbling, and although everyone who knew him, or who had watched him, knew perfectly well that he had brought himself to believe that he meant last year what now he said he meant, the mass of his countrymen knew him better, and could recognise in the declaration the Liberal Party adhered to, if the Duke of Devonshire did not, an outburst under his present depressing circumstances of his earlier better self. ["Hear, hear."] The point of inequality was the great impediment to the easy passage of this Measure, and was the objection he offered to the Bill. It was stamped with the vice of inequality. But then they were told that a Bill would be introduced providing for Board Schools. ["Hear, hear."] But why were they put off with a mere promise of a Bill, and what guarantee was there that if the Bill was introduced—and he did not doubt the honest intention of the Government—that it would ever become law or prove satisfactory? Only one tenable reason was at one time urged in favour of separate treatment of the two classes of schools. The hon. Gentleman who had just spoken had with great ingenuity invented some more reasons. [*Cries of* "Oh, oh."] Well, he had found some reasons—he did not use the word "invented" at all disrespectfully—the hon. Gentleman had found some reasons, but no one would have been more surprised than his hon. Friend a few months ago if he had heard of such a thing as this separation proposed. One general reason was that there was no time to pass both Bills before the end of the year, and that it was necessary that this Bill should pass before the end of the year. The right hon. Gentleman told the House some days ago, in the earlier stages of this Debate, that it was doubtful, if not impossible, that the Bill would pass, and one wondered why he did not discover that sooner, for anything that could now militate against the opportune passing of the Bill surely could have been foreseen some months ago. If it was not foreseen, did not the right hon. Gentleman see the conspicuous letter from Sir C. Ryan, to which the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Bodmin (Mr. Courtney) referred some nights ago, and which was given a prominent place in *The Times*, and in which that high authority with great knowledge and impartiality said he did not see how it was possible this money could become available for its purpose from the surplus of the year? The First Lord of the Treasury ought to have known these facts, and, if so, surely there ought to have been some indication of this change of view. But, whether or not, this fact blew to the winds the reason for a separate Bill for this purpose. What was the reason for legislation on this subject at all? It was the intolerable strain upon the supporters of schools caused by fresh and extended requirements enforced by the central authority. The right hon. Gentleman the Vice-President said last night what was well known, but which they were glad to hear on his authoritative dictum, that these causes of increased expenditure were not the expression of wanton caprice on the part of the department, but were in obedience to the demands of the public opinion of the country. The truth was the art of education, like other arts, was continually developing, and we must make every effort to prevent the educational gap between ourselves and other nations being increased, new requirements were enforced, all deemed necessary, and enforced alike on Board and Voluntary Schools; so that help, if required, was required by both. It would not be difficult to show that if any difference was to be made between Board and Voluntary Schools in this respect, or if any preference should be given it should be given rather to Board Schools—["Oh, oh!"]—and for two reasons. In the first place because the strain which was complained of fell upon the voluntary subscribers. He would not say a word in depreciation of the public spirit of the Voluntary School subscriber, who gave his money either for the sake of education or for the sake of the religious body to which he belonged or with which the school was connected; in either case it was a public-spirited, unselfish motive. But, after all, it was a voluntary contribution, and it could be diminished or increased as circumstances required. But in the case of the Board Schools they were maintained by a compulsory rate which was exacted from everyone, whether he could afford it or not; and if they were to look at the matter closely, it was the ratepayer rather than the voluntary subscriber who was entitled to complain of the intolerable strain. [*Cheers.*] His second reason was because all the future was, surely, on the side of schools under popular representative control; and a system of Voluntary Schools under clerical management, however necessary its continuance might be, was after all, a survival from the past. ["Hear, hear!"] The Solicitor General had said that the State at present was not neutral as between Voluntary and Board Schools, that the Board Schools had at their back rates on which the State had enabled them to draw as far as they wanted for the purposes of education, and he asked, Had the Voluntary Schools such an exchequer at their back? That argument, which he had often heard, involved a complete misapprehension of the settlement of 1870. It was never supposed for a moment that the two classes of schools were to be set up as of equal value, and to be run, as it were, against each other. It was because the Voluntary Schools were in existence and were honourably recognised as having every title to consideration that they were not interfered with, but the condition of the arrangement that was made was that there should be no fresh calls made upon the public funds, unless in a case where the increased requirements for educational purposes bore heavily on all concerned with education. ["Hear, hear!"] They who opposed this Bill did so because they upheld the settlement of 1870. He had heard the most extraordinary sentiments expressed with regard to the School Boards. It was often implied that they were a strange machinery invented by the enemies of religious education, and above all by the enemies of the Established Church; and that idea was at the bottom of a great deal of the hostility with which the School Boards were regarded. What were the facts? Would anybody doubt that in 1870, if they had had a *tabula rasa*, if the field had been unoccupied, Parliament would have proceeded to set up in England, as two years later they did in Scotland, a School Board in every parish? ["Hear, hear!"] There was no doubt of it; and if there had been any doubt that doubt would have been removed now, because between 1870 and 1897 they had seen a prodigious development of this principle of local representative government under the Act of the right hon. Gentleman opposite and the Act of his right hon. Friend near him. ["Hear, hear!"] But they did not have a *tabula rasa*. The ground was in a large degree occupied, and occupied to her everlasting glory, be it said, by the Church of England. ["Hear, hear!"] The Church of England had stepped in when there was none to help, had seen the wants of the people for elementary education, and had attempted to the best of her power to meet those wants. ["Hear, hear!"] She had established schools, erected buildings and maintained them, and what the Parliament of 1870 felt was that it was quite impossible to ignore that fact and do anything which was likely to injure the system which she had created or deprive her of the position she had established for herself in educational matters. ["Hear, hear!"] That was the reason of the compromise and settlement of 1870. The *status quo* was respected and School Boards were to be established wherever the field was not occupied. But where Voluntary Schools existed, or could be established and maintained to the same degree as those which existed, there they were allowed to establish themselves, on the condition that no new burden was imposed on account of them. When the School Boards were spoken lightly of he would ask, where should they have been if it had not been for the School Boards? ["Hear, hear!"] In saying this he did not speak merely of the 2,000,000 children whom the School Boards were educating and saving from ignorance and savagery, but he spoke of the impulse given to educational interests throughout the country by these representative bodies. What he and those who thought with him wanted was to be true to the original settlement, but for that purpose they must insist on certain points in any new legislation such as this. In the first place they must have an equality in treatment as between the two classes of schools. He did not know that the Government themselves had, on previous occasions, shown any disposition to make a distinction such as they had attempted to draw now. The year 1891 was not long ago, and Section 9 of the Bill of 1891, dealing with education, said:—

> "Nothing in this Act shall give any preference or advantage to any school on the ground that it is or is not provided by a School Board."

[*Cheers.*] That contained the whole principle for which they were contending. His second point was that, in giving money to the one school or the other, precaution must be taken—which they did not discern in the Bill—that the money should be applied to increase the efficiency of the school or make it better fitted for complying with future requirements. Another condition they were certainly disposed to insist upon as of great consequence was that there should be some representation of popular feeling and interests, and that the schools should not be left to mere clerical management. [*Cheers.*] They declared no hostility whatever to religious teaching, but they had a disbelief—and he was much mistaken if there was not in all parts of the House a considerable disbelief—in purely clerical control. [*Cheers.*] In the view of the opponents of the Bill the school should not be the handmaid of a sect, however great, vigorous, and worthy that sect might be. For this purpose they had confidence in their countrymen if elected to some share in the control of the schools. He could appeal on this ground to the case of his own country, with which naturally he was more familiar. In Scotland, as hon. Members knew, there was a School Board in every parish. He had never heard of any jealousy of School Boards in Scotland, or of any complaint as to the treatment of scholars, or unfair or injurious interference with Voluntary Schools. He believed the religious teaching in the schools in Scotland was almost identical with that given in the schools in England, and of a kind calculated to benefit the scholar without instilling into him the doctrines or peculiar dogmas of a particular sect. However that might be, let the House mark this difference—that religious teaching was not imposed in Scotland by any Act of Parliament. The only provision was this passage in the preamble of the Act of 1872:—

> "Whereas it has been the custom to give instruction in religion,"

and so on, and

> "it is expedient that the managers of public schools should be at liberty to continue the said custom, be it enacted,"

etc. The managers of the schools were the elected members of the School Board—[*cheers*]—and their experience in Scotland was that they could with perfect safety leave to the elected members of the community at large this thorny question, sometimes found so difficult in England. What was the result? Voluntary Schools and religious bodies left the School Boards entirely alone, and all schools were rivals, not in the petty, sordid intrigues of sect against sect, but in their common, overmastering devotion to the cause of education. Two questions had been addressed to the Government as to the amount of money that would be devoted to Scotland in consequence of the considerable grant to England. Enigmatical answers had been given. He made bold to say he was speaking on behalf of his hon. Friends in every quarter of the House when he said there were two things they would be always agreed upon. The first was that, whether the money was given to them on any fixed scale, such as they had been accustomed to or not, they would insist upon having their full equivalent share of the money granted to England. The second point was that if the Government were looking about for means of expending that money they must remember that in Scotland they were not content to be brought up to the English average. They were far above that average; they had always been so, and meant to continue that pre-eminence; and, moreover, they in Scotland had never recognised any deep artificial line of distinction between elementary and secondary education. They had run the one into the other, and regarded, as they had done for generations, the whole course of training, from the elements up to the end of the University curriculum, as one staircase up which it was the right of every youth in the country to climb. [*Cheers.*] It was because this Bill fell short of nearly all the conditions he had named, because there was no guarantee of fairness towards Board Schools, because where not actually reactionary it ignored the tendency to develop the movement towards local control over our modern institutions, and that there was a danger of the interests of the school being subordinated to clerical interests—it was for these reasons they on the Opposition side of the House were bound to offer to the Bill their most strenuous opposition. With regard to the particular Vote which would be given at the close of the Debate, when every hon. Member would be invited to say "Aye" or "No" on the question of justice to the Board School—[*Ministerial cries of* "No" *and Opposition cheers*]—whatever might be the character or nature of the decision in the House of Commons, the overwhelming voice of the country would be with them. [*Cheers.*]

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY, who rose amidst Ministerial cheers, said: Mr. Speaker, it has been my fortune to have to address to the House two long speeches already upon the subject of this

Bill. In the first I explained and defended its provisions before I was aware of the special line of attack that would be directed against me. In the second of those speeches I answered, to the best of my ability, one of the ablest speeches made against the Bill and dealt seriatim and in detail with the various arguments against it, and I confess that it seemed to me that, at all events, as far as I could forecast the future course of the Debate, the subject was a nearly exhausted one. At all events I had nothing more to say to the House of an instructive or interesting description unless some new objections hitherto unforeseen, hitherto undeveloped, were advanced from the Benches opposite. I have been a patient listener to the three nights' Debate that we have had since Thursday last, and I confess that nothing has fallen from hon. Members opposite which was not foreshadowed and indeed enunciated at great length in the previous Debate. If we waited for the summing up of the case against the Bill in the speech we have listened to, as I have waited for materials for my reply, the difficulty I am placed in is considerable, not owing to the strength of the arguments advanced against me, but to the paucity of material for my reply. [*Cheers and laughter.*] The right hon. Gentleman's objections to the Bill, as far as I could summarise them, fell under one of two heads, one head of which he developed at a certain length, the other of which he passed by in a most summary manner. The first objection was that there was no equality preserved in the Bill between Voluntary Schools and Board Schools. On that theme or text he based three-quarters of the address which he has just delivered.

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: There happens to be an Amendment before the House.

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY: Yes, and the right hon. Gentleman was aware that it was not absolutely necessary to confine his speech to the Amendment. If it had been, at least a third of his speech would have been out of order. [*Laughter.*] I presume, therefore, his arrangement of material was dictated not merely by his view of the Amendment on the Paper or of the proportion which ought to exist between the two branches of the argument which he so unequally developed. His attack was mainly directed to what is called the inequality of treatment provided by this Bill for the two classes of schools, by telling us that, like a great dynasty, we neither learn anything nor forget anything, and he explained that this Bill was likely to be wrecked upon the same rock which had proved disastrous to its predecessor in the course of last year. He led us to believe that the real reason why it did not meet with that Parliamentary success which it undoubtedly deserved—[*cheers and laughter*]—was that it did not contain that absolute equality of treatment between Board Schools and Voluntary Schools which appears now to be the cardinal principle of hon. Members opposite. I do not remember that in any of the speeches of last year that was made a cardinal ground for the opposition that was directed against the previous Bill. [*Cheers.*] The Bill of last year was in Committee for a Parliamentary fortnight, and we had the pleasure of hearing the Leader of the Opposition every night—[*laughter*]—at great length—[*laughter and Opposition cheers*]—and with great eloquence—[*Cheers and laughter*]—discussing the first three lines of the Bill. [*Laughter.*] I am perfectly aware that it has been the habitual practice of hon. Gentlemen opposite to interpret a single cheer which I once rashly gave—[*laughter*]—imprudently and improperly gave—[*laughter*]—to a speech made opposite—I will never cheer any speeches opposite again. I do remember that that cheer was interpreted as a party declaration of hostility to the whole system of School Board education. [*Cheers and counter-cheers.*] I have since had an active correspondence with almost every part of the country upon that subject. Apart from that single and misinterpreted cheer no sentence was uttered on this side of the House hostile to the School Board system. ["Oh!" *and cheers.*]

SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT: Will the right hon. Gentleman say that there was no clause in the Bill restraining the expenditure of School Boards, and which placed it under the control of another body? [*Cheers.*]

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY: It is perfectly true that the Bill of last year did, under certain circumstances, deal with the expenditure of School Boards, and gave a certain control to bodies elected by the same constituency, but under a method of protection which, in the opinion of hon. Members opposite themselves, is far more fitted to give the true opinion of the constituencies than the system which at present obtains. I am not going to waste the time of the House by discussing the Bill of last year; I should not have alluded to it if we had not been taunted by the right hon. Gentleman who had just sat down with having in this Bill fallen into the same error as we fell into with regard to the Bill of last year. But in the Bill of this year we have not fallen into the error into which we fell last year—a Parliamentary error which ended, no doubt, in the abandonment of that Bill. The fault of the Bill of last year was not that it dealt unequally with Board and Voluntary Schools, not that it was hostile to School Boards, not that it was otherwise than most favourable to the general interests of the education of the country. The Bill of last year had one fault, and one fault alone—[*Opposition laughter and Ministerial cheers*]—and that fault was that it gave too large a natural field for the eloquence and the ingenuity of hon. Gentlemen opposite. [*Ministerial laughter and cheers.*] The right hon. Gentleman thinks that the Bill of this year has fallen into the same error; I am not prepared to deny it until I see the event, but all I can say is that I have done my best in drawing up the Bill to limit the subjects with which it deals, and at all events we shall not be precluded by the great length of the Debates which it provokes from carrying it into law at an early date. [*Cheers.*] The right hon. Gentleman having given us this warning, thought it then worth while, not for the first, second, or third time in the course of these Debates, to make an attack upon the President of the Council, and he endeavoured to insinuate that there was a division of opinion between the Duke of Devonshire and the rest of Her Majesty's Government on the subject of the statutory equality established by the Act of 1870. This attack has been made more than once, and I am almost ashamed to occupy the time of the House in meeting it again. The question can really be disposed of in a sentence. If anybody takes the trouble to look back at the Duke of Devonshire's speech he will see that when he talked of statutory equality he referred to the equality of what is known as a fixed grant. ["Hear, hear!"] The fixed grant is now by statute given on precisely similar terms to Board Schools and to Voluntary Schools, and the Duke of Devonshire rightly said that it would be a very serious thing to interfere with that statutory equality, and that he for one was not going to be responsible for any such change. That is all he said, and to suppose that he said anything more is to imply an ignorance of the Act of 1870 which may possibly be pardonable in Gentlemen who though they have been in office are now in Opposition, but is not likely to be shared by any Gentleman now holding high office in the Education Department. There is, as has been pointed out over and over again, no statutory equality between Board and Voluntary Schools except in regard to the fixed grant; in every other respect—in respect to rates, in respect to assistance to poor schools, and in respect to other matters—there never has been since the Act of 1870 came into force any statutory equality whatever between the two classes of schools, and it can hardly therefore be maintained that the Duke of Devonshire made it a cardinal point in his creed that an imaginary statutory equality which has never existed should be maintained during an indefinite future. ["Hear, hear!"] Are the right hon. Gentlemen and the Opposition serious in their demands for statutory equality with regard to any assistance given to these schools? I can never make out what their demand is. Sometimes they ask for assistance to poor Board Schools corresponding to the assistance to poor Voluntary Schools. That is an intelligent policy, but it is not one which requires an equal sum to be given to the average attendance in Voluntary Schools and Board Schools. The policy recommended by hon. Gentlemen opposite does not appear from the Amendment. The Amendment has a happy ambiguity about it which reflects the happy ambiguity of hon. Gentlemen opposite who, when it suits their game, wave the flag of the poor School Board, the over-taxed ratepayer, and the impossible burden of education in certain poor districts, but who, when the plan of attack seems to fail, change their ground and would lead us to believe that the policy they advocate and which they would carry out if they were in office is an equal grant to every school, rich and poor, Board or Voluntary. Is that their policy? [AN HON. MEMBER: "With control!"] Yes; but this is the second branch of the right hon. Gentleman's attack upon the Bill. I an now dealing with the policy of giving financial aid to those schools, and I want to know whether hon. Members opposite are serious in pressing upon the Government and upon the Chancellor of the Exchequer the policy of giving to every Board School in the richest parts of the richest counties the same amount of aid as they would give to the poorest schools in the poorest counties. [AN HON. MEMBER: "Yes; if you give it to all!"] But we do not propose to give it to all. The hon. Gentleman who made that observation can scarcely have read the Bill. ["Hear, hear!"] Is the taxpayers' money to be given where it is not needed? ["Hear, hear!"] By universal consent aid is needed more by the poorer Voluntary Schools than by any other class of schools—[*loud Opposition cries of* "No!"]—and because it is so much required by them we propose by this Bill to give it to them. [*Cheers.*] The right hon. Gentleman opposite sat down without telling us what he meant by equality of treatment. Between the two principles we have no hesitation in choosing, and we say boldly that, if you ask for equality of treatment in the one sense, we do not mean to give it. [*Cheers and ironical cheers.*] I hear the right hon. Gentlemen opposite cheering that statement ironically. This is an Amendment upon the Second Reading of the Bill, but the Debate upon the introduction of the Bill was conducted in a different spirit. Then we heard of nothing but the poverty of the poor Board Schools. Is that equality of treatment? Is that giving the same amount to every child alike in the rich and poor schools. ["Hear, hear!"] Of course it is not. ["Hear, hear!"] We support the policy of giving something to the poor School Board areas. In dealing with either Board Schools or Voluntary Schools we say we must look at the necessities of the people to be helped and that an indiscriminate charity which gives as much to the rich as to the poor schools would be a squandering of the ratepayers' money. ["Hear, hear!"] If that is the issue on which we are imdiately about to divide I have no hesitation in saying that not only will every man on this side of the House support the principle we lay down, but that there is not a voter in the country who will be bold enough to say, "You must give as much to the rich as to the poor." ["Hear, hear!"] There was a part of the right hon. Gentleman's speech in which, in a brief and a perfunctory manner, he referred to the question of control, and he went into a long disquisition on the subject of the Scotch School Board system. It is a curious fact that two hon. Members on this Bench, my hon. and learned Friend the Solicitor General and myself, are both Scotchmen, and that we have two other hon. Members on the Front Opposition Bench, one of whom is a Scotchman and the other a Scotch representative—["hear, hear!" *and laughter*]—and perhaps it is owing to that fact that we have in the course of this Debate discussed the Scotch system of education rather more at length than might have been expected from the educational interest involved in this Bill lying on this side of the Border. ["Hear, hear!"] But while the right hon. Gentleman showed us that the Scotch system was so admirable in character that it excited no animosity in Scotland, he showed us also some evidence of not having followed the Debate as closely as I have been obliged to do. He was evidently not in the House when the hon. Gentleman the Member for the Scotland Division of Liverpool made one of those speeches with which we on this side of the House are so familiar, in the course of which he showed a great dislike for Voluntary education and a great desire to be disagreeable to Her Majesty's Government. ["Hear, hear!" *and laughter.*] The two objects are not always to be reconciled in the case of this Bill. I confess it would have been better for the hon. Gentleman to have reserved the second until some favourable opportunity when the Measure is disposed of. [*Laughter.*] But it was a Scotch parish—the parish of Port Glasgow—which the hon. Gentleman instanced as an illustration of the injustice to which, as he contended, the Roman Catholic communion are subjected. He stated that a third of that parish were Irish Roman Catholics; that they were in a minority; that they paid a very large percentage of the rates; and that they had to support out of their own pockets Roman Catholic Schools, while they paid rates not merely in support of sectarian education, but of denominational Presbyterian education. And so, undoubtedly, they have. I will not discuss whether that is right or wrong. But let the right hon. Gentleman listen to his own side before he tells us that the Scotch system—which I support—is one that receives universal favour from all sections of the community in Scotland. The truth is that the Scotch system is one which, on the whole, is eminently suited to Scotland. It gives denominational education, which you refuse to give to England. [*Cheers.*] It gives that denominational education partly at the cost of the State and partly at the cost of the ratepayers; and it gives it according to the will of the majority of the parish in which the school is situated. [*Cheers.*] That system is undoubtedly, speaking generally, a system which suits Scotland, where there is no great divergence, speaking broadly, between the religious beliefs of the population in most parishes. Whether that system would suit England I do not know. Two or three hon. Gentlemen opposite have said they would like to see it introduced into this country; but my belief is that any Government that tried to introduce it into England would receive determined opposition from hon. Gentlemen opposite. [*Cheers.*] They talk about popular control; but a popular control which enabled the people of a district to give whatever religious education they liked, to teach whatever formularies they liked, does not, and would not ever, command the general assent of hon. Gentlemen opposite. [*Cheers.*] If that is so—and I hear no dissenting cheers from the other side—what is the value of all this talk about the importance and the justice of popular control? [*Cheers.*] Popular control, in the Scotch sense of the term, which is the true sense of the term, is, whether good or bad, altogether outside the scope of this Bill; and when hon. Gentlemen opposite come forward with a plan like the Scotch plan, they will not find in me a vehement opponent. [*Cheers.*] But if popular control in that sense is excluded, and properly excluded, from the Bill, I should like to know from some speaker opposite whether we are to modify the government of Voluntary Schools because we increase the grant from the Exchequer. My hon. Friend the Member for Cambridge University (Mr. Jebb), who, for a second time this evening, has made a most interesting contribution to our debates on the Bill—[*cheers*]—said that, in his judgment, popular control was the correlative of popular support; and that Imperial control was the correlative of Imperial support. We are giving support out of the Exchequer—we are not giving it out of the rates—and therefore the Education Department, which is responsible to this House, is the department which properly exercises control over the grant which we are giving. [*Cheers.*] But, while we have not given way to any of the schemes which have been advanced from time to time for giving the parents control, or the ratepayers control, or any other control of that kind, for which we think there is no justification, in the management of Voluntary Schools, we have laid the foundation for an organisation which will have at least as great an effect upon elementary education in Voluntary schools as any possible local control which you can contrive could have. [*Cheers.*] I admit that these associations are voluntary. I admit that we have not laid down detailed regulations in this Bill for their organisation or constitution; but has anybody on either side of the House any doubt that these voluntary associations will be constituted? ["Hear, hear!"] And can anybody doubt that when they are constituted voluntarily they will have a most excellent effect upon the general elementary education given by the Voluntary Schools? ["Hear, hear!"] These associations will fulfil two great and two necessary objects. They will, in the first place, relieve a Government Department of a great part of the burden which, in their absence, would fall upon the shoulders of the Department, and which the Department would be ill able to bear; and they will, in the second place, form a centre where the managers of Voluntary Schools—not necessarily clerical managers, as hon. Gentlemen opposite seem to think—[*cheers*]—where managers and all those interested in the education of these schools will meet together, will be able to compare notes, will be able to agree upon a system by which the schools are to be improved, the general level of education to be raised, the difficulties of particular schools to be met, and by which the whole system of voluntary education may be brought to a higher perfection than is possible under the existing system—["hear, hear!"]—each manager acting on his own initiative, and on no other than that derived from the support and advice of the Inspector of the Department. I think, now, I have travelled over, to the best of my ability, the two objections, and the only two objections, raised by the right hon. Gentleman opposite, and I take him as suming up the whole of the objections to this Bill as formulated by the Opposition. I would appeal for my part, not merely to Gentlemen on this side of the House, but to Gentlemen on both sides of the House, to support this Bill on far more substantial grounds than have been urged by Gentlemen opposite for opposing it. I appeal, in the first place, to education. The right hon Gentleman who was once Vice President of the Council, in the earlier hours of the evening occupied more than an hour of the time of the House in telling us how inefficient was the present system of education in Voluntary Schools. Is that an argument against the Bill? [*Cheers.*] I confess that it was with the utmost difficulty that I restrained my natural enthusiasm and prevented myself from cheering the right hon. Gentleman at every stage for the able speech he made in defence of the Measure. [*Cheers and laughter.*] If the education in Voluntary Schools be inferior to the education in Board Schools, why is it inferior? It is inferior because they have smaller means. [*Cheers.*] The right hon. Gentleman is in the habit of posing as a great advocate of democratic institutions; but the most admirably tried democratic institution has never yet proved a substitute for pounds, shillings, and pence—[*cheers*]—and if you want to have a good teacher no popular control will enable you to get one unless you pay for him. [*Cheers.*] If you want to get a good building no popular control will enable you to get it unless you pay for it; and if you want efficient equipment no popular control will enable you to get it unless you pay for it. [*Cheers.*] And it is because the Voluntary Schools in many cases cannot pay for it, and for no other reason whatever, that their education is open to the criticisms levelled against them by the right hon. Gentleman. [*Cheers.*] Now, Sir, this money will go in the main to education. It will go in the main to improving education, and I ask, therefore, every educationist, including the hon. Gentleman the member for Nottingham opposite, to vote for it. How the hon. Gentleman the Member for Nottingham can deliberately vote against a Measure which will increase the resources of the most hard-pressed schools in the country passes my understanding—["hear, hear!"]—and until I see him go through the Lobby, and deliberately record his verdict against this great addition to the educational machinery of the country, I shall be unable to believe that anybody representing the great educational interest that he does can possibly adopt so paradoxical a course. ["Hear, hear!"] While I appeal with equal confidence to the educationist, surely I may appeal with equal confidence to the ratepayer? [*Cheers.*] I have never brought forward this Bill as a ratepayers' Bill. I think there are higher interests concerned than the interests of the ratepayers, but nobody can doubt that it is of enormous assistance to the ratepayers. I grant that it does not act equally, and it cannot act equally, under our present educational system, in every part of the country. But when I heard the right hon. Member for Sheffield say that his borough would get nothing, or only a comparatively trifling sum, I listened to him with amazement, for the children in the Voluntary Schools in Sheffield are not so far short of the number in the Board Schools. [Mr. Mundella: "One-third."] No, two-thirds. I have made inquiries in quarters which I believe to be accurately informed, and I am told that while there are about 30,000 or 32,000 children in Board Schools in Sheffield there are about 20,000 in the Voluntary Schools. Does not the right hon. Gentleman assent to that? [Mr. Mundella: "No."] Well, those are the facts that I have obtained from what I believe are authentic sources. ["Hear, hear!"] But I am not going to peddle over the details of this borough or of that borough, this county or that. I admit that this Bill acts unequally. Of course it acts unequally, because it deals with an unequal system, and no ingenuity will prevent its acting unequally, and no system will give assistance where assistance is required which does not act unequally. But, while making that admission in the frankest way, I assert that this is a Bill which is, on the whole, of enormous assistance to the ratepayers of this country. [*Cheers.*] It is an assistance to the ratepayers in every locality where Voluntary Schools exist, and where they are in danger of extinction. When I remember of how large a portion of England that statement is true, I think I am justified in appealing not merely to educationists, but also to the ratepayers. Those are two great classes, but there are others also to whom I appeal. I appeal to those in this House who regard the existing system of Board School education, with all its limitations, as an essential privilege of the Nonconformists of this country. [*Opposition cries of* "No!"] It is a cardinal point of faith with a very large body of opinion, chiefly Nonconformist opinion, that you ought not to teach the formularies of any particular religious denomination in any public elementary school—["hear, hear!"]—and those who hold that attitude find their views satisfied by the Board School system of this country. Now, I say boldly that that system cannot be maintained, the forces existing in our society being what they are, if you permit the Voluntary School system to be destroyed. [*Cheers.*] The two methods of education are correlative. I believe that the country might possibly tolerate the Scottish system, under which you have universal School Boards and denominational teaching; I believe the country might tolerate the Irish system, under which practically all the expenditure of schools is met out of the Imperial Exchequer, and the teaching is denominational practically in every case. It would submit, I believe, to either of those systems. The system I am quite certain it would never submit to is a system under which School Boards were universal, but denominational teaching was impossible. [*Cheers.*] Whatever else would happen, that system would never be tolerated. Impose it by a majority—and you might have a majority which could impose it—the opposition in the country would never rest until it was upset. [*Cheers.*] Therefore, hon. Members will see that I really am not pushing my argument too far when I say that in support of this Bill I have a right to appeal, not merely to the educationist, not merely to the ratepayer, but also to the supporter of the existing English system of Board School education. But if I may appeal, as I may with confidence, to those three classes, with still greater force surely I may appeal to those who think, as I do, that, at all events, the possibility of denominational education should be an essential portion of every national system of education. [*Cheers.*] I do not pretend, and never have pretended, that this Bill will for all time settle the education question in England. That question, in every country where it has been debated, has for generations proved fruitful in strife between the two opposing parties; and I am aware that, in parts of the country at all events, the financial straits to which the Voluntary Schools have been subjected under our existing system is so great that it may well be even this assistance, generous as it is, may not be sufficient permanently to preserve them as part of our educational machinery. But though I do not advertise my wares as being of a kind to meet every need, or to last for all time, I do appeal to those who for the most part sit on this side of the House, who think as I think on the subject of primary education, whether it is not the best and most practical scheme which in the existing condition of English politics we can present to the House? [*Cheers.*] Some hon. Members would prefer to see the whole cost of primary education borne by the State. There is much to be said for it; but I should be sorry for the Chancellor of the Exchequer who should attempt to carry it out. [*Laughter.*] Other Friends of mine, deeply impressed by the unequal lot which falls on the Board and Voluntary Schools in our great towns, would like to see Mr. Forster's first Bill of 1870 revised, by which local authorities could supply out of the rates assistance to denominational schools. A great deal is to be said for it, but I think they will admit that in the present position of public opinion such a scheme, however valuable, however important, is not one which any responsible Government would venture to bring forward. [*Cheers.*] If these two plans be put aside for one reason or the other, then I respectfully venture to say to them that no better plan can be contrived than that which we have brought before the House to-day; and, as I have appealed, I hope not in vain, to the educationist, to the ratepayer, to the upholder of the existing Board School system, so now I appeal with even greater confidence to all those who think as we think on the great question of religious education to support the Government not merely on the Second Reading of the Bill and in the discussion of its details, but when the happy moment arrives when we shall place it on the Statute Book. [*Cheers.*]

MR. J. W. LOGAN (Leicester, Harborough), who spoke amid continued cries of "Divide!" and interruption, and whose remarks were for the most part inaudible, said that this question was pre-eminently a poor man's question. He had no intention of detaining the House very long—[*Ministerial cheers*]—but he had a large number of working men in his constituency, and he felt it his duty to make a few remarks on this Bill. ["Oh!"] And, first of all, he wished to say how glad he was to find a latent spark of candour which had obliged the Government to call this, not an Education Bill, but a Voluntary Schools Bill. [*Disorder.*] In spite of what the Leader of the House had said, he did not presume that there were many people in the House—and he was sure there was not a man in the country—who imagined that this Bill had been introduced in the interests of education. [*Disorder.*] It might have been introduced to pacify the parsons or for the sake of the Church, but the sooner they got rid of the pretence that it had been introduced in the interests of education the better. [*Disorder.*] No one would declare that the education which was being given in the Board Schools was unnecessarily elaborate; and, on the other hand, those who had made a careful study of the subject, like the Vice President of the Council, were bound to admit that the education which was being given in the Board Schools was inferior to that being given by continental nations. [*Disorder.*] To whom was it proposed to hand over the money to be voted under this Bill? Not to the people who were deeply impressed with the necessity of better education, but to those who deprecated education, and who declared over and over again before the Agricultural Commission that Education was ruining the agricultural labourer. Some few years ago this House—[*interruption*]—granted money to be devoted by the County Councils to technical education. [*Cries of* "Divide"! *and interruption.*] The county he represented — ["Divide. divide!"]—joined neighbouring counties in providing a dairy institute with the view of enabling landowners and farmers to compete with foreign productions, [*Cries of* "Question," *and interruption.*]

*MR. SPEAKER said he hoped the hon. Member would see that the House was impatient. [*Cries of* "No, no!" and *cheers.*] The hon. Member stood waiting until there was quiet restored. He was afraid that to get complete quiet at the present hour and in the present state of the House was quite impossible. ["Hear, hear!"] He trusted that the hon. Member would not, in the present temper of the House, prolong his remarks unduly. [*Cheers.*]

MR. LOGAN, who was again received with cries of "Divide, divide," said he did not propose to detain the House very many minutes longer. [*Ministerial cheers and Opposition cries of* "Move the Adjournment!"] He was saying that a few years ago the House granted money for technical education, and that Leicestershire, Nottinghamshire, and Derbyshire provided a dairy institute for the purpose of aiding the farmers in those counties in their competition with the foreigners. What had been the result? At the present time there were in that institute only five students from Nottinghamshire, seven from Derbyshire, and none from Leicestershire. That showed the interest which landowners and farmers took in education. ["Oh, oh!"] It was the farmer and the landlord—[*ironical laughter and cries of* "Divide"]—to whom this money would be handed over for expenditure. [*Interruption.*] The Vice-President of the Council very well understood this phase of the question. [*Cries of* "Divide!"] He spoke of the landowner exhibiting their dislike to intellectual progress—[*loud interruption*]—which was peculiar to the territorial class. [*Laughter and cries of* "Divide!"] The aim of the Bill was to strengthen and perpetuate such a condition of things, and that was why he objected to it. [*Interruption.*] There was only one other point he wished to deal with. [*Loud cries of* "Divide," *and ironical laughter.*] He was not in agreement with many of his hon.

Friends on that side of the House who objected to the abolition of the 17s. 6d. limit. [*Cries of* "Divide!"] To his mind it was an unwise thing to put a limit on expenditure for elementary education. Children had a right to the best possible education a nation could give them, and such a duty ought not to be left to private individuals to discharge. [*Cries of* "Oh, oh!" "Divide!" *and laughter.*] He thought hon. Members on his side of the House, therefore, were not well advised in insisting on the 17s. 6d. limit. [*Loud interruption.*] After this grant was made, he believed the Voluntary Schools would be back again before long asking for more money —[*ironical laughter*]—but, possibly, the people would be fully awake to the importance of the matter by that time, take the question into their own hands, and once for all abolish private control in the work of education. [*Laughter and cries of* "Divide!"] It might be that private individuals who gave money for purposes of education might claim a certain degree of control; but he contended that public education provided out of public funds, whether wholly or partially, should be subject to public control, and——[*loud cries of* "Divide!"] The Bill was bad and unjust in principle, and he therefore opposed it. [*Ironical cheers.*]

The House divided:—Ayes, 355; Noes, 150.—(Division List—No. 30—appended).

AYES.

Abraham, William (Cork, N.E.)
Allhusen, Augustus Henry Eden
Allsopp, Hon. George
Ambrose, William (Middlesex)
Arnold, Alfred
Arnold-Forster, Hugh O.
Arrol, Sir William
Ascroft, Robert
Ashmead-Bartlett, Sir Ellis
Atkinson, Rt. Hon. John
Bagot, Capt. Josceline FitzRoy
Bailey, James (Walworth)
Baillie, James E. B. (Inverness)
Baird, John George Alexander
Balcarres, Lord
Baldwin, Alfred
Balfour, Rt. Hon. A.J.(Manch'r)
Balfour, Gerald William (Leeds)
Banbury, Frederick George
Barnes, Frederic Gorell
Bass, Hamar
Bathurst, Hon. Allen Benjamin
Beach, Rt.Hon.Sir M.H.(Bristol)
Beach, W.W. Bramston (Hants)
Beckett, Ernest William
Bemrose, Henry Howe
Bentinck, Lord Henry C.
Bethell, Captain
Bhownaggree, M. M.
Biddulph, Michael
Bigham, John Charles
Bigwood, James
Blundell, Colonel Henry
Bond, Edward
Boscawen, Arthur Griffith-
Boulnois, Edmund
Bousfield, William Robert
Bowles, Capt. H. F. (Middlesex)
Brassey, Albert
Brodrick, Rt. Hon. St. John
Brookfield, A. Montagu
Brown, Alexander H.
Bullard, Sir Harry
Burdett-Coutts, W.
Butcher, John George
Campbell, James A.
Carew, James Laurence
Carlile, William Walter
Carson, Edward
Cavendish, R. F. (N. Lancs.)
Cavendish, V.C.W.(Derbyshire)
Cayzer, Charles William
Cecil, Lord Hugh
Chaloner, Captain R. G. W.
Chamberlain, Rt. Hon.J. (Birm.)
Chamberlain, J.Austen (Worc'r)
Chaplin, Rt. Hon. Henry
Charrington, Spencer
Chelsea, Viscount
Clare, Octavius Leigh
Clarke, Sir Edward (Plymouth)
Cochrane, Hon. Thos. H. A. E.
Coghill, Douglas Harry
Cohen, Benjamin Louis
Collings, Rt. Hon. Jesse
Colomb, Sir John Charles Ready
Colston, Chas. Edw. H. Athole
Compton, Lord Alwyne (Beds.)
Condon, Thomas Joseph
Cook, Fred. Lucas (Lambeth)
Crilly, Daniel
Cripps, Charles Alfred
Cross, Herb. Shepherd (Bolton)
Curran, Thomas B. (Donegal)
Currie, Sir Donald
Curzon, Rt.Hn.G.N.(Lanc.S.W.)
Curzon, Viscount (Bucks.)
Dalbiac, Major Philip Hugh
Dalkeith, Earl of
Dalrymple, Sir Charles
Dane, Richard M.
Darling, Charles John
Davenport, W. Bromley-
Denny, Colonel
Dickson-Poynder, Sir John P.
Digby, John K. D. Wingfield-
Dillon, John
Disraeli, Coningsby Ralph
Dixon-Hartland, Sir Fred.Dixon
Donkin, Richard Sim
Dorington, Sir John Edward
Douglas, Rt. Hon. A. Akers-
Drage, Geoffrey
Drucker, A.
Duncombe, Hon. Hubert V.
Dyke, Rt.Hon. Sir William Hart
Edwards, Gen. Sir James Bevan
Egerton, Hon. A. de Tatton
Engledow, Charles John
Fardell, Thomas George
Farquhar, Sir Horace
Fellowes, Hon. Ailwyn Edward
Fergusson, Rt.Hn.Sir J.(Mancr.)
Field, Admiral (Eastbourne)
Fielden, Thomas
Finch, George H.
Finlay, Sir Robert Bannatyne
Firbank, Joseph Thomas
Fisher, William Hayes
FitzGerald, Sir R. U. Penrose
Fitz Wygram, General Sir F.
Flannery, Fortescue
Fletcher, Sir Henry
Flower, Ernest
Flynn, James Christopher
Folkestone, Viscount
Forster, Henry William
Forwood, Rt. Hn. Sir Arthur B.
Foster, Colonel (Lancaster)
Foster, Harry S. (Suffolk)
Fry, Lewis
Galloway, William Johnson
Garfit, William
Gedge, Sydney
Gibbs, Hn.A.G.H.(City of Lond.)
Gibbs, Hon. Vicary (St. Albans)
Giles, Charles Tyrrell
Gilhooly, James
Gilliat, John Saunders
Godson, Augustus Frederick
Goldsworthy, Major-General
Gordon, John Edward
Gorst, Rt. Hon. Sir John Eldon
Goschen, Rt. Hn. G. J.(St. G'rg's)
Goschen, George J. (Sussex)
Goulding, Edward Alfred
Graham, Henry Robert
Gray, Ernest (West Ham)
Green, Walford D. (Wednesb'ry)
Greene, Henry D. (Shrewsbury)
Greene, W. Raymond (Cambs.)

Gretton, John
Greville, Captain
Gull, Sir Cameron
Gunter, Colonel
Halsey, Thomas Frederick
Hamilton, Rt. Hon. Lord Geo.
Hanbury, Rt. Hon. Robert Wm.
Hardy, Laurence
Harrington, Timothy
Heath, James
Heaton, John Henniker
Helder, Augustus
Hermon-Hodge, Robert Trotter
Hickman, Sir Alfred
Hill, Rt. Hn. Lord Arthur (Down)
Hill, Rt. Hn. A. Staveley (Staffs.)
Hoare, Edw. Brodie (Hampstead)
Hoare, Samuel (Norwich)
Hobhouse, Henry
Hogan, James Francis
Holland, Hon. Lionel Raleigh
Hopkinson, Alfred
Hornby, William Henry
Houldsworth, Sir Wm. Henry
Houston, R. P.
Howard, Joseph
Howell, William Tudor
Howorth, Sir Henry Hoyle
Hozier, James Henry Cecil
Hubbard, Hon. Evelyn
Hudson, George Bickersteth
Hutchinson, Capt. G. W. Grice-
Hutton, John (Yorks. N.R.)
Isaacson, Frederick Wootton
Jameson, Major J. Eustace
Jebb, Richard Claverhouse
Jeffreys, Arthur Frederick
Jenkins, Sir John Jones
Jessel, Captain Herbert Merton
Johnston, William (Belfast)
Johnstone, John H. (Sussex)
Jolliffe, Hon. H. George
Kemp, George
Kennaway, Rt. Hon. Sir John H.
Kenny, William
Kenrick, William
Kenyon, James
Kilbride, Denis
Kimber, Henry
King, Sir Henry Seymour
Knowles, Lees
Knox, Edmund Francis Vesey
Lafone, Alfred
Laurie, Lieut.-General
Lawrence, Wm. F. (Liverpool)
Lawson, John Grant (Yorks.)
Lea, Sir Thomas (Londonderry)
Lecky, William Edward H.
Lees, Elliott (Birkenhead)
Legh, Hon. Thomas W. (Lanc.)
Leighton, Stanley
Llewellyn, Evan H. (Somerset)
Llewelyn, Sir Dillwyn- (Swans'a)
Lockwood, Lt.-Col. A. R. (Essex)
Loder, Gerald Walter Erskine
Long, Col. Charles W. (Evesham)
Long, Rt. Hn. Walter (Liverpool)
Lopes, Henry Yarde Buller
Lorne, Marquess of
Lowles, John
Loyd, Archie Kirkman
Lubbock, Rt. Hon. Sir John
Lucas-Shadwell, William
Lyttelton, Hon. Alfred
Macaleese, Daniel
Macartney, W. G. Ellison
Macdona, John Cumming
Maclean, James Mackenzie
Maclure, John William
McCalmont, H. L. B. (Cambs.)
McCarthy, Justin
McDermott, Patrick
McKillop, James
Malcolm, Ian
Manners, Lord Edward Wm. J.
Marks, Henry Hananel
Martin, Richard Biddulph
Massey-Mainwaring, Hon. W. F.
Mellor, Colonel (Lancashire)
Melville, Beresford Valentine
Meysey-Thompson, Sir H. M.
Milbank, Powlett Charles John
Mildmay, Francis Bingham
Milner, Sir Frederick George
Milton, Viscount
Milward, Colonel Victor
Minch, Matthew
Monckton, Edward Philip
Monk, Charles James
Montagu, Hon. J. Scott (Hants)
Moon, Edward Robert Pacy
More, Robert Jasper
Morgan, Hn. Fred. (Monm'thsh.)
Morrell, George Herbert
Morrison, Walter
Mount, William George
Mowbray, Rt. Hon. Sir John
Muntz, Philip A.
Murdoch, Charles Townshend
Murray, Rt. Hn. A. Grah'm (Bute)
Murray, Charles J. Coventry
Murray, Col. Wyndham (Bath)
Myers, William Henry
Nicol, Donald Ninian
Northcote, Hon. Sir H. Stafford
O'Brien, Patrick (Kilkenny)
O'Connor, Arthur (Donegal)
O'Connor, James (Wicklow, W.)
O'Connor, T. P. (Liverpool)
O'Malley, William
O'Niell, Hon. Robert Torrens
Orr-Ewing, Charles Lindsay
Parkes, Ebenezer
Parnell, John Howard
Pender, James
Penn, John
Pierpoint, Robert
Platt-Higgins, Frederick
Pollock, Harry Frederick
Powell, Sir Francis Sharp
Power, Patrick Joseph
Pretyman, Capt. Ernest George
Pryce-Jones, Edward
Purvis, Robert
Pym, C. Guy
Rankin, James
Rasch, Major Frederic Carne
Renshaw, Charles Bine
Richards, Henry Charles
Richardson, Thomas
Ridley, Rt. Hon. Sir Matthew W.
Ritchie, Rt. Hon. Chas. Thomson
Robertson, Herbert (Hackney)
Roche, Hon. James (East Kerry)
Round, James
Russell, Gen. F. S. (Cheltenham)
Russell, Sir George (Berksh.)
Russell, T. W. (Tyrone)
Rutherford, John
Samuel, Harry S. (Limehouse)
Saunderson, Col. Edw. James
Savory, Sir Joseph
Scoble, Sir Andrew Richard
Seely, Charles Hilton
Seton-Karr, Henry
Sharpe, William Edward T.
Sidebotham, J. W. (Cheshire)
Sidebottom William (Derbysh.)
Simeon, Sir Barrington
Sinclair, Louis (Romford)
Skewes-Cox, Thomas
Smith, Abel (Herts)
Smith, Abel H. (Christchurch)
Smith, Hon. W. F. D. (Strand)
Spencer, Ernest
Stanley, Lord (Lancs.)
Stanley, Edw. Jas. (Somerset)
Stanley, Henry M. (Lambeth)
Stephens, Henry Charles
Stewart, Sir Mark J. McTaggart
Stirling-Maxwell, Sir John M.
Stock, James Henry
Stone, Sir Benjamin
Strauss, Arthur
Strutt, Hon. Charles Hedley
Sturt, Hon. Humphry Napier
Sullivan, Donal (Westmeath)
Sutherland, Sir Thomas
Talbot, Lord E. (Chichester)
Talbot, John G. (Oxford Univ.)
Taylor, Francis
Thorburn, Walter
Thornton, Percy M.
Tomlinson, Wm. Edw. Murray
Tritton, Charles Ernest
Usborne, Thomas
Valentia, Viscount
Verney, Hon. Richard Greville
Vincent, Col. Sir C. E. Howard
Warkworth, Lord
Warr, Augustus Frederick
Webster, R. G. (St. Pancras)
Webster, Sir R. E. (Isle of Wight)
Welby, Lieut.-Col. A. C. E.
Wharton, John Lloyd
Whiteley, George (Stockport)
Whiteley, H. (Ashton-under-L.)
Whitmore, Charles Algernon
Williams, Col. R. (Dorset)
Williams, Joseph Powell- (Birm.)
Willoughby de Eresby, Lord
Wiliox, John Archibald
Wilson, John (Falkirk)
Wilson, J. W. (Worc'shire, N.)
Wilson-Todd, Wm. H. (Yorks.)
Wodehouse, Edmond R. (Bath)
Wolff, Gustav Wilhelm
Wortley, Rt. Hon. C. B. Stuart-
Wylie, Alexander
Wyndham, George
Wyndham-Quin, Major W. H.
Wyvill, Marmaduke D'Arcy
Yerburgh, Robert Armstrong
Younger, William

TELLERS FOR THE AYES, Sir William Walrond and Mr. Anstruther.

NOES.

Abraham, William (Rhondda)
Acland, Rt. Hon. A. H. Dyke
Allan, William (Gateshead)
Allen, Wm. (Newc.under Lyme)
Allison, Robert Andrew
Arch, Joseph
Asher, Alexander
Ashton, Thomas Gair
Asquith, Rt. Hn. Herbert Henry
Austin, Sir John (Yorkshire)
Bainbridge, Emerson
Baker, Sir John
Balfour, Rt. Hon. J. Blair (Clackm
Barlow, John Emmott
Bayley, Thomas (Derbyshire)
Beaumont, Wentworth C. B.
Birrell, Augustine
Bolton, Thomas Dolling
Brigg, John
Broadhurst, Henry
Brunner, Sir John Tomlinson
Bryce, Rt. Hon. James
Buchanan, Thomas Ryburn
Burns, John
Burt, Thomas
Buxton, Sydney Charles
Caldwell, James
Cameron, Robert
Campbell-Bannerman, Sir H.
Causton, Richard Knight
Cawley, Frederick
Channing, Francis Allston
Clough, Walter Owen
Colville, John
Cozens-Hardy, Herbert Hardy
Crombie, John William
Dalziel, James Henry
Davies, M. Vaughan- (Cardigan)
Dilke, Rt. Hon. Sir Charles
Dixon, George
Doughty, George
Dunn, Sir William
Ellis, John Edward (Notts.)
Evans, Samuel T. (Glamorgan)
Evans, Sir Francis H. (South'ton)
Farquharson, Dr. Robert
Fenwick, Charles
Ferguson, R. C. Munro (Leith)
Foster, Sir Walter (Derby Co.)
Fowler, Rt. Hn. Sir H. (Wol'tn)
Fowler, Matthew (Durham)
Gladstone, Rt. Hn. Herbert John
Goddard, Daniel Ford
Gold, Charles
Gourley, Sir Edward Temperley
Griffith, Ellis J.
Haldane, Richard Burdon
Harcourt, Rt. Hon. Sir William
Harrison, Charles
Hayne, Rt. Hon. Charles Seale-
Hazell, Walter
Hedderwick, Thomas Charles H.
Holborn, J. G.
Holden, Angus
Humphreys-Owen, Arthur C.
Hutton, Alfred E. (Morley)
Jacoby, James Alfred
Johnson-Ferguson, Jabez Edw.
Joicey, Sir James
Jones, David Brynmor (Swansea)
Jones, William (Carnarvonshire)
Kay-Shuttleworth, Rt. Hn. Sir U.
Kearley, Hudson E.
Kinloch, Sir John G. Smyth
Kitson, Sir James
Labouchere, Henry
Lambert, George
Langley, Batty
Lawson, Sir Wilfrid (Cumb'land)
Leese, Sir Joseph F. (Accr'gton)
Leng, Sir John
Leuty, Thomas Richmond
Lewis, John Herbert
Lockwood, Sir Frank (York)
Logan, John William
Lough, Thomas
Luttrell, Hugh Fownes
McEwan, William
McKenna, Reginald
McLaren, Charles Benjamin
McLeod, John
Maden, John Henry
Mappin, Sir Frederick Thorpe
Mellor, Rt. Hn. J. W. (Yorks.)
Montagu, Sir S. (Whitechapel)
Morgan, J. Lloyd (Carmarthen)
Morley, Charles (Breconshire)
Morley, Rt. Hn. John (Montrose)
Morton, Edward John Chalmers
Mundella, Rt. Hn. Anthony John
Nussey, Thomas Willans
Oldroyd, Mark
Owen, Thomas
Palmer, Sir Charles M. (Durham)
Paulton, James Mellor
Pease, Joseph A. (Northumb.)
Perks, Robert William
Pickard, Benjamin
Pickersgill, Edward Hare
Pirie, Captain Duncan Vernon
Price, Robert John
Priestley, Briggs (Yorks.)
Provand, Andrew Dryburgh
Randell, David
Reckitt, Harold James
Rickett, J. Compton
Roberts, John Bryn (Eifion)
Roberts, John H. (Denbighs.)
Robertson, Edmund (Dundee)
Robson, William Snowdon
Samuel, J. (Stockton-on-Tees)
Schwann, Charles E.
Scott, Charles Prestwich
Shaw, Charles Edw. (Stafford)
Shaw, Thomas (Hawick B.)
Sinclair, Captain John (Forfar)
Smith, Samuel (Flint)
Souttar, Robinson
Spicer, Albert
Stevenson, Francis S.
Strachey, Edward
Tennant, Harold John
Thomas, Abel (Carmarthen, E.)
Thomas, Alfred (Glamorgan, E.)
Ure, Alexander
Wallace, Robert (Edinburgh)
Wallace, Robert (Perth)
Walton, John Lawson
Warner, Thomas Courtenay T.
Wayman, Thomas
Wedderburn, Sir William
Whittaker, Thomas Palmer
Williams, John Carvell (Notts.)
Wills, Sir William Henry
Wilson, Frederick W. (Norfolk)
Wilson, John (Durham, Mid.)
Wilson, Jos. H. (Middlesbrough)
Woodall, William
Woodhouse, Sir J. T. (Hud'rsf'ld)
Woods, Samuel

TELLERS FOR THE NOES, Mr. Thomas Ellis and Mr. McArthur

Main Question put, and agreed to.

Bill Read a Second time, and committed for Thursday 25th February.

INJURIES TO WORKMEN (EMPLOYERS' LIABILITY) BILL.

Second Reading deferred till Tuesday 16th March.

EMPLOYERS' LIABILITY (FOREIGN SHIPOWNERS) AMENDMENT BILL.

Second Reading deferred till Tuesday next.

MILITARY LANDS ACT (1892) AMENDMENT BILL.

Committee deferred till Thursday.

TRUSTS (SCOTLAND) BILL.

Committee deferred till Thursday.

House adjourned at Twenty-seven minutes before One o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

Wednesday, 17th February 1897.

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

[PRIVATE BUSINESS.]

DUBLIN CORPORATION BILL (BY ORDER).

Order read for resuming Adjourned Debate on Question [11th February],—

> "That it be an Instruction to the Committee on the Dublin Corporation Bill that, either by definition or enactment, they make provision for conferring on duly qualified women the municipal franchise within the City of Dublin."—(*Mr. William Johnston.*)

Question again proposed:—Debate resumed.

Mr. J. L. CAREW (Dublin, College Green), rising to a point of order, asked whether, having regard to the fact that the clauses in the Bill relating to the franchise did not propose an extension of the franchise, but merely a simplification of the methods for getting names on the register, the instruction of the hon. Member, which proposed an entirely new franchise, was in order.

*Mr. SPEAKER said that when it was last before the House he said he thought the Instruction was in order, and before doing so he had looked at the Bill and considered the point the hon. Member referred to. He thought the Instruction was in order.

Mr. W. JOHNSTON (Belfast, S.) said he proposed to confer on women in the city of Dublin who were duly qualified that franchise which women exercised in Blackrock, Kingstown, and Belfast. In England and Scotland women possessed the municipal franchise, and it seemed to him very hard that women in the metropolis of Ireland should be deprived of it. He understood from a letter he had received from a Member of the Dublin Corporation that the municipal electorate of Dublin would under this Bill be increased from about 8,000 to 36,000. If that be so, it was very extraordinary that the Dublin Corporation should refuse their assent to his proposition. He begged to move the Instruction which stood in his name.

Mr. TIMOTHY HARRINGTON (Dublin, Harbour) said he thought that were the House in possession of the facts of the case, they would see that there was nothing in the statement which the hon. Member for South Belfast had made with regard to the Bill, which ought to secure the support of the House. The question of women suffrage had never been brought before the Corporation by anybody, though it was open to the Member of the Corporation who had written to the hon. Member for South Belfast, and to every citizen of Dublin who wanted to raise the qeustion, to do so. A meeting of burgesses was held in support of the Bill, and neither in the Corporation nor at the meeting of the burgesses, nor by anybody connected with the City of Dublin, was one question raised which would warrant the hon. Member in moving this Instruction. The hon. Member himself had no connection with the City of Dublin. He did not represent it, nor did he even sympathise with its general position or character, and if he had any interest in the matter it would be an interest against the Bill, because his interest would be in the townships which were referred to in the Bill. This was the third attempt made by the Dublin Corporation to obtain from the House of Commons power to charge the surrounding townships for their supply of water at a figure already fixed, really by statute, but which the townships were not paying owing to a looseness in the drawing of the Statute. The main provision of the Bill, and the purpose of the Bill, were merely to carry out an arrangement fixed 25 or 26 years ago, by which the Dublin Corporation was to supply to the townships 20 gallons of water per head of the population per day, and it was arranged by the Bill that in case of excess over that amount taken by the township they should pay a certain figure by arrangement. The townships had been, however, drawing the water in excess without paying any figure for it, and the whole scope of the Bill was merely to enable the Corporation to compel the townships to pay for the water they were taking in excess of the amount fixed by statute. Was it not a monstrous injustice to the citizens of Dublin, that when they incurred all the expense of coming to Parliament to seek an act of justice they should be defeated by any fad or frivolous objection any particular Member might choose to raise? ["Hear, hear!" *and laughter.*] This was the third time that the Bill had been promoted by the Dublin Corporation. It was at first defeated on a vote of the citizens on some misunderstanding as to the Franchise Clauses. Last year the Bill came before the House of Commons; it passed the different readings in the House of Commons; it was approved of by a Committee in the House of Commons; and it was finally defeated because a Member of the House moved a Franchise Instruction and carried it against the Bill, and it was eventually thrown out in the House of Lords. As a punishment to the House of Lords the Bill was rejected by the House of Commons, after the citizens of Dublin had paid £12,000 in promoting it. The Corporation of Dublin did not object to the extension of the franchise to women, but they were in this position—that the question was not raised by the citizens. The member of the Corporation who wrote to the Member for South Belfast did not raise the question in the Corporation, because he would have been defeated. If the Instruction were now passed it would have the effect of wrecking the Bill for the third time. The Instruction was mandatory; it took out of the hands of the Committee having charge of the Bill all discretion, all opportunity of examining evidence upon the question; and it compelled them to adopt this principle of women suffrage whether it might wreck the Bill or not. If the Committee carefully examined the evidence as to whether machinery existed in Dublin or not for giving practical effect to the Instruction —and he knew that no such machinery existed—they would have no alternative but to reject the Bill. The hon. Member, by his Instruction, absolutely tied the hands of the Committee. The hon. Member next spoke of woman suffrage as it existed in Belfast, Blackrock, and Kingstown. These places stood upon a totally different footing from the City of Dublin. In Dublin, Kingstown, and Blackrock the franchise lists were made up by the Town Clerk. In the City of Dublin there were three distinct official authorities who combined to make up the lists—the clerks of the two Unions and the Collector General. The Collector General was independent of the Corporation, being an official of the Government, appointed directly by Statute. The effect of this Instruction, if carried, would be to throw upon the Collector General, who, as he had said, was not an officer of the Corporation, an entirely new duty. That duty, perhaps, he would have no objection to have cast upon him if the question of woman suffrage became a general question with which he would have to deal. Under this Instruction he would have to open a new column in his ratebook; he would have to inquire into the names of the women who were qualified, and yet they had no machinery for paying him or compelling him to do this work. The hon. Member did not give any indication to the Committee in this Instruction what was the particular view of women's suffrage he wished them to adopt. They had no choice. They were to do it, either by definition or enactment, but the hon. Member did not tell them whether the franchise was to be conferred on those who occupied rooms in rated premises or on those who paid rates directly. He could understand a franchise which it would be easy to work out if it were confined strictly to the case of women who paid rates directly on property, and whose names appeared on the lists because they did so. But with regard to women who occupied rooms in tenement houses, nobody had any knowledge as to who they were. They did not pay rates to the Town Clerk or to the Collector General; there were no means of discovering their names, and the only machinery left to the Collector General for ascertaining them was the form connected with the Parliamentary franchise, and that form specially forbade him to put down on it the name of any woman. There was no machinery whatever if it was intended to apply it to women who occupied rooms in tenement houses. That was the position in which the Instruction of the hon. Member put the Committee. He entirely agreed with the hon. Member on the general question of women's suffrage, but do not let it be raised by side issues here and there—one Act for Belfast, one for Kingstown, and one for Dublin, until those who had got to deal with it in the public courts did not know where they were. Let the whole question be dealt with in a general Act. ["Hear, hear!"] He knew this question of women's suffrage was one which had very largely the sympathy of the House, but he appealed to hon. Members not to import their views on the question into this Bill, because that was not the way to deal with it even if it were practicable under the Bill. The carrying of the Instruction would have no other effect than that of killing the Bill for the third time. [*Cries of* "No!"] It was so. If the Instruction were adopted it could not be carried out by the Committee, and, as it was a mandatory Instruction, if it could not be carried out by the Committee they had no other discretion than to reject the Bill. The hon. Member had referred to a letter from a member of the Dublin Corporation. He had not given the House the name of the writer, and he could assure the hon. Member that if he inquired into the facts he would find that either the writer was opposed to the extension of the municipal franchise in the Measure, or that he was interested in the townships which were to be affected by the Bill—possibly both. The Instruction sought to import into the Bill a matter which was not before the citizens of Dublin when the Bill was promoted. He had not the slightest doubt that the Instruction would be ruled out of order elsewhere—possibly the whole franchise connected with the Bill, and then they would be again in the position of last year. Some £15,000 or £16,000 at least had been already lost in promoting this Bill, and he appealed to the House to give his fellow-countrymen in Ireland the same measure of fairplay which they meted to other corporations who came there. Those other corporations had none of these views imposed on their Bills. He appealed to the hon. Member not to punish the citizens of Dublin by rejecting their Bill, or even to endanger its passing by a mandatory Instruction upon this question. [*Cheers.*]

Mr. MICHAEL DAVITT (Mayo, S.) said that, while he cordially sympathised with the Motion of the hon. Member for Belfast, he would appeal to him not to persevere with it to the extent of endangering this Bill. He regretted very much that the citizens of Dublin had not a sufficiently progressive spirit or sufficient of that spirit of gallantry to follow the example of Belfast and grant the women of Dublin the same municipal privileges accorded to men.

Mr. HARRINGTON said the citizens in framing their Bill had to avoid all matters which they thought would be contentious, and, while they might be very desirous for women's suffrage, they tried to prevent the Bill becoming a contentious one by leaving it out in case there should be a strong feeling against the subject.

Mr. DAVITT said that, however that might be, a poet on those Benches had summed up the situation in these lines:—

> "Oh, why should Johnston take a course
> Which you so much deplore?
> Because he loveth water much,
> But loveth women more."

[*Loud laughter.*] In that respect he gladly ranged himself alongside the hon. Member for Belfast. The hon. Member deserved the gratitude of all advocates of women's suffrage for his consistent labours in so righteous a cause; but he thought he had, by his action, made a sufficient protest on this question. If he followed it up by another course before the end of the Session he should have his hearty support, but, in view of the money already expended by the citizens of Dublin in promoting this Bill, he hoped he would not endanger its passing by pressing his Instruction.

Mr. SYDNEY GEDGE (Walsall) said he did not see why they should endanger the passing of this Bill by adopting the Instruction. Who would reject the Bill on account of the adoption of the Instruction? Not the House of Commons. The House of Commons would not turn back on itself and reject the Bill after it ordered the Instruction, because it provided for the extension of the franchise to women. Then it must be either the Committee or the Corporation. [*Cries of* "The Lords."] He was not at all afraid of the House of Lords on this account. The hon. Member could scarcely mean that the Committee, which was a judicial body, which would hear evidence and base its finding on that evidence, would reject the Bill because that House had told them they were to do some particular thing with the Bill? Therefore the hon. Member could merely mean that the Corporation of Dublin would withdraw the Bill. [*Cries of* "No!"] Then if that was so the danger which had been spoken of simply fell to the ground. This question had not been sprung upon the Dublin Corporation, because it had been raised twice before. The Corporation had not raised the question simply because they represented only the men. But that House represented, he hoped, the whole country, and they desired that women of Dublin should have the same municipal advantages that all the qualified women had in Great Britain, and that the women had in Kingstown and Belfast. ["Hear, hear!"] Though, no doubt, he should be very glad to see a general Bill brought in giving the municipal franchise to women throughout Ireland; and though, no doubt, that would be better than to do it in this piecemeal fashion—["hear, hear!"]—he would remind the House that that piecemeal fashion had been begun already, and he did not see why, when they had a good thing before them, they should not take advantage of it while they had the opportunity, instead of waiting to some future date when a general Bill was introduced. He should cordially support the Instruction.

Mr. HORACE PLUNKETT (Dublin Co., S.) could not see that any case had been made out by the hon. Member (Mr. Harrington), whose one point, he understood, was that the Bill would be wrecked because it was impossible for the authorities to make out any list to include women voters. But that was merely matter of assertion, and he could not see any difficulty of the kind. The Instruction called upon the Committee to make provision for conferring the municipal franchise on duly qualified women, and no reasonable man could doubt for a moment that the Committee could do this. It was curious to find the hon. Gentleman protesting against this franchise resolution as applied to a private Bill, seeing that in so many instances an Instruction or Amendment to a similar effect had been carried according similar privileges to women. He supported the Instruction, and would vote for it if his hon. Friend went to a division.

Mr. HUBERT DUNCOMBE (Cumberland, Egremont) appealed to the House not to assent to this Motion. The matters in the Bill concerned the Corporation and ratepayers of Dublin, and for the third time the Bill was before the House, its promotion having cost thousands of pounds. It would be unfair to the promoters to introduce this controversial matter, and risk the loss of the Bill for the third time. The hon. Member for Walsall said the Bill ran no risk because of the introduction of this franchise Instruction; but last Session the Bill was lost on this account.

Mr. GEDGE: I said it was not lost in the Lords.

Mr. DUNCOMBE said the Bill was lost, and a similar risk would be incurred by the adoption of the Instruction now. It was going beyond the functions of the House, it would be a misuse of the powers of the House—powers he certainly had no wish to minimise—to subject the promoters for the third time to risk of losing a Bill of this kind—which concerned the health and comfort of one of the principal cities of the kingdom—to gratify what had been called a "fad," in which a large number of Members took a great deal of interest. The whole difficulty in respect to this subject began, he thought, through the House not listening to the advice of the Speaker. At the end of last Session the House got itself into an extraordinary tangle over this Bill, and there was observable then, as now, a total absence of leaders on either side to give the House guidance. On the division on the last occasion the House was left to itself, and it was credibly reported that so little was the question understood that one Member consulted the coins in his pocket as to which Lobby he should enter. Surely this was a matter the House should have clearly before it. The House had been told by a Member representing the City of Dublin that the adoption of this Instruction would risk the loss of the Bill, and this risk, he submitted, the House ought not to encourage. If ever there was a subject on which a Member might reasonably expect the Home Rule principle to apply it was in the municipal government of the city in which he lived. Such local government was given to all our cities, large and small, and it was deeply rooted in our constitution. The hon. Member (Mr. Harrington) represented a very strong feeling in Dublin on this subject, and he earnestly appealed to the House not to assent to this Motion.

Mr. JAMES LOWTHER (Kent, Thanet) did not wish to enter into local disputes in connection with this Bill, or into the particular question of the enfranchisement of women, or certainly not in detail, but he thought the House would do well to consider whether this sort of piecemeal legislation on the subject of the franchise was likely to redound to the credit of Parliament or the advantage of the country. Some hon. Members might say the fault was not theirs, the system began long ago, and many Members of the Party opposite made themselves responsible for the first steps in what he considered this wrong direction; but what did this amount to? Instead of a general statute governing the franchise in municipal areas, here were partial discussions day after day; instead of proposals submitted on the responsibility of a Minister, advantage was taken of the machinery of a private Bill, and an Instruction was moved by any Member who might happen to take a special view of his own on any subject connected therewith. It was a question he could not now discuss, but he confessed to a very strong feeling against the introduction of a controversial and political matter like the franchise into a private Bill. It certainly was as far back as he could remember, and had continued until quite lately, the practice of the House to put its foot down firmly on any attempt to open up political issues on a private Bill. This had been the rule always applied, and he should have almost thought the Rules of Order had declared against great subjects of controversy being imported into private Bill discussions. But that was a matter he would not be in order in discussing. The House was confronted with this: a political matter of a highly controversial nature was sought to be imported into a private Bill by a mandatory Instruction to the Committee; and this was a position the House ought very seriously to consider. Whether it was right or not right that women should have the franchise was scarcely now the subject for consideration; there was an opportunity for considering that two weeks ago in connection with another part of the political field, and if his hon. Friend introduced a Bill of a general character applicable to the whole of Ireland no doubt the House would be prepared to give attentive hearing to his arguments. Meanwhile he hoped the House would not follow up the very mischievous precedent of last year, when a serious departure was made from the usage and practice of Parliament under circumstances he would not recall. He hoped that, under the circumstances, the Instruction would not be persevered with.

Mr. W. FIELD (Dublin, St. Patrick), as a representative of the city of Dublin, felt it his duty to voice the views of the Corporation; and he read the terms of a resolution in which the Corporation declined to accept this alteration in the Bill as approved by the burgesses, and called upon Dublin Members to vote against the Instruction. In obedience to that resolution he would vote against the Motion. At meetings held to consider the Bill 15 wards declared in its favour, and in only two wards were there majorities against the Bill. Why did not gentlemen who were desirous of obtaining women's suffrage in Dublin bring a proposal before a meeting of the Corporation?

Mr. JOHNSTON: Why did not the hon. Gentleman bring it forward himself? His name is on the back of my Bill.

Mr. FIELD said so far as he personally was concerned he was in favour of women having votes for municipal purposes, but he was deterred from taking any action in regard to this Bill because it was thought by those in charge of it that it would endanger the Bill. The hon. Member for South Belfast thought he could use this women's suffrage question to suit his own purpose, for he was one of the hon. Gentlemen who helped to wreck the Bill last year.

Mr. JOHNSTON appealed to the Speaker if these imputations were in order. He repudiated everything but a desire to introduce women's suffrage.

*Mr. SPEAKER had heard no imputation of any dishonourable or improper motive to the hon. Gentleman.

Mr. FIELD concluded with an appeal to the House not to subject the Dublin Corporation to further expense, but to allow the Bill in its present form to go to a Select Committee.

*Mr. CARVELL WILLIAMS (Notts, Mansfield) pointed out that the Instruction applied solely to the municipal franchise, and he submitted that it was too late in the day to call this proposal a political fad.

MR. HARRINGTON: I did not call it a political fad. I said that if this practice were sanctioned by the House of Commons, there is no fad which any private Member has that he may not raise.

*MR. CARVELL WILLIAMS said the hon. Member opposite spoke of this proposal as a fad. There were some fads which had a knack of becoming established political doctrines, and this was one of them. The Legislature had accepted the principle so far as the municipal franchise for women was concerned, and this was a proposal to apply to Ireland the principle which existed in England. As to the second point, that this was an irregular mode of endeavouring to establish a certain principle, he had only to say that private Members were driven, not infrequently, to the adoption of an irregular method of procedure because they found it impossible, under the present mode of procedure in that House, to advocate the principles they desired to see established by a recourse to regular methods. The advocates of the Parliamentary franchise for women had to wait for years before they could obtain a discussion of their Bill. They had now carried that Bill to a Second Reading, but nobody knew whether it was likely to proceed further. This Instruction afforded an opportunity of extending to a city in Ireland the principle which was already adopted in this country, and he submitted that the advocates of Women's Suffrage were entitled to avail themselves of the opportunity that thus presented itself.

The House divided:—Ayes, 89; Noes, 61.—(Division List, No. 31.)

MR. PLUNKETT had the following Instruction on the Paper:—

"That it be an Instruction to the Committee to which the Bill shall be committed that they shall insert therein clauses to provide that all the questions in dispute between the Corporation of Dublin and the Commissioners of the several townships mentioned or referred to in the Bill as to the quantity and price for supply of water by the Corporation to the townships shall be decided by a referee or arbitrator appointed by the Board of Trade or in such other manner as to the Committee may seem reasonable."

*MR. SPEAKER: The Instruction standing in the name of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for South Dublin is in order because it is mandatory, and only for that reason; but I hope, under the circumstances, the right hon. Gentleman and the House will not think I am stepping outside my province if I advise him very strongly not to move this Instruction, but to wait until the matter comes before the Committee, and then, if he objects to what is done in the Committee, to raise his objection on the Report stage. There is a growing practice of putting on the Paper as the subject of an Instruction matters which do not involve simply a question of principle, but which go into matters of detail, the proper subject of Amendments in Committee, and are only in order because they are mandatory. For example, the present Bill, so far as the water question is concerned, proposes to fix the prices at which water should be sold to the different townships around Dublin. These prices are fixed at 2½d. and 3½d. per thousand gallons and so forth, and were so fixed, I presume, after due consideration by those who prepared the Bill. What the right hon. Gentleman is proposing to do is to instruct the Committee beforehand, when the matter comes before them, not to hear evidence as to the propriety of the proposal so made after careful consideration by the promoters of the Bill, but to sanction a totally different scheme for fixing the price without giving the promoters the opportunity of bringing their evidence before the Committee. Although, as I say, the right hon. Gentleman has put himself in order by making the Instruction mandatory, it seems to me that the course he suggests is entirely contrary to all sound practice of the House in regard to private Bills, and I hope the right hon. Gentleman will see fit not to move this as an Instruction, but will bring his case forward before the Committee, and then take the opinion of the House upon it on the Report stage, if he thinks it necessary.

MR. HARRINGTON: On the point of order, Mr. Speaker, may I point out to you that, the principle of the Bill having been affirmed on the Second Reading, this Instruction is practically a Motion to negative the Bill after the Second Reading has been passed?

*MR. SPEAKER: No, I do not think it is out of order, because I cannot say that the principle of the Bill is to fix the price of water at 2½d., or 3½d., or at any particular figure. The principle of the Bill is to fix and settle the terms on which the water supply shall be made from Dublin to the townships around. But the actual figures are not the principle of the Bill, and it is competent for the Committee, by an Amendment, to say, "We will not fix the prices at 2½d. or 3½d., but make it a question of arbitration." That is what the right hon. Gentleman proposes to do, but I hope, for the reasons I have given, that he will not move the Instruction.

Mr. PLUNKETT: I have only, Mr. Speaker, to thank you for your guidance in the matter, which I shall follow. May I ask will your ruling apply to the second Instruction in my name?

"That it be an Instruction to the Committee to which the Bill shall be referred that they shall insert in said Bill Clauses to provide for the establishment of a water trust for the supply of water to the city of Dublin and the extra municipal districts, as defined in The Dublin Waterworks Act, 1861, on the Board of which trust the Corporation of Dublin and the Commissioners of all the townships affected by the Bill shall be represented in proportion to the valuations of the city and townships respectively."

*Mr. SPEAKER: No, the second Instruction is out of order, because it proposes that it should be an Instruction to the Committee to establish a Water Trust in Dublin. That is an entirely new subject matter, and ought to be the subject of a new Bill.

STEAM ENGINES AND BOILERS (PERSONS IN CHARGE) BILL.

*Mr. J. SAMUEL (Stockton) moved: "That this Bill be now Read a Second time." He explained that he was in charge of the Measure simply owing to the accident of the ballot. The principle of the Bill, he understood, had been before the House for many years—18 or 19 years. The Bill of 1895 was referred to a Select Committee, but it was in the end lost. The present Bill was very much modified in consequence of the advice given by the Select Committee. The object of the Bill was principally to grant certificates to persons in charge of boilers and engines, but it did not apply generally. It did not apply to any boiler or engine used exclusively for domestic, agricultural, or farming purposes, or to any boiler used in the service of Her Majesty, or to any boiler or engine used by a railway company, or to any boiler or engine used on board a steamship having a certificate from the Board of Trade, or to any road traction engine or steam roller. Those limitations were made after the 1895 Committee. The principle of the Bill was such that the Measure might be called a Mining Bill. Briefly, the Bill dealt with the boilers and engines used for winding workmen or minerals up or down the shaft of a mine. The men in charge must hold a certificate, and these certificates were divided into classes. First, a person taking charge of any boiler or engine as described in Clause 6 of the Bill must hold a first-class certificate; and, secondly, a person taking charge of any other boiler must hold either a first-class certificate or a second-class certificate. He might say that the Bill was supported not only by the Trade Union Congress, but also by the mining population almost to a man, amongst whom there was a great demand for competent men to take charge of this machinery. There were 733,000 men engaged in and about the pits of the country, and 580,689 men were employed underground. The House would see the great importance of having properly-qualified winding men engaged, so that the men who went into the pits might have confidence that their lives were safeguarded. ["Hear, hear!"] He knew there were objections to the Bill. In the Debate on the Bill of 1895 the Member for Wolverhampton spoke of the Bill as "grandmotherly legislation." ["Hear, hear!"] He admitted that strong exception might have been taken to the interference of Parliament in matters of this kind, but this was not the first time that Parliament was asked to interfere. In the Debate which took place in that House in 1862 on the Bill for granting certificates to seagoing engineers, Mr. Milner Gibson, who was in charge of it, used words on which the present Bill might be based. He said:—"Engineers have important duties to perform. Life and property are intrusted to their care, and it is desirable that there should be some test of qualification." It might have been thought that this would have put a limitation to the supply of seagoing engineers, but that was not so, and he believed that it would be the same under this Bill. The second interference which took place was in 1887 on the passing of the Coal Mines Regulation Act, but there was no test of competence, and that was the point which they wished to deal with. He should leave the question of engines and go to that of boilers, and here he thought a stronger case might be made out for examination. He would like to see the Bill for the inspection and registration of boilers passed. He thought that with proper inspection, registration, and management the present evils would be mitigated. The reports of the inspectors of the Board of Trade showed that during the last three years there were 297 boiler explosions in this country, through which 92 persons were killed and 187 injured. The reports showed, moreover, that 117 of these explosions were caused by deterioration or corrosion of the boilers or safety valves, 86 by ignorance or neglect of the attendants, 76 by defective construction, and 18 by miscellaneous circumstances. They contended that if a man were a qualified attendant with technical knowledge he would be able to detect much of the deterioration which took place at present. There was an enormous risk from these explosions. In 1895, near the town where he lived, there was an explosion of 12 boilers owing to a defect in one boiler. In that case there were 12 men killed and eight injured. He spoke from personal experience of the iron and steel trade, having spent 17 or 18 years in it as a workman, and he had known some hundreds of men to leave their work almost at a moment's notice for fear of an explosion of boilers. These men ought to be thoroughly safeguarded in the execution of their work. In the large clubs and hotels in London the boilers for the generation of the steam power necessary for the electricity, &c., were fixed in the basement. If a boiler explosion took place in one of these clubs or hotels, as was possible, it would be a most serious matter, and the men in charge of the boilers should be qualified men. He thought there was a strong case in favour of this Bill, and hoped he had convinced the House that the experiment tried in 1862 with regard to sea-going engineers should be extended, especially to engineers engaged at the pit mouth of the collieries, and also to those in charge of boilers and engines throughout the country. He had great pleasure in moving the Second Reading of the Bill. ["Hear, hear!"]

*SIR ALFRED HICKMAN (Wolverhampton, W.) thought he should be able to show that no case whatever had been made out for this Bill. The explosion cited by the hon. Member, in which 12 persons were killed, arose not from any ignorance on the part of the man in charge or the inspector, but from a defect in the boiler, and the remedy would be an inspection of boilers rather than the examination of attendants. As to the frightful risks which the hon. Member said were run by persons who lived in clubs and hotels, he would point out that the hon. Member had been very careful to exclude all such cases from the operation of the Bill. ["Hear, hear!"] The promoters of the Bill did not believe in it, he thought, for they had exempted Her Majesty's service, steamships, railways, traction and steam rollers, and, above all, they had exempted domestic and agricultural labourers. ["Hear, hear!"] If there was a class of people in charge of boilers more ignorant than another surely it was the agricultural labourer, or the cook or housemaid to whom they intrusted the charge of so many boilers. He thought the Bill came at an extremely inopportune time in view of the proposals which the Government were going to make in regard to employers' liability. He understood that the Employers' Liability Bill, when introduced, would provide for all accidents from whatever cause, except when due to a man's negligence. The hon. Member had referred to the Reports issued by the Board of Trade for three years, but he would take instead last year's Return, which showed that there were only 14 cases of explosions which the inspectors attributed to ignorance or neglect. Of these five took place at sea, to which the Bill would not apply, and of the remaining nine cases only five caused any injury or death. Let them examine these five cases. The first was occasioned by the coil being stopped up. Of course a man did not require to be examined to know that that must not be stopped up. The next case was one where they were short of water. That clearly was a case of neglect. The next was a case where the attendant omitted to drain the steam from the pipes; that was clearly also a case of neglect, and it was a case to which the Act could not apply, because it took place at the works of Messrs. Whitworths. Clause 6 said that the Act did not apply to persons who were under the constant supervision of some qualified persons, and that would clearly apply to Whitworths. And so he found only two cases which such an Act would affect. In one of those cases there was an impact of water, and the inspector said that probably the valve was opened suddenly; and the only remaining case was where a boiler was short of water, and the poor fellow who attended to it was killed. In that instance the inspector said the accident probably arose from some misapprehension on his part. So the whole of this enormous case which had been presented to them resolved itself into one man killed and one man injured, and it was very doubtful even if in those cases any examination would have prevented the accidents happening. ["Hear, hear!"] On the other hand, look at the infliction upon trade which such a Bill would cause. Every engineer in charge of an engine of five horse power must be a certificated person. He dared say that in any ordinary works there would perhaps be 100 engineers of that sort, and everyone must have a certificate, and supposing one man stayed away for a day, they must have a duplicate. At any rate they must have a large number of additional certificated men. Then look at the expense in which those poor fellows would be involved in presenting themselves say in London for examination.

*MR. J. WILSON (Durham, Mid) said the Bill only contemplated the examination of engineers at winding engines at the pit mouth.

*SIR A. HICKMAN: That is not in the Bill.

*MR. J. SAMUEL: Look at Clause 6.

*SIR A. HICKMAN said that Clause 6 provided that persons taking control of any boiler or engine not confined to pits, of five horse power or upwards, must hold a certificate, and in order to present himself in London say, for examination, for the purpose of obtaining such certificate, a man would be involved in an outlay of 30s. or £2. That he considered a very serious imposition. ["Hear, hear!"] But if the examination did not take place in London they would want an army of travelling examiners, and was the Home Office prepared to provide those examiners to go throughout the country? It was quite certain that if the Bill were to become law that no hon. Gentleman connected with it would be able to show his face in the Black Country as a candidate, and if he did he was sure he would have no chance of being returned. [*Cheers and laughter.*] The main objections to the Bill were, first, that it was not wanted, and, second, that it was mischievous because it removed the responsibility from those persons who ought to bear it to those persons who ought not to bear it. ["Hear, hear!"] He challenged the promoters of the Bill to produce one single instance either of death or injury to life that this Bill would prevent or affect in any way whatever. There was more injury from accidents in the streets of London in a single day than was occasioned by boiler tenders in years; but would hon. Members propose that every driver of a vehicle must pass an examination, or would they contend that he would be any better for passing it? He trusted the House would not pass the Bill, and he begged to move to leave out the word "now," and at the end of the Question to add the words "upon this day six months."

MR. G. W. WOLFF (Belfast, E.) seconded the Amendment for the rejection of the Bill. The Bill, he said, was intended to save loss of life and prevent injury by explosions of boilers, but if passed in its present form it would result in much hardship and inconvenience, and would interfere with the arrangements at present existing in regard to the control of engines and boilers. He was quite willing to admit that no amount of inconvenience caused by the Bill should be allowed to stand in its way if it could be shown that the passing of it would really save life and injury, and he did not think anybody in that House would hesitate to support it if he thought that result would be secured. But he might say, on the other hand, that no statistics had been placed before them which would make out that to be the case. They had no reason to believe that the accidents alluded to would have been prevented by it, and before they said that the Measure would prevent loss of life and explosions he thought the promoters of it should show the House the number of men who had lost their lives or who had been injured by the absence of such a Bill. [" Hear, hear! "] He was perfectly convinced that no examination would diminish the number of accidents which occurred. All those things happened, if not through defects of construction through the negligence of the men, and the fact of a man having passed an examination would not make any difference. The number of men employed at boilers at the pit mouth had been referred to, and the number of people who worked in mines affected thereby had been alluded to, but on the railways of the country the proportion was much higher, and yet no provision was made in the Bill in regard to them. Why had they been left out? The fact of the matter was, he was entirely of the opinion of his hon. Friend the Member for Wolverhampton, that hon. Members who brought in this Bill year by year had no faith in it themselves. [" Hear, hear! "] When it first came in every kind of boiler was included, but each year the Bill was whittled down smaller and smaller. He objected to the Bill because it was unnecessary, because it would do no good, and because, if it was to be a good Bill it should be infinitely more extensive than it was now. If the Bill was to become law it must be a Bill dealing with boiler attendants universally. They must include locomotive engineers, those on ships, and those who had charge of domestic boilers and boilers for agricultural purposes. Either make it a universal Bill—and then it would be so large that, in his opinion, it would never be carried—or abandon it altogether. In his humble opinion it was not wanted, would very much interfere with trade, and the sooner it was given up the better. [*Cheers.*]

*Mr. JOHN BURNS (Battersea) said he wished to put briefly before the House one or two reasons why he supported the Bill, but before doing so he would endeavour to remove the somewhat captious objections that had been taken to the principle of the Bill. Whenever a wide and comprehensive Measure dealing with a large subject was brought in, the promoters were told that they were utopian and impracticable; whenever a modest practical Bill was introduced it was described as ridiculous. He contended that the Bill before the House, objectionable though it might be in one or two minor respects and capable of improvement in others, was a practical demand that erred on the side of moderation; and if the Bill was ridiculous and unworkable, as was contended by its opponents, the responsibility for that rested with the past opponents of the principle of the Measure—in a modified form with the present opponents of it—who for the last 10 years had caused the promoters to whittle away many of its most important features. A more ingenious argument that was to be used against the Bill was that there was not a case dealt with in it which was not covered by another and, of course, a better Bill not now before the House. When Gentlemen were unsuccessful in the ballot there was no more convenient argument than to say that a Bill under discussion was no good at all, but if worked in with another Measure not before the House would be a perfect Bill. The House was, however, now dealing with the Bill before it, with all its virtues and all its defects on its head, and the way out of that difficulty was to send the Bill to the Grand Committee, where its defects might be remedied. He believed, at any rate, that the principle of the Bill was right—[" Hear, hear! "]—and what there was indefinite and doubtful in it could be threshed out in Grand Committee. [" Hear, hear! "] He always listened to the hon. Member for Belfast with respect and attention on industrial matters, and in nine cases out of twelve they had co-operated together; but in this case the hon. Member represented the obstinate juryman, and said that this Bill was not necessary because there had been an accident on the *Blenheim.* That, however, was not an argument for rejecting the Bill, because it did not apply to ironclads. Another argument used by the hon. Member against the Bill was that it did not include locomotives; but he thought that locomotives were properly omitted, because locomotives were inspected every day by the foreman erector, the foreman fitter, and the foreman cleaner, before the engineers and firemen took them out. They got the most perfect form of inspection. The hon. Member also said that the Bill ought to be opposed because it did not include all classes of engines. But it was not necessary to include all those engines which were at present under the inspection of the Board of Trade on seagoing vessels, on which every engineer, from the first to the eighth, had to pass a very stiff examination. When this Bill was introduced as a universal measure, it was mutilated and destroyed, and if the promoters of the present Bill were to carry out the wishes of some hon. Members they would get no Bill at all. He believed that 95 per cent. of the men who now looked after boilers and engines would be able, without much trouble, to go through an examination; and if the remaining 5 per cent. could not, that was an argument for not allowing people in a factory or passengers on a river steamer, without a Board of Trade certificate, to be exposed to injury through their ignorance. With regard to hotels and flats, he thought the latter term was more applicable to those persons who were content to live in rooms situated over boilers which were frequently attended by men who had no qualification for the work—["Hear, hear!" *and laughter*]—and the fact that these boilers were so attended was an argument for stiffening the qualification. An argument used by the hon. Member for Wolverhampton was that agricultural machinery was one of the most fruitful sources of boiler accidents, and that it was not included in the Bill. He regretted very much that that was so, and two years ago he had asked the House to include agricultural machinery. Accidents in connection with traction engines, threshing machines and reaping machines were of frequent occurrence, and they were largely due to the ignorance of the people in charge of the machines, and sometimes, unfortunately, of the owner. The Board of Trade inspector in his report, said:—

> "I have again to observe that many of these explosions have occurred through ignorance."

What ignorance? The kind of ignorance he had seen displayed when he had been repairing threshing machines, reaping machines, and mills. He had himself come across manifestations of ignorance when he had repaired threshing machines, water mill machinery, and flour mill machinery. He had known cases of the purchase by impecunious farmers of threshing machines and portable engines 10, 15, and even 20 years old. In these cases there was no proper inspection. He had seen a poor agricultural labourer, in the absence of the driver of an engine, hang scythes and other implements on the safety valve, believing that the more he could depress the safety valve the more he would increase the speed. The labourer did not understand that he was jeopardising his own life and the lives of the reapers near him. In the Board of Trade Report on explosions, 1896, a case was mentioned where a boiler in a farm engine was worked for 33 years without inspection. The boiler at last exploded with fatal results, and upon examination it was found that a longitudinal seam, originally the thickness of a plate, had been reduced to the size of a knife's edge. Such cases supplied an argument for including in the scope of the Bill agricultural boilers and machinery. He was glad to know that boilers and machinery in factories and workshops were improving. This was partly due to the aggregation of industrial capital in fewer hands. More pains were taken, business men recognising that it was unsafe to employ incompetent servants, and wasteful to give £1 a week to a man who might blunder. But there was still a great number of small manufacturers who did not take the same trouble as was taken in well-equipped manufactories, and it was right to afford protection to the people whom they employed. With regard to miners, he admitted that, having regard only to what had occurred in 1896, as strong a case could not be made out for applying the Bill to them. But there was one boiler explosion in 1896 in connection with mining machinery, and that was one explosion too many. The House would recollect the Hartley colliery accident some years ago, when 200 men were killed through the cracking of a beam that fell down into the pit. He believed that if the engine had been properly attended to the crack would have been detected, and if, instead of a cast iron beam, there had been a beam of malleable iron or wrought steel the accident would not have occurred. The engines and boilers connected with mines, down which 2,000 or 3,000 men went, ought not to be in the hands of incompetent persons. There was frequently in mines a susceptibility to panic, in consequence of the mere stopping of an engine through an accident to the boiler. The introduction of this Bill was amply justified by statistics. In 14 years 376 men had been killed by boiler explosions and 837 injured. In 1896 the number of killed and injured amounted to 79. Thirty-nine of these cases occurred on board vessels to which the Bill did not apply. That could not be used as an argument for killing the Bill, but it might be an argument for extending its scope. Then accidents and explosions sometimes occurred in connection with tramways, and he thought the Board of Trade ought to apply, in the case of traction engines drawing passengers, the same regulations as the Department applied to small vessels. The solicitor to the Board of Trade had stated that as long as a boiler did not leak people appeared to think that it was safe enough to work. That in itself constituted a sufficient justification for the introduction of this Bill. Its scope might be enlarged with advantage, as he had endeavoured to point out, and he trusted that it would be read a Second time and sent to a Grand Committee.

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE HOME DEPARTMENT (Mr. JESSE COLLINGS, Birmingham, Bordesley) in explaining the views of the Government, said that any Bill which aimed at the reduction of accidents was bound to meet with the greatest sympathy from the Government. They were, however, at the same time compelled to look at the provisions of such a Measure with the greatest care, and to see how they could afford any assistance in carrying such a Measure into law. In its present shape the Bill excluded agricultural engines, and locomotives, while the engines of mills, mines, and factories were dealt with. But all the arguments which had been adduced in support of the Bill, and, indeed, the common sense of every one, showed that as it stood it was but the thin end of the wedge, and if they admitted that the Bill would stop accidents to the extent alleged, there was no argument to prevent its extension to other kinds of engines, even to the extent of gas, petroleum, and electric engines. [*Cheers.*] He also understood that all ship engines were excluded, though he could not find that it excluded shipping in general.

*MR. J. SAMUEL: It is the intention of the promoters to exclude the mercantile marine altogether. They will do that in Committee.

MR. JESSE COLLINGS said that at present the whole responsibility with regard to engines and boilers rested upon the owner. He had the responsibility of finding the proper and competent men to look after the engines, and the last speaker had borne testimony to the efficacy of the results. Not only were the manufacturers and owners actuated by a natural desire to preserve from destruction their valuable property, but they had also to consider the result of any accident that might occur through not having competent men. In the event of accident the owners were liable not only to heavy fines, but to the payment of heavy costs, in addition to the discredit of failure to carry out the duty which the law cast upon them. The Act of 1882 gave the Board of Trade power to order a preliminary inquiry into every explosion. Afterwards there was a formal investigation by Commissioners, who were men of the ablest mechanical character; and they were accompanied by a lawyer. Their powers were extensive, for they could ask for the production of books, put witnesses on oath, and order costs to be paid and penalties imposed. Therefore, as far as this class of boilers was concerned, the owners were liable to penalties and costs. The mover of the Bill said that the principal object was to deal with engines in coal mines. But there were a far stronger set of regulations and restrictions applied. The Coal Mines Regulation Act of 1887 was founded on the evidence taken by a Commission which sat five years. Very great precautions were taken in a variety of ways under that Act to prevent accidents.

*MR. J. WILSON (Durham, Mid): Will the right hon. Gentleman explain the rules that relate to boilers and engines and to the men in charge of them?

MR. JESSE COLLINGS said that one of the governing rules was that the employer was obliged to have a competent man, whose competency, moreover, did not depend on the certificate issued at Whitehall. There were several points of drafting, however, which it was difficult for the Government to understand. There was a good deal of anomaly in the Bill, and the whole burden was apparently thrown on the unfortunate Home Secretary. It was, for example, the duty of the Home Secretary to be satisfied not only with the knowledge and physical ability of the candidate, but also with his character and experience. This was a tremendous responsibility to put upon a department, and hon. Gentlemen who were anxious to secure the efficient protection of the men must admit that the result of the Home Secretary's action could be of the most perfunctory character only, void of any guarantee whatever as to the particular qualities which they were all desirous to secure. ["Hear, hear!"] At present the head of a factory could, by consultation with his manager, choose the best men for taking charge of steam engines, but under this Bill his choice would be limited to the men who had certificates, and the best men might not be among them.

MR. BURNS asked whether the right hon. Gentleman was aware that employers, to their credit, were sending their engineers to technical schools?

MR. JESSE COLLINGS said that he was quite aware of that. As to the "character" of the men, that, he supposed, meant their steadiness and sobriety. But suppose the Home Secretary, on the strength of a couple of testimonials, gave this certificate of character, what was there to guard against the possibility that three or six months after it had been granted the man who still had it in his pocket would no longer deserve it?

*MR. J. SAMUEL: The certificate can be withdrawn.

MR. JESSE COLLINGS asked how the Home Secretary was to know whether or not the certificate should be withdrawn in each of 200,000 cases. ["Hear, hear!"] As for the Redcar accident which had been mentioned, that was one which the Bill would not touch at all. There were 12 killed and eight injured in that accident, and the Board of Trade Inquiry held the owners liable, not for the ignorance of their engineer, but for his failure to insist on the boilers being condemned when he knew that they were in a dangerous condition.

*MR. SAMUEL said that he referred to the case to show the risk to the workmen.

MR. JESSE COLLINGS said that the proposed certificates were to prevent ignorance on the part of the engineers. In this case the man had full knowledge. His employers were fined £200 and costs.

MR. BURNS: They will get a better man next time.

MR. JESSE COLLINGS agreed; but he pointed out that if the owners could have urged the excuse that their man in charge had a certificate from the Home Office they might have escaped scot free. He would take the returns of accidents for one year—that ending June 30, 1895, which was the worst that could be chosen. In that year there were 114 explosions, but 78 of these were connected with farm, locomotive, and domestic engines. Therefore there were only 36 to which this Bill would apply; and out of the 43 persons killed and injured altogether, six belonged to the other 78 cases. But in looking to the cause of the remaining 36 accidents, it would be found that hardly any of them resulted from the ignorance with which alone the proposed certificate was concerned. Was it not obvious that, by relieving the employer from the responsibilities which were now imposed on him in respect of accidents, accidents might be increased? The Government were anxious to support any Bill which would save even one life or one limb, but he was sorry to say that they could not support this Bill, because they believed it to be opposed to the interests of the men and to be a departure from the policy of the Home Office, which was to increase rather than to decrease the responsibility of employers. The inspection of boilers was, of course, quite a different thing from the granting of certificates of character, and the latter proposal, the Government believed, would only tend to increase the number of explosions.

MR. JAMES BRYCE (Aberdeen, S.) said that he regretted the conclusion to which the Government had come. The question was not a new one. A Bill similar to this had been introduced for many years past. In 1895 good fortune in the ballot enabled the promoters of the Bill to secure a Second Reading, and that without a Division, even though the Bill of that year was more extensive than the present Bill. In the circumstances the House ought to have had some better reply to the arguments in favour of the Bill than the old stock argument, a hundred times advanced and a hundred times overruled, that it would diminish responsibility by introducing Government security. If that argument had been listened to they would not have had many provisions of the Factory Acts, the inspection and certificates of examination of the Board of Trade for marine vessels, and many of the best securities under which industry was carried on and loss of life and limb greatly diminished. [*Cheers.*] The objection taken to the Bill of 1895 was that it was too large; in the present case the objection was that the Bill was too small. As to the objection that it did not include engine drivers on railway locomotives, he would point out that there was a great difference between a great industry like that of railways and the isolated engines and boilers, mostly in small concerns, to which the Bill was intended to apply. It was the interest of railway companies not only to employ the most competent locomotive engineers and firemen, but also to subject their locomotives to regular inspection. And when it was alleged that accidents arose largely from neglect rather than want of knowledge, he replied, in the first place, that the reports of numbers of inquiries into accidents showed that want of knowledge really was the cause rather than neglect; and they had the weighty deliverance in a Board of Trade document that "many of these explosions have occurred through ignorance."

*SIR A. HICKMAN: The only instances of any explosion through ignorance are in the case of agricultural engines.

MR. BRYCE did not think that was so. The observation was not so restricted. Apart from that, neglect and ignorance were more closely connected than at first sight appeared. A competent man would be careful where an ignorant man would not be; he knew where danger lay. And he had the further advantage that his knowledge enabled him to watch his boiler and engine from time to time and to see when it was getting into a dangerous condition, and to report to his employer accordingly. The ignorant man could not do that. All the objections to the Bill, as far as he could see, came from those who represented or professed to represent the views of employers. ["No!"] He had not heard in the Debate anyone competent to express the views of the workmen, who were specially concerned because their lives were in danger, raise a voice against the principle of the Bill. At the same time, there were several details of the Bill which required attention. Even the immense zeal and capacity of the Secretary of State and his staff of the Home Office would not be able to undertake the functions sought to be imposed by Section 8 as to granting certificates of competency. It would be necessary to define more exactly the relative functions of the Board of Trade and Secretary of State in these matters. It would be necessary also to provide that the examinations should be held, if possible, at various convenient centres in the country—[*cheers*]—as well as in London; and he did not see why those who conducted other Government Department examinations should not conduct the examinations under the Bill. Passing from details, he thought, if the Government were anxious to carry out their programme of social legislation, they were making a bad beginning in opposing a Bill of this kind. There was no Bill which was more commended by the general course of preventive legislation, no Bill more earnestly desired by those who had the best occasion to know existing difficulties and dangers, and a large body of opinion which had called for the Bill would be grievously disappointed if the House now reversed its unanimous decision of 1895, and if it neglected now the opportunity of endeavouring to diminish the number of accidents which were so great a blot and cause of distress in our industrial system. [*Cheers.*]

MR. GEORGE WHITELEY (Stockport) was in no way enamoured of the Bill, and should vote against it. It would create the maximum of inconvenience and interference with the minimum of advantage for all concerned. When they had eliminated the clauses which were objectionable and those which were capable of improvement they had almost eviscerated the Bill. He was very suspicious of these continual efforts on the part, he would not say of faddists, but of hon. Members, to manage manufacturers' affairs. Any hon. Member who had anything to do with mills or workshops must know that there were in a mill or a workshop men fully acquainted with every part of the engine. Under this Bill those men would be precluded from driving the engine in case of the illness of the regular engineer, although they were infinitely more capable of doing the work than any outside certificated man who could be got on the spur of the moment. It was just the same in the case of boilers. The hon. Member who proposed the Second Reading based his argument mainly upon the necessity for the Bill in the case of the mining industry. He was not competent to deal with mining matters, but he asked hon. Members why, if they wanted the Bill for the mining industry, they did not limit it to that industry? ["Hear, hear!"] Most of the arguments of the hon. Member for Battersea appeared to be arguments rather in favour of the Bill for the compulsory insurance of boilers. They certainly were not germane to this Bill. He hoped that without much more delay the House would reject this Bill, and enable them to get on with more important business.

*MR. C. FENWICK (Northumberland, Wansbeck) said he was surprised to find that the only argument which the Under Secretary for the Home Department gave in support of the attitude which the Government intended to take up was that the operation of the Bill would weaken the responsibility of the employer and increase the liability to accidents. The right hon. Gentleman had had some experience at the Home Office, and therefore must know something concerning the operations of the Mines Regulation Act. One of the most important provisions of that Act was the compulsory appointment of certificated managers, both of the first and second class. Would the right hon. Gentleman say that the compulsory appointment of certificated managers had weakened the responsibility of the coal-owners, or tended to increase the number of accidents? No; he must know that the provision had had the contrary effect. The Government proposed to introduce a Measure which some people thought would weaken the responsibility of employers and tend to increase the number of accidents. He hoped that when that Bill was introduced they would be able to count upon the support of his right hon. Friend. ["Hear, hear!"] It was contended, notably by the hon. Member for Belfast, that there was no demand for this Bill. Very few employers wanted it, for the simple reason, as avowed by the hon. Member who had just spoken, that, in their opinion, it would create the maximum of inconvenience. But was there one hon. Member who would say that any body of working men had ever passed a resolution in opposition to the Bill? At every Trades Union Congress for the last 18 or 19 years the principle of the Bill had been unanimously approved. Who were the people who asked for this legislation? They were the working men, whose lives and limbs were at stake. They might be wrong, but they were of opinion that the operation of such a Bill would do much to increase their safety whilst engaged in their daily avocation. The hon. Member who moved the rejection of the Bill argued that because the Government intended to introduce a Measure providing universal insurance, or making provision for all accidents, it was unnecessary to take precautionary measures such as those now suggested. That seemed to him a ridiculous argument. The workmen did not want compensation. They would gladly do without compensation for accidents. What they wanted were reasonable precautions against accidents. What monetary grant would compensate a widow and her children for the loss of their bread-winner? ["Hear, hear!"] Reference had been made to the scarcity of the accidents that would be touched by this Bill as reported upon last year by Her Majesty's Inspectors. But why take last year? He admitted willingly that the reports of last year were favourable as compared with those of previous years. [MR. COLLINGS: "I took the year before; a worse year."] The reports of last year indicated greater care and precaution on the part of employers. It must be remembered that the principle upon which the Bill was founded had been before the House for a period extending into the teens of years. The details of the Bill might be open to objection, but the right hon. Gentleman was careful to avoid any criticism of the principle of the Measure—namely, that duly qualified persons should be appointed to take charge of boilers.

MR. JESSE COLLINGS said that that was the principle he actually contended for, but he maintained that that principle was more effectually secured by the responsibility and the pains and penalties now placed on the employer, than it would be by a mere certificate issued in a perfunctory manner by the Home Office.

*Mr. FENWICK said he willingly accepted the explanation given by the right hon. Gentleman. He thought, however, that the Under Secretary gave the case of the coal-owners being compelled to secure a competent man to take charge of the winding engine as an example. But was there any machinery for the enforcement of that provision? There was no standard set up as to efficiency. No one was to determine whether a man was a fit or competent person except the employer himself. When an accident occurred involving the loss of a limb or the life of a workman it was too late in the day to hold an inquiry to ascertain whether the person appointed in charge of the engine was an efficient person. [" Hear, hear! "] What was wanted was that the House should undertake, as far as it possibly could, to insure that the men who took charge of winding engines at collieries, and the boilers that were feeding and supplying the energy of those engines, should be men who had some practical and technical knowledge of the machines over which they were placed in charge. [" Hear, hear! "] In his judgment that was a moderate and reasonable request, and he confessed that he was much surprised, remembering that the House had indorsed the principle of the Bill on a previous occasion, to find that a Member of the Government—of a Government pledged to pass social legislation—had stated that a direct negative would be given to the Measure. [" Hear, hear! "] It was said by the hon. Member who moved the rejection of the Bill that none of its friends and promoters would dare to stand as a candidate in the Black Country if the Second Reading of the Bill were carried. He should rather be surprised to find that hon. Members who voted against the Bill would be willing to challenge a vote of confidence from the workmen in their constituencies. [" Hear, hear! "] He challenged any hon. Member to state whether any responsible body of workmen in his constituency had ever appealed to him to vote against the Measure. [" Hear, hear! "] He trusted that the House would assent to the Second Reading of the Bill, notwithstanding the opposition of the Under Secretary for the Home Department, because, in the opinion of Her Majesty's Inspectors, and particularly the inspectors of mines, it was a Measure urgently required. [" Hear, hear! "] Her Majesty's Inspector for Devon and Cornwall called attention in one Report to a positive case of overwinding, and he said that this case was due to the carelessness, neglect, and incompetency of the man appointed to take charge of the engine. He even went further, and said he believed that these accidents would continue to be of frequent occurrence until Parliament insisted on precautions being taken to compel employers to appoint certificated persons to take charge of winding engines. [" Hear, hear! "] In this opinion other inspectors concurred. He should like to quote one further remark from the Inspector for Devon and Cornwall. The Inspector said:—

> " In my opinion men placed in charge of engines, especially in cases where numbers of lives are intrusted to their care, to say nothing of valuable property, should be forced to pass an examination before some competent Board, and have certificates granted to them before being allowed to take charge."

In reference to the statement about the hardship of compelling workmen to come up to London for examination to obtain their certificates, the objection was unfounded. The promoters of the Bill contemplated nothing of the kind. The County Boards which existed in every mining county might be utilised for the purpose. [" Hear, hear! "] But, after all, these were only matters of detail which did not affect the principle of the Bill, and which might find a solution in the Grand Committee on Trade, and he could only repeat that, notwithstanding the speech of the right hon. Gentleman the Under Secretary, the House would pass the Second Reading of the Bill.

*Colonel MELLOR (Lancashire, Radcliffe) said it appeared to him that nearly all the arguments that had been advanced by the advocates of the Bill would go to support the Bill which would shortly be introduced by the hon. Member for North-west Manchester (Sir W. Houldsworth). He ventured to say that no amount of technical instruction, and no certificate, would enable a boiler-minder, or "tenter," as he was called in Lancashire, to detect accidents of the kind referred to as hon. Gentlemen seemed to think. Only a thorough inspection of steam boilers, inside and outside, internally and externally, would secure the employés and the public from accident, and for a Bill of this character he had always given, and should always give, his warmest support. But the qualities needed to insure immunity from accident depended, not so much upon technical knowledge—which was very good in its way—as upon steadiness, sobriety, watchfulness, and care. ["Hear, hear!"] But those were moral qualities which no extent of technical knowledge would supply. ["Hear, hear!"] The hon. Member for Battersea had referred to an accident that happened to a steam engine through a cast iron beam giving way, and he said that if there had been a competent engineer in charge of the engine the defect in the beam would have been detected and the accident prevented. He had had a long experience of engines and boilers, and he ventured to say that in this case the hon. Member was entirely mistaken. ["Hear, hear!" *and a laugh.*] A cast iron beam was just one of those things in which a defect would not be detected. When such a beam failed, it would fail at once, and come down without warning. If the beam had been of malleable iron or of steel, some warning of the accident might have been perceived, but not with a cast iron beam. ["Hear, hear!"] The facts of nearly all the cases of accident that had been stated to the House in regard to steam boilers went to show that the accidents were due, not to the fault of the men in charge, but to their employers, through having used engines or boilers that were not fit to be used—["hear, hear!"]—and the employers in such circumstances were the men who should be held responsible. ["Hear, hear!"] The most serious objection he had to the Bill was that it did not apply to the particular cases in which it was known that incompetent men were placed in charge of engines and boilers—he referred especially to the men employed on agricultural and traction engines. All those men and the engines and boilers of which they were in charge were excluded from the Bill. He agreed with the hon. Member for Battersea that the Bill would have been of a much stronger character if they had been included in the Measure. If the promoters of the Bill had brought in a small Measure affecting the winding engines and boilers of collieries, they would undoubtedly have made out a strong case. He represented a constituency in which there were about 1,500 miners who had votes, and he could only say, in reply to the hon. Member who spoke last, that he had not received any communication from them, asking him to vote either for or against the Bill. In fact, he had grave doubts whether the men in charge of the colliery winding engines would look with any favour on the Bill. If, as he had already said, the promoters of the Bill had brought in a simple Measure dealing with such engines, he should have felt it his duty to consult his constituents concerning it, because, after all, the men in charge of colliery engines were in a different position to men in charge of engines in any other form of industry. ["Hear, hear!"] Every hour of the day those men had the lives of other men in their hands, and regard should be paid to that very important fact. ["Hear, hear!"] He felt, however, that he could not vote for the Bill in its present form.

MR. W. ALLAN (Gateshead) said he had always looked upon the Under Secretary for the Home Office as one who had full sympathy with the working classes of this country in their various phases and conditions, but he had been dissillusioned that afternoon by the right hon. Gentleman's expressions, and by the manner in which he had objected to the Bill. He began his remarks by using that old, time-worn phrase, "the thin end of the wedge." He wanted to know what the right hon. Gentleman meant by that phrase. What was the wedge intended to raise? Was it the thin end of the wedge of making better men, saving life, having less accidents? Was it the thin end of the wedge of giving them higher technical education?

MR. JESSE COLLINGS said he was speaking of the limitation of the Bill, and he said that if it were passed it must be extended to all those engines which were now excluded. In that sense he said it was the thin end of the wedge.

MR. ALLAN said he was glad the right hon. Gentleman had such a breadth of mind as to take into his purview all the other engines. He hoped the day was not far distant when there would not be a man who was intrusted with machinery of this nature but what would know what the machine was that he was intrusted with. ["Hear, hear!"] It was the aim of these workmen—and he spoke as an employer—to better their condition, to go to technical schools at night, and to learn all the theory of their work, and, forsooth, they were not to be recognised by a Government certificate from the Board of Trade. The right hon. Gentleman also spoke about the character of the men, and said a written character would be given by the two sponsors of the men. What did he mean by that? They knew there was not an engineer who went to pass the Board of Trade who would not carry his character with him.

MR. JESSE COLLINGS: I did not say he did not.

MR. ALLAN: No, but the right hon. Gentleman seemed to cast a doubt upon the character of these men.

MR. JESSE COLLINGS said he must object to this no doubt unintentional but none the less absolute misrepresentation of what he said. He referred to the clause in the Bill in which it was provided that the Home Secretary should, where he received a testimonial as to character and physical ability and so forth, from two persons, issue a certificate. He was obliged to do it. [HON. MEMBERS: "Not obliged!"] Certainly, he must issue it; and what he said was that the Home Secretary could not possibly know a thing about the character beyond what was stated in the recommendations.

MR. ALLAN said that, according to his notes, the right hon. Gentleman said:—

> "The Home Secretary would have to issue a certificate on the receipt of a character and other qualifications of the man; but what was to become of the man if he was to get drunk six months after he got his character?"

He wanted to ask the right hon. Gentleman whether the Board of Trade officials declined to take the characters which the engineers took when they went there, or whether the officials declined the characters when the candidates were going to pass for the Civil Service? They must go to the bed-rock of what was required. They were not living in an old age; they were living in a new age, and they wanted progress. The right hon. Gentleman said the Bill would relieve an employer of responsibility where a certificate was granted to his engineman. He denied that. He knew it for a fact that no certificate that was ever given to a captain, or mate, or engineer, or any officer on board ship, could exempt an owner from damages or liability, whatever might happen. Certificates did not give exemption from liability. Upon no consideration could that argument be entertained. He agreed with the right hon. Gentleman that this matter would come more properly under the purview of the Board of Trade than of the Home Office. The right hon. Gentleman talked about this being grandmotherly legislation, but what was the legislation they were under at this moment for boilers and engines? They could could not build a boiler without the Board of Trade rules, without they were inspected by Board of Trade inspectors or Lloyd's inspectors; they could not do anything in engineering without coming under the purview of the Board of Trade or Lloyd's. This "grandmotherly legislation" extended to almost every phase of engineering, and he would ask the right hon. Gentleman, why should not a man who had charge of an engine, where there were, perhaps, hundreds of lives at stake, have a certificate the same as a man who was running a steamer which did not carry passengers? ["Hear, hear!"] He thought the whole of the arguments of the right hon. Gentleman against this Measure were indeed very weak, very illogical, and not altogether up to date. He once more appealed to the House, as he did more than two years ago, to pass this little Bill. There were no objectionable features in it at all—nothing to which an employer could object. He hoped the House would give the Bill a Second Reading, and then, when it got before the Committee, its weaknesses and shortcomings could be hammered into shape. If they did this he felt sure that they would have done a great amount of good to a great many admirable, honourable working men in this country, who wanted to better their position by passing an examination at the hands of the Board of Trade.

MR. C. B. RENSHAW (Renfrew, W.) said the crudities and absurd anomalies of the Bill had been acknowledged on both sides of the House, but it was urged by its supporters that the deliberations of the Standing Committee would set these matters right. It was true a similar Bill in 1895 passed its Second Reading unanimously, but why was that? The hon. Member for Gateshead had charge of the

Bill, and threw most of the cargo in the Bill overboard before the Bill was read, and then there was a distinct understanding that the Bill should go before a Select Committee, and that evidence should be taken and statistics examined. A more hopeless case for a Bill, so far as statistics were concerned, had never been presented to the House. As a basis for any legislation of this kind the House should know the number of men who would be affected by the Bill, and the number of serious accidents over a given period. With such facts and figures to go upon the House might consider legislative proposals without running the risks the passing of such a crude Measure as this would involve. The Bill had been so riddled by criticism that it would be unnecessary to occupy the attention of the House with details. The vagueness of its definitions would constitute grave danger to every employer of labour. To show how little the Bill was understood the hon. Member who introduced it referred to the case of boilers at hotels and clubs, but these were distinctly excluded from the Bill. The exclusion of locomotives on railways had been alluded to, and they were excluded, but the Bill did not refer to locomotives at all. It was provided that the Bill should not apply to any boiler or engine used by a railway company, and that excluded a great deal more than locomotives. Did this not indicate that the promoters of the Bill found so much opposition from the railway interest that they excluded railways altogether? He was as anxious as any Member that everything possible should be done for the prevention of accidents in mines and factories, but he believed there was no need of such legislation as this. The regulations of the Mines Regulation Act of 1887 as to the competency of persons employed were of the most stringent character, and serious penalties were attached to breaches of these regulations.

*MR. J. WILSON (Durham, Mid): Will the hon. Member say what is the penalty for employing an incompetent man for a winding engine?

MR. RENSHAW said, by Section 50 of the Coal Mines Regulation Act, 1887, any person contravening the rules was liable to fine, and Section 60 dealt with wilful neglect, and he presumed that would cover the case of putting an incompetent man in charge.

*MR. J. WILSON (Durham, Mid): Who is to judge the competency?

MR. RENSHAW said that was for the employer, and a court of justice would decide if there had been wilful negligence. He had no doubt of the fairness of the court.

MR. BURNS: But that is after the accident.

MR. RENSHAW said steps of this kind could not be taken until after inquiry, and there would be no inquiry before an accident. Preventive measures might be taken, but these were better secured by the responsibility of the employer than by certificates. As an employer he recognised that the gravest responsibility rested upon those who engaged men to take charge of machines, not only that they should be competent, but that they should be sober, trustworthy, steady men. Let the House consider the position of a manager at a pit-head or in a factory when he found a certified man on duty in a state of intoxication. He would have to send the man away and would have to incur the risk of being fined for employing another man not certified. The Under Secretary for the Home Department had done well in opposing the Bill, and he should certainly vote against the Second Reading.

*MR. THOMAS BURT (Morpeth) said this was a subject in which he had taken great interest for many years, and he knew that workmen in the North, and, indeed, throughout the kingdom, took a very keen interest in the Bill, and wished to see it pass. Resolutions in its favour had been adopted at many Trades Union Congresses, and though he did not say that on that ground alone, or chiefly on that ground, there was sufficient reason for passing the Bill, yet he did think that this general and, he might say, unanimous feeling and weight of opinion on the part of workmen who on many other subjects disagreed, ought to be a strong recommendation of the Bill to the favourable consideration of the House. The hon. Member who had just spoken said that the best guarantee against accidents was the employment of sober, steady, trustworthy men. Certainly that was so. But a workman would be none the less trustworthy on account of his being intelligent and thoroughly acquainted with the machinery of which he had charge. ["Hear, hear!"]

He had listened very attentively to the speech of the Under Secretary for the Home Department, and was fully sensible of the right hon. Gentleman's sympathy with the workmen's cause, and his desire to afford protection to them in their work, but he felt great disappointment at the speech and the conclusion the right hon. Gentleman arrived at to oppose the Bill on behalf of the Government. His arguments, if he might say so with respect, were of the most feeble and hackneyed character, they were the old arguments, which had been repeated again and again, that certificates diminished the responsibility of employers. These arguments were heard when the First Mines Act passed on the initiative of Lord Ashley, and they were used when the last Mines Act passed, and, in fact, they were brought forward on every occasion when Measures of this kind were before the House of Commons. With such arguments the Government opposed a Bill which he should have thought they would have been quite willing to send to the Standing Committee on Trade. The Members constituting the present Government in their election addresses laid very considerable emphasis on their desire to deal, not with great constitutional changes or organic reforms, but largely, if not mainly, with questions tending to the social and industrial amelioration of the people. It seemed rather strange in view of that fact, that whenever a Bill came before the House, supported as this was by the working men through all their organisations, without a single dissentient voice, instead of being supported by the Government it should meet with their direct and strenuous hostility. ["Hear, hear!"] He could assure the right hon. Gentleman that his speech and the attitude he had adopted would give very great disappointment to large numbers of working men. ["Hear, hear!"]

*Mr. C. W. CAYZER (Barrow-in-Furness) observed that the late President of the Board of Trade seemed to be under some misapprehension when he stated that this Bill was entirely opposed by the employers on the Government side of the House. If the right hon. Gentleman would refer to the back of the Bill he would there find the name of the hon.

Member for the Kilmarnock Burghs, who was a large employer of labour.

Mr. BRYCE: I did not say entirely. I said that those who had spoken in opposition to the Bill from the other side of the House represented the employers.

*Mr. CAYZER: I understood the right hon. Gentleman to say that the employers on this side of the House were opposed to the Bill.

Mr. BRYCE: No.

*Mr. CAYZER said that in 1895 he voted for the Second Reading of the Bill of that year, as he intended to vote for this Measure. A very strong case had been made out for the Second Reading of the Bill, and he must say he very much regretted to hear the Under Secretary for the Home Department state that the Government were not going to support the Bill, as he did not think the reasons which the right hon. Gentleman had advanced for the course the Government were taking were at all sufficient. One of the chief reasons he gave was the difficulty in granting certificates. He himself did not see why it should be relegated to the Home Department to grant certificates. He rather thought it was the duty of the Board of Trade to do this, as they already granted certificates of competency to engineers in the merchant service. He was certain that since these certificates had been granted it had not diminished the responsibility of the owner, but, on the contrary, he thought it had greatly conduced to the safety and better management of the engines, which were now under the charge of certificated persons. The hon. Member for Stockport gave as his reason for opposing the Bill that he had a great many men in his employ, and if an engine broke down it could easily be put together again by men who did not possess certificates. No doubt the hon. Member had in his employment thoroughly capable men, and it would be no hardship to them if they were sent up for examination in order to obtain certificates. The hon. Member for Renfrewshire said he wanted statistics before he would vote for the Second Reading of this Bill. He thought it would be very difficult to get all the statistics the hon. Member required; but they had sufficient statistics to show that this was a necessary Bill. He did not approve of the whole of its details, but he certainly thought it should have a Second

Reading. Representing as he did a large number of working men engaged at boilers and engines, he knew they were anxious to have the protection which this Bill afforded, and he hoped the House would pass the Second Reading, so that anomalies in the details of the Bill might be removed in Committee.

*MR. J. WILSON (Durham, Mid) expressed the readiness of the promoters and those interested in the Bill to widen its scope if the House should think it desirable, so as to include other classes of engines and boilers. He felt sorry at the official, unsympathetic speech of the Under Secretary for the Home Department. No more official, dry, and rigid statement against this Bill was ever delivered from the Government Bench. If he were an employer of labour sitting on the other side of the House he should carefully canvass and consider and try to ascertain the import of the statement which the hon. Gentleman made and repeated time after time. It was this: give the workman a certificate of competency, it will take away the responsibility from the owners, and accidents will increase. See what that meant! It meant that it needed Acts of Parliament to make the employers anxiously care for the lives of their workmen.

MR. JESSE COLLINGS: I am sorry to interrupt the hon. Gentleman, but I desire to explain. What I stated was this. That at present there were great responsibilities laid on employers which they were compelled to carry out, not from their own sense of what they think good to keep the men in security, but under pains and penalties, fines, and all such things as are contained in the Act of 1887 and other Acts. What I said was this. That if you relieve them from this responsibility and simply give a paper certificate from the Home Office, I would not say that such would happen, but what would be likely to happen was that such responsibilities would be weakened and there would be a danger of an increase of accidents on that account.

*MR. J. WILSON (Durham, Mid) remarked that the right hon. Gentleman the Under Secretary, instead of making better his own position, had really made it worse. He did not know whether the right hon. Gentleman was a lawyer or not, but he hid himself behind the slight reservation that these accidents might increase. Why should they? If they gave the workman a hundred certificates arising out of examinations of competency, why should that relax the care of the employer, and if he had been careful in the past why should he not be equally as careful in the future? The reason he rose was to clear the mist which appeared to hang around the interpretation of the Act of 1887 so far as it was confined to engines. Look at General Rule 24 of that Act, and they would find there was no penalty whatever attached to an employer if he employed an incompetent man. It was competent for an employer to employ any man at an engine provided he was over 22 years of age; but who was to judge of the man's competency? Reference had been made as to the area over which the demand for the Bill extended. There was present in the House a deputation of 20 men or more from every part of England, Wales, and Scotland, charged, as the representatives of the workmen, to advocate the passing of this Bill. The chief point with the deputation was the certification of the skill and ability of the enginemen who wound men up and down the shaft in mines. It was most necessary for the safety of life and limb that competent men should be secured for this responsible work. Let the Home Office not fear the "thin end of the wedge." If the thin end of the wedge was in the right direction it was the duty of the Home Office to drive it home. He once heard a divine say that "original sin" was laziness, and it had been asserted that the Home Office were afraid of taking on its shoulders a further burden of the work. He asked the House to Read the Bill a Second time and refer it to the Grand Committee on Trade, that they might so shape it as to make it most conducive to the safety of the workmen. ["Hear, hear!"]

MR. LEONARD COURTNEY (Cornwall, Bodmin) expressed the pleasure with which he heard the speech of the hon. Member for Barrow. It used to be said that the Conservative Party had in its ranks those who first defended the workman against the employer as regarded the conditions of labour. Member after Member had risen round him to say that that boast could no longer be entertained. [*Opposition cheers.*] The hon. Member for Stockport said, "Why should you interfere with employers? They know their responsibility and duties. Leave them to manage their own business and the interests of the workmen will be consulted." That argument was used when it was proposed to limit the hours of labour, to fence machinery, and improve the ventilation in factories and workshops. Then it was said, "You are going too far," or "You are not going far enough." [*Opposition cheers.*] He had been struck with the analogy drawn as regarded the mercantile marine. Ships were inspected and examined. Did we on this account refrain from requiring the competency of mates and masters to be verified by certificate? ["Hear, hear!"] If it was true that the care of boilers in many cases exposed to perils the lives of the men, it did not need the strong speech of the Member for Durham to recommend the Bill to the House. If competency in the care of ships was necessary to be verified it must be so in the care of boilers. The Home Secretary, whose benevolence was not exceeded by any Member of the House, had been led astray by his head rather than his heart The peculiar sophisms which had betrayed many before had betrayed him now. The Home Secretary said that after a man obtained his certificate he might lose his character by getting drunk and falling into evil habits. Was not the same argument applicable to the masters and mates of merchant ships. Their work depended on their character as well as on their knowledge, and they might lose their characters after receiving their certificates. All the same, it was useful that they should have certificates, and certificates would be useful for those who had charge of engines and boilers. The hon. Member for Renfrew was going to oppose this Bill. Yet two years ago he assented to the Second Reading of a Bill which was much more comprehensive. He himself protested against the notion that opinion on the subject was divided. Happily, however, there were many Members around him who were ready to express their concurrence in the same sentiments. ["Hear, hear!"]

Mr. W. J. GALLOWAY (Manchester, S.W.) said the right hon. Gentleman who had just sat down seemed to him to accuse employers of labour, and particularly Conservative employers of labour, of being absolutely regardless of the welfare of the workmen in their employ. [Mr. Courtney: "No, no."] He submitted that no argument had been adduced to prove that by the granting of these certificates one single life would be saved or one single accident avoided. The right hon. Gentleman and hon. Gentlemen opposite seemed to imagine that employers of labour only employed incompetent men. [*Cries of* "No."]

Mr. COURTNEY said there was a difference between only employing competent men and never employing competent men. ["Hear, hear!"]

Mr. GALLOWAY said he entirely agreed with the right hon. Gentleman, but did he really suggest that any employers of labour wilfully employed incompetent men? Did they believe that a certificate granted by the Home Office was going to prove the competency of a man? If they were going to question a man in front of a boiler and let him show practically whether he understood it or not there might be something in the contention, but a written examination would not be worth the paper it was written on. He thought the discussion had shown that there was a very good case for the Bill of his hon. Friend the Member for West Manchester, and he thought that many accidents to boilers might be avoided where boilers were compulsorily inspected and registered. Hon. Members opposite admitted themselves that this Bill was a wholly new departure in regard to the Home Office, which would have to administer it. That meant that there would have to be a considerable amount of consideration and arrangement at the Home Office for the carrying out of the Bill. He would ask hon. Members whether they would not better serve the cause they had at heart by withdrawing this Bill and bringing in, in conjunction with the Home Office, another Bill which all would be willing to support. He hoped the House would not assent to the Second Reading of the present Bill. It had been said that the Bill of 1895 passed the Second Reading without a division, but the reason was that the hon. Member in charge of it first threw over half his cargo, and then agreed to the Bill being referred to a Select Committee—not to the Grand Committee on

Trade. If the Bill went to a Select Committee they could then have expert evidence adduced. He hoped the appeal he had made would be accepted.

MR. HENRY SETON-KARR (St. Helens) rose to continue the discussion, and was met with cries of "Divide."

MR. J. M. PAULTON (Durham, Bishop Auckland): I beg to move that the Question be now put.

MR. SPEAKER: I hope there will be no necessity for that Motion. ["Hear, hear!"]

MR. SETON-KARR said he had not the slightest intention of talking out the Bill, he rose to support it. ["Hear, hear."] The hon. Member had appealed to the promoters of the Measure to withdraw it, but he thought a Bill in the hand was worth two in the bush. [*Laughter.*] He put no faith in vague promises from the Front Bench on either side of the House. The Bill was a logical and simple one. It was surely important that the men who managed the engines at the top of colliery shafts should be competent men.

MR. W. E. M. TOMLINSON (Preston) was understood to say that that was the law now.

MR. SETON-KARR said they wanted additional security that the men in charge of these engines should be properly competent. The certificates could be easily obtained, and would be a proof that a man was sober and industrious as well as competent.

Question put, "That the word 'now' stand part of the Question."—The House divided:—Ayes, 203; Noes, 137.—(Division List—No. 32—appended.)

The result of the Division was received with prolonged Opposition cheers, and ironical cries of "Resign."

AYES.

Abraham, William (Cork, N.E.)
Abraham, William (Rhondda)
Acland, Rt. Hon. A. H. Dyke
Allan, William (Gateshead)
Allen, Wm. (Newc.-under-Lyme)
Allison, Robert Andrew
Arch, Joseph
Arnold, Alfred
Ascroft, Robert
Asher, Alexander
Ashton, Thomas Gair
Atherley-Jones, L.
Austin, Sir John (Yorkshire)
Baker, Sir John
Balfour, Rt. Hn. J. Blair (Clackm.)
Banes, Major George Edward
Barlow, John Emmott
Bayley, Thomas (Derbyshire)
Beaumont, Wentworth C. B.
Bhownaggree, M. M.
Blake, Edward
Blundell, Colonel Henry
Bolton, Thomas Dolling
Bousfield, William Robert
Bowles, Capt. H. F. (Middlesex)
Brookfield, A. Montagu
Bryce, Rt. Hon. James
Buchanan, Thomas Ryburn
Bullard, Sir Harry
Burns, John
Burt, Thomas
Caldwell, James
Campbell-Bannerman, Sir H.
Causton, Richard Knight
Cayzer, Charles William
Channing, Francis Allston
Clare, Octavius Leigh
Clough, Walter Owen
Cochrane, Hon. Thos. H. A. E.
Coghill, Douglas Harry
Colston, Chas. Edw. H. Athole
Colville, John
Condon, Thomas Joseph
Corbett, A. Cameron (Glasgow)
Courtney, Rt. Hon. Leonard H.
Cozens-Hardy, Herbert Hardy
Crilly, Daniel
Crombie, John William
Cross, Herb. Shepherd (Bolton)
Curran, Thomas B. (Donegal)
Dalbiac, Major Philip Hugh
Dalrymple, Sir Charles
Dalziel, James Henry
Davies, M. Vaughan-(Cardigan)
Davitt, Michael
Denny, Colonel
Dickson-Poynder, Sir John P.
Dillon, John
Dixon, George
Doughty, George
Drage, Geoffrey
Duncombe, Hon. Hubert V.
Dunn, Sir William
Egerton, Hon. A. de Tatton
Ellis, John Edward (Notts)
Ellis, Thos. Edw. (Merionethsh)
Evans, Sir Francis H. (South'ton)
Fenwick, Charles
Ferguson, R. C. Munro (Leith)
Field, William (Dublin)
Firbank, Joseph Thomas
Fitz Wygram, General Sir F.
Flynn, James Christopher
Foster, Sir Walter (Derby Co.)
Fowler, Matthew (Durham)
Gilhooly, James
Gilliat, John Saunders
Goddard, Daniel Ford
Goulding, Edward Alfred
Gourley, Sir Edward Temperley
Graham, Henry Robert
Green, Walford D. (Wednsbry)
Gretton, John
Gull, Sir Cameron
Haldane, Richard Burdon
Harcourt, Rt. Hon. Sir William
Havelock-Allan, General Sir H.
Hayne, Rt. Hon. Charles Seale-
Hazell, Walter
Hedderwick, Thomas Charles H.
Helder, Augustus
Hobhouse, Henry
Holburn, J. G.
Holden, Angus
Holland, Hon. Lionel Raleigh
Howell, William Tudor
Hutton, Alfred E. (Morley)
Isaacson, Frederick Wootton
Jacoby, James Alfred
Jenkins, Sir John Jones
Joicey, Sir James
Jones, David Brynmor (Sw'nse')
Jones, William (C'rn'rvonshire)
Kay-Shuttleworth, Rt. Hn. Sir U.
Kearley, Hudson E.
Kilbride, Denis
King, Sir Henry Seymour
Kinloch, Sir John Geo. Smyth
Knowles, Lees
Lambert, George
Langley, Batty
Laurie, Lieut.-General
Lawson, Sir Wilfrid (Cumb'lnd)
Leese, Sir Joseph F. (Accrington)
Leng, Sir John
Lewis, John Herbert
Llewellyn, Evan H. (Somerset)
Llewelyn, Sir Dillwyn-(Swansa')
Lockwood, Sir Frank (York)
Logan, John William
Lough, Thomas
Luttrell, Hugh Fownes
Macaleese, Daniel
Macdona, John Cumming
Maclean, James Mackenzie
McArthur, William
M'Hugh, Patrick A. (Leitrim)
McKenna, Reginald
McLaren, Charles Benjamin

McLeod, John
Maden, John Henry
Massey-Mainwaring, Hon. W. F.
Mellor, Rt. Hn. J. W. (Yorks.)
Milbank, Powlett Charles John
Milner, Sir Frederick George
Minch, Matthew
Monk, Charles James
Montagu, Sir S. (Whitechapel)
Morgan, J. Lloyd (Carmarthen)
Morrell, George Herbert
Morton, Edward John Chalmers
Mundella, Rt. Hn. Anthony John
Murray, Charles J. (Coventry)
Murray, Col. Wyndham (Bath)
O'Brien, James F. X. (Cork)
O'Brien, Patrick (Kilkenny)
O'Connor, T. P. (Liverpool)
O'Kelly, James
Oldroyd, Mark
Orr-Ewing, Charles Lindsay
Palmer, Sir Charles M. (Durham)
Parnell, John Howard
Paulton, James Mellor
Perks, Robert William
Pickard, Benjamin
Pickersgill, Edward Hare
Pirie, Captain Duncan Vernon
Priestley, Briggs (Yorks.)
Provand, Andrew Dryburgh
Pryce-Jones, Edward
Randell, David
Rankin, James
Rasch, Major Frederic Carne
Reckitt, Harold James
Reid, Sir Robert T.
Richardson, Thomas
Rickett, J. Compton
Roberts, John H. (Denbighs.)
Robertson, Edmund (Dundee)
Roche, Hon. James (East Kerry)
Rollit, Sir Albert Kaye
Samuel, Harry S. (Limehouse)
Sandys, Lieut.-Col. Thos. Myles
Savory, Sir Joseph
Schwann, Charles E.
Shaw, Charles Edw. (Stafford)
Shaw, Thomas (Hawick B.)
Sidebottom, William (Derbysh.)
Sinclair, Louis (Romford)
Smith, Samuel (Flint)
Spicer, Albert
Stanhope, Hon. Philip J.
Stanley, Henry M. (Lambeth)
Strachey, Edward
Sullivan, Donal (Westmeath)
Talbot, John G. (Oxford Univ.)
Tennant, Harold John
Thomas, Alfred (Glamorgan, E.)
Ure, Alexander
Wallace, Robert (Edinburgh)
Walton, John Lawson
Wayman, Thomas
Wedderburn, Sir William
Williams, John Carvell (Notts)
Willox, John Archibald
Wills, Sir William Henry
Wilson, Frederick W. (Norfolk)
Wilson, John (Durham, Mid)
Wilson, John (Govan)
Wilson, J. W. (Worc'sh., N.)
Woodall, William
Woodhouse, Sir J. T. (Hudd'rsf'ld)
Yoxall, James Henry

TELLERS FOR THE AYES, Mr. J. Samuel and Mr. Seton-Karr.

NOES.

Anstruther, H. T.
Arnold-Forster, Hugh O.
Arrol, Sir William
Ashmead-Bartlett, Sir Ellis
Atkinson, Rt. Hon. John
Bailey, James (Walworth)
Baird, John George Alexander
Balcarres, Lord
Baldwin, Alfred
Balfour, Gerald William (Leeds)
Barry, A. H. Smith- (Hunts.)
Beach, Rt. Hon. Sir M. H. (Bristol)
Beach, W. W. Bramston (Hants.)
Beckett, Ernest William
Begg, Ferdinand Faithful
Biddulph, Michael
Boulnois, Edmund
Brassey, Albert
Brodrick, Rt. Hon. St. John
Campbell, James A.
Carlile, William Walter
Chaloner, Captain R. W. G.
Chamberlain, J. Austen (Worc'r)
Chaplin, Rt. Hon. Henry
Charrington, Spencer
Cohen, Benjamin Louis
Collings, Rt. Hon. Jesse
Colomb, Sir John Charles Ready
Cook, Fred. Lucas (Lambeth)
Currie, Sir Donald
Curzon, Viscount (Bucks.)
Davenport, W. Bromley-
Digby, John K. D. Wingfield-
Dixon-Hartland, Sir Fred. Dixon
Donkin, Richard Sim
Drucker, A.
Dyke, Rt. Hn. Sir William Hart
Fardell, Thomas George
Fellowes, Hon. Ailwyn Edward
Fergusson, Rt. Hn. Sir J. (Manc'r)
Fielden, Thomas
Finch, George H.
Finlay, Sir Robert Bannatyne
Fisher, William Hayes
FitzGerald, Sir R. U. Penrose
Fletcher, Sir Henry
Forster, Henry William
Gedge, Sydney
Gibbs, Hn. A. G. H. (City of Lond.)
Godson, Augustus Frederick
Gordon, John Edward
Greene, Henry D. (Shrewsbury)
Gunter, Colonel
Halsey, Thomas Frederick
Hamilton, Rt. Hon. Lord Geo.
Hardy, Laurence
Hare, Thomas Leigh
Heath, James
Hill, Rt. Hn. Lord Arthur (Down)
Hornby, William Henry
Howard, Joseph
Hudson, George Bickersteth
Hutton, John (Yorks, N.R.)
Jebb, Richard Claverhouse
Jeffreys, Arthur Frederick
Johnson-Ferguson, Jabez Edw.
Johnston, William (Belfast)
Jolliffe, Hon. H. George
Kennaway, Rt. Hn. Sir John H.
Kenny, William
Kenyon, James
Kenyon-Slaney, Col. William
Lawrence, Wm. F. (Liverpool)
Lawson, John Grant (Yorks.)
Lea, Sir Thomas (Londonderry)
Leighton, Stanley
Lockwood, Lt.-Col. A. R. (Essex)
Loder, Gerald Walter Erskine
Long, Col. Charles W. (Evesham)
Long, Rt. Hn. Walter (Liverpool)
Lowther, Rt. Hon. James (Kent)
Lubbock, Rt. Hon. Sir John
Maclure, John William
Martin, Richard Biddulph
Mellor, Colonel (Lancashire)
Meysey-Thompson, Sir H. M.
Milward, Colonel Victor
Monckton, Edward Philip
Montagu, Hon. J. Scott (Hants)
More, Robert Jasper
Morgan, Hn. Fred. (Monm'thsh)
Mount, William George
Murdoch, Charles Townshend
Murray, Rt. Hn. A. Gr'h'm (Bute)
Myers, William Henry
Nicol, Donald Ninian
Northcote, Hon. Sir H. Stafford
Parkes, Ebenezer
Penn, John
Pierpoint, Robert
Powell, Sir Francis Sharp
Pym, C. Guy
Renshaw, Charles Bine
Ridley, Rt. Hn. Sir Matthew W.
Ritchie, Rt. Hn. Chas. Thomson
Russell, T. W. (Tyrone)
Scoble, Sir Andrew Richard
Scott, Charles Prestwich
Sharpe, William Edward T.
Simeon, Sir Barrington
Skewes-Cox, Thomas
Smith, Abel (Herts)
Smith, Abel H. (Christchurch)
Stanley, Lord (Lancs)
Stephens, Henry Charles
Stewart, Sir Mark J. McTaggart
Strauss, Arthur
Sturt, Hon. Humphry Napier
Sutherland, Sir Thomas
Talbot, Lord E. (Chichester)
Taylor, Francis
Thorburn, Walter
Thornton, Percy M.
Tomlinson, Wm. Edw. Murray
Usborne, Thomas
Walrond, Sir William Hood
Welby, Lieut.-Col. A. C. E.
Wharton, John Lloyd
Whiteley, George (Stockport)
Whitmore, Charles Algernon
Williams, Colonel R. (Dorset)
Williams, Joseph Powell- (Birm.)
Wilson, John (Falkirk)
Wilson-Todd, Wm. H. (Yorks.)
Wodehouse, Edmond R. (Bath)
Wolff, Gustav Wilhelm
Wortley, Rt. Hon. C. B. Stuart-

TELLERS FOR THE NOES, Sir Alfred Hickman and Mr. Galloway.

Main Question put, and agreed to.

Bill read a Second time.

SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT (Monmouthshire, W): This is a Government of social reform. [*Laughter and cheers.*]

MR. J. SAMUEL: Mr. Speaker, after this important Division, I beg to move "That the Bill be referred to the Standing Committee on Trade, Etc." [*Cheers.*]

*SIR A. HICKMAN objected. [*Cries of* "Oh, oh!"] If the hon. Member would move to refer the Bill to a Select Committee, he would withdraw his objection. [*Opposition cries of* "No, no!"]

And it being after Half-past Five of the Clock, and objection being taken to further proceeding, the Debate stood adjourned.

Debate to be resumed To-morrow.

RATING OF MACHINERY SUSPENSORY BILL.

Second Reading deferred till Wednesday next.

MARRIAGE WITH A DECEASED WIFE'S SISTER BILL.

Second Reading deferred till Wednesday 3rd March.

ASSISTANT COUNTY SURVEYORS (IRELAND) BILL.

Second Reading deferred till Wednesday next.

SCHOOL BOARD ELECTORATE (SCOTLAND) BILL.

Second Reading deferred till Thursday 11th March.

RIVERS POLLUTION PREVENTION BILL.

Second Reading deferred till Wednesday 3rd March.

MARRIED PERSONS' SMALL INDUSTRIAL INCOMES (TAX RELIEF) BILL.

Second Reading deferred till Tuesday 9th March.

CROFTERS' HOLDINGS (SCOTLAND) ACT (1886) AMENDMENT BILL.

Second Reading deferred till Friday 12th March.

TRUCK ACTS AMENDMENT BILL.

Second Reading deferred till Thursday 25th February.

CEMETERIES RATING BILL.

Second Reading deferred till Wednesday next.

VEHICLES (LIGHTS) BILL.

Second Reading deferred till Wednesday 10th March.

ALIENS BILL.

Second Reading deferred till Wednesday next.

SHOPS (EARLY CLOSING) BILL.

Second Reading deferred till Wednesday next.

SHOPS BILL.

Second Reading deferred till Wednesday next.

WORKING MEN'S DWELLINGS BILL.

Second Reading deferred till Wednesday next.

POOR LAW OFFICERS' SUPERANNUATION ACT (1896) AMENDMENT BILL.

Second Reading deferred till Wednesday 3rd March.

SHOP ASSISTANTS (HALF-HOLIDAY) BILL.

Second Reading deferred till To-morrow.

SUPPLY.

Committee deferred till Friday.

WAYS AND MEANS.

Committee deferred till Friday.

MOTIONS.

COUNTY COUNCILS (QUALIFICATION OF WOMEN).

Bill to enable Women to be elected and to serve upon County Councils, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Bousfield, Mr. Courtney, Mr. Sydney Buxton, Sir John Llewelyn, Mr. Justin McCarthy, Sir Stafford Northcote, Mr. Haldane, and Mr. Spicer; presented, and Read the First time; to be Read a Second time upon Tuesday, 9th March, and to be printed.—[Bill 136.]

ESTATES TAIL.

Bill to prevent the creation of Estates Tail, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Hopkinson, Mr. Bigham, Mr. Cozens-Hardy, Mr. Cripps, Mr. Hobhouse, and Mr. Schwann; presented, and Read the First time; to be Read a Second time upon Tuesday next, and to be printed.—[Bill 137.]

BOROUGH JUSTICES' CLERKS.

Bill to amend the Law with respect to the payment of Clerks to the Justices of Boroughs, ordered to be brought in by Sir Albert Rollit, Mr. Woodall, Mr. Willox, and Sir Edward Gourley; presented, and Read the First time; to be Read a Second time upon Wednesday, 9th June, and to be printed.—[Bill 138.]

LICENSING EXEMPTION (HOUSES OF PARLIAMENT).

Bill to exempt the Sale of Intoxicating Liquor in the Houses of Parliament from the Licensing Acts, ordered to be brought in by Lord Stanley, Mr. Kearley, Mr. Power, and Mr. William Redmond.

Sir WILFRID LAWSON (Cumberland, Cockermouth) thought some explanation should be given of this Bill, and also of what was to be done as regarded the time that liquor was being sold, when, according to the Attorney General, its sale was illegal.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir Richard Webster, Isle of Wight) said he would be glad to assist the hon. Baronet in anything that would promote temperance. If he would introduce a Bill to restrict the sale of liquor at the House to Members and their friends, this Bill would be unnecessary, or if he would introduce a Bill to prohibit the sale of liquor in the House the opinion of the House might be taken upon it. The Kitchen Committee having come to the conclusion that the present practice as to the sale of liquor within the precincts of the House was illegal, there was no alternative but to see that the proceedings of the House were in accordance with the law, and this Bill had been introduced to rectify the matter. As regarded the past, the whole time the hon. Baronet had been a Member of the House liquor had been supplied in the same way. Everyone was supposed to know the law, and the hon. Baronet could not be allowed to plead ignorance of it.

Sir WILFRID LAWSON said he did not know the sale of liquor at the House was illegal until last Session, when the Attorney General admitted it to be the case.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL declined to be a party to any action as regarded the past, because it had been discovered that a change in the law was necessary. ["Hear, hear!"]

Bill presented and Read the First time; to be Read a Second time To-morrow, and to be printed.—[Bill 139.]

House adjourned at Five minutes before Six o'clock.

HOUSE OF LORDS.

Thursday, 18th February 1897.

EARL OF NORMANTON.

Petition of Sidney James Agar, Earl of Normanton, claiming a right to vote at the elections of Representative Peers for Ireland; read, and referred to the Lord Chancellor to consider and report thereupon to the House.

COUNTY COURTS (RIGHT OF AUDIENCE) BILL [H.L.].

A Bill to amend the law relating to the right of audience of solicitors in County Courts—was presented by Lord Macnaghten; read 1ª; and to be printed.—[No. 15.]

MARINE INSURANCE BILL.

Lord HERSCHELL, in moving the Second Reading of the Marine Insurance Bill, said that it was the same Measure for codifying the law relating to marine insurance which had been read a Second time by their Lordships' House last Session and referred to the Standing Committee, but which it was not then found possible to proceed with. He now begged to move the Second Reading of the Bill with the view to it being referred to the Standing Committee, and by them to a sub-Committee for minute examination. ["Hear, hear!"]

Read 2ª (according to Order), and committed to a Committee of the Whole House on Monday next.

THE IRISH LAND COMMISSION.

Lord MONTEAGLE rose to ask Her Majesty's Government (1) whether the monthly Returns of the proceedings of the Irish Land Commission could not be given by counties, showing (*a*) the fair rent proceedings in the form of tables I., XI., XVII., XVIII., XIX. (column 1), XXI. (column 1), XXXI., and XXXV., in the appendix to the last annual Report of the Irish Land Commission; (*b*) the number and amount of loans applied for, sanctioned, and issued under the different Land Purchase Acts; and (2) whether the monthly Returns of the Irish Land Commission could not be presented during the Recess, as provided for by the Order of this House of 17 February 1896. In putting this question to Her Majesty's Government, he hoped that he was not asking for any unreasonable information, or for Returns that would involve very great cost in their production. Looking at the annual Report of the proceedings of the Irish Land Commission, it appeared to him that the information he desired could be easily given in a monthly form instead of being kept back for a considerable period as was the case under the present system. He hoped that Her Majesty's Government would see their way to granting his request.

The LORD PRIVY SEAL (Viscount Cross) said that in the absence of the Lord Chancellor for Ireland, he had been requested to state, first, that the Government had considered the matter and did not think that the additional labour and expense involved in preparing the statistics in the form suggested would be attended by any compensating advantage sufficient to make the adoption of the change desirable, and they trusted that the noble Lord would not press for the suggested alterations in the Returns; and, secondly, that all command papers of the Irish Land Commission would, in accordance with the Order of the House referred to by the noble Lord, be completed and sent forward for circulation during the Recess. ["Hear, hear!"]

Lord MONTEAGLE asked whether, as the Government did not see their way to giving these Returns monthly, they would consider the possibility of giving them quarterly?

Viscount CROSS said that he would take care that the suggestion of the noble Lord was placed before the Irish Government, and no doubt they would be able to answer his question in a short time.

Lord MONTEAGLE said that he should repeat his question on a subsequent day.

LEE-METFORD RIFLE (VOLUNTEER RIFLE RANGES).

*EARL SPENCER rose to call attention to the effect produced upon rifle ranges in the country by the adoption of the Lee-Metford rifle, and to ask the Secretary of State for War whether any arrangements had been made to assist Volunteer corps in getting facilities for rifle practice at their present ranges or within easy reach of their headquarters. His Lordship said that the question he desired to ask the noble Marquess the Secretary for War involved a subject of considerable importance to the large Volunteer force of which the country was so proud. Up to the present time nearly every Volunteer corps had had its rifle range close to its headquarters. Rifle shooting was of importance to the Volunteers, not only as making them more efficient soldiers, but because it served to keep in the ranks a large number of young men who made it a national pastime. As matters now stood, he entertained some fears lest the change in the character of the rifle issued to the Volunteers might be attended with most important, if not disastrous, effects upon the Volunteer force. He did not question the desirability of having the same arms and ammunition issued to the Army, the Militia, and the Volunteers; but, at the same time, considerations of moment were certainly involved by that course being adopted. The rapid issue of the new weapon to the Volunteers had caused Her Majesty's Government to make minute inquiries into the character of the various rifle ranges, with the result that a large number of them had been closed as being dangerous owing to the great range of the new weapon. He knew that in Northamptonshire two ranges had already been closed, while it was possible that three others would also be closed. The result was that, instead of the Volunteers having their rifle ranges close to their headquarters, they had now to go to a considerable distance to practise rifle shooting, and probably had to share their ranges with several other corps. In these circumstances he wished to ask the noble Marquess what he proposed to do in order to overcome the difficulty he had pointed out. He had been informed that one or two expedients for overcoming the difficulty had been suggested. In the first place, it had been proposed that Volunteers should be allowed to fire at their old ranges with the new rifle, using a diminished charge of powder; but he need scarcely point to the disadvantage of Volunteers practising with a less charge of powder than they would have to use in time of war. ["Hear, hear!"] That proposal had been unanimously condemned by the council of the National Rifle Association. Another expedient proposed for adoption was that only the best shots should be allowed to fire at particular ranges, the less proficient shots being allowed to fire at the shorter ranges only. He understood that a considerable number of ranges might be made safe by means of a certain expenditure of money, and he wished to ask whether the Government were prepared to make a grant that would cover the cost of the necessary alterations. Unless the Government were prepared to take that course, he should certainly question the wisdom of issuing the new weapon to the Volunteers, who could not practice with it; and it would be a great national misfortune if our Volunteer Force were diminished in consequence. ["Hear, hear!"] He need not apologise to the Government for putting these questions to them, seeing that he had always taken a great interest in the Volunteer Force, with which he had been associated for so long. ["Hear, hear!"]

*EARL STANHOPE said the same difficulty in making rifle ranges safe existed in Kent; he knew of a case in Kent where a range was likely to be closed, but which might be made safe if it were raised or otherwise altered so as to avoid danger from ricochet shots. He hoped the noble Marquess would be able to give a satisfactory reply to his noble Friend's question. ["Hear, hear!"]

*THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR WAR (The MARQUESS of LANSDOWNE: I frankly admit that if any Member of your Lordships' House has a right to call attention to this subject it is the noble Earl opposite, whose name is so honourably connected with the Volunteer movement in this country. ["Hear, hear!"] The subject to which he has called attention is one of the utmost importance to the Volunteer Force, and I can assure him that it has engaged the earnest attention of the War Department. It is quite true that the range of the Lee-Metford rifle is greater than that of the Martini-Henry, but the difference is very much less than is commonly supposed. I am assured that where an existing range was really safe for use with the Martini-Henry rifle it is, as a rule, safe for use with the Lee-Metford rifle, or, at all events, it may easily be made safe for it. The introduction of the Lee-Metford rifle has, I think, added to our difficulties in this way—namely, that it has attracted a considerable amount of public attention to this question, and has made people consider a great deal more anxiously than they did before whether the ranges in their locality are or are not safe. What really has rendered so many ranges dangerous is the increase of population and the spread of buildings in the neighbourhood of large towns. For example, in the neighbourhood of the metropolis the difficulty of obtaining suitable rifle ranges has become almost insurmountable. The attention which this matter has aroused led us, as the noble Earl has told the House, to make an inquiry into the condition of the whole of those ranges, and I may give your Lordships some idea of the extent of the matter when I tell you that of the 1,200 ranges in this country no fewer than 1,130 are ranges which are used solely by the Volunteer Force, most of them local ranges entirely under the control and management of the Volunteers themselves. A few of the larger of these, used by whole corps of Volunteers, had been under Government inspection. The smaller ones had not.

*EARL SPENCER: Not under inspection? I imagined that every range was inspected by a Government officer.

*THE MARQUESS OF LANSDOWNE: Not, at any rate, in the sense in which large ranges have been inspected. The Returns we have received are incomplete, but so far as they go at present, they show that a few of the existing ranges are unsafe and will have to be condemned. Most of these ranges were, I believe, unsafe even for the use of the Martini-Henry rifle, although, perhaps more by good fortune than any other cause, they have been used for a great number of years without the occurrence of accidents. In some cases we have been obliged to resort to one of those expedients the noble Earl described, and for the present, at all events, to restrict firing at the longer ranges to men who have arrived at a certain degree of proficiency in the use of the rifle, and in similar cases it has been found also desirable to restrict volley firing; but, so far as we are able to judge from the Reports which have reached us up to the present time, the great majority of these local ranges can be made safe without any great difficulty, and I think that until we know a little more of the condition of these ranges throughout the country it would be premature to discuss the question of a grant for the purpose of improving their safety. I assure the noble Earl that we shall do all we possibly can to meet this difficulty, but I certainly should be very sorry to contemplate the possibility of our assuming responsibility for the whole of that large number of small local ranges of which I spoke just now. We have, I think, been able to achieve something, at all events, in the direction desired by the noble Earl. In the year 1892 a Bill was passed now known as the Military Lands Act, under which the Loan Commissioners can make loans to Volunteer corps for the purpose of acquiring land for ranges, or of acquiring existing ranges; and we have at this moment passing through the other House of Parliament an amending Bill under which the borrowing powers are extended to loans for the construction of works necessary to form new ranges. Then, besides that, the Military Works Bill, which is now passing through Parliament, provides for a sum of about half a million to be expended on new ranges. These, of course, are for the general use of the Army, and will be in central positions, but I shall be much disappointed if we are not able so to arrange matters that Volunteers in the neighbourhood of these ranges shall derive considerable advantage from their creation. We recognise as fully as the noble Earl that practice with the rifle is absolutely essential to the efficiency of the Volunteer Force, and we also fully admit that, were facilities for that practice diminished, the Force would be rendered, as the noble Earl has said, much less attractive than it is at present. We shall certainly bear these considerations in mind, and I hope I have said enough to convince the noble Earl that we shall spare no pains to meet the difficulty to which he has called attention.

House adjourned at Ten minutes before Five o'clock, till To-morrow, a Quarter past Ten o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

Thursday, 18th February 1897.

PRIVATE BUSINESS.

LONDON COUNTY BUILDINGS BILL.

*MR. C. A. WHITMORE (Chelsea) said that, in the unavoidable absence of his right hon. Friend the Member for the University of London (Sir John Lubbock) it fell to him to move "That this Bill be now read a Second time." He knew that the Motion would be met with vigorous opposition—[*Ministerial cheers*]—and that that opposition would come mainly from those with whom he generally had the pleasure of working. As he believed that a great deal of the opposition of his hon. Friends arose out of vague and general prejudices, and as he was certain their opposition to this particular proposal had been inflamed by statements which were misleading and estimates which were exaggerated, he hoped he would be pardoned if he, at no excessive length, stated the case of the London County Council. The proposal in the Bill was that the County Council should have power to acquire a site to the east of their present buildings which would run over that area of land which was bounded by Cockspur Street, Charing Cross, and the Mall, and which would in future be bounded by the extended Mall, assuming that the Government carried out the plan to extend the Mall into Charing Cross. The necessity of a great extension of the site for the County Council buildings was no new question. From the first it had been generally admitted that the present offices were quite insufficient for the satisfactory discharge of the duties which had been delegated to that Council. In 1890 a special committee of the Council carefully viewed 11 different sites which were then available for new offices; but now every one of those sites had ceased to be available. At the present moment, as he was instructed, there was only one site available, and that was the one which it was the object of this Bill to enable the Council to acquire. The staff of the Council numbered 500 persons, and two-fifths of that staff were housed away from the central offices. The cost of housing those who were away amounted to £6,000 a year. To give an idea of the necessity for new buildings he might state that there were 24 standing committees of the Council, and it was not unusual for the committees and sub-committees to hold as many as 50 meetings a week. Yet there were only five rooms in the present buildings available for their accommodation, including the so-called library, and there was no sort of separate room in which a deputation could be received. The necessity for new buildings being admitted, the main question left to be considered was whether the proposed site was an extravagantly expensive one. ["Hear, hear!"] He contended that it was not, and expressed surprise that certain irresponsible statements of an exaggerated character as to the cost should have been put forward publicly. The figures which he should give to the House, on the other hand, were based on estimates made by experts responsible to the County Council. It was calculated that the cost of acquiring the site would be £813,000. It was intended that the ground floor of the buildings should be utilised for bank offices, insurance offices, and other business premises, and the value of letting those premises would amount to the capital sum of £300,000, as against the £813,000 for the site; and the annual interest would be £20,000, which meant an addition to the rates of one-seventh of a penny in the pound. The probable cost of the buildings would be £500,000, which meant another one-seventh of a penny in the pound. The freehold would be acquired in 60 years. What the ratepayers had to consider was whether it was worth their while, in order to obtain new buildings in a central and convenient position, to sacrifice the difference in rates between two-sevenths of a penny in the pound and one-fourteenth of a penny in the pound now paid for leasehold interest.

SIR J. B. MAPLE (Camberwell, Dulwich): Does that include compensation in respect of the new street contemplated?

*MR. WHITMORE: Yes, I think so.

SIR J. B. MAPLE: I do not think so. ["Hear, hear!"]

*MR. WHITMORE: At any rate, the making of the new street has nothing to do with this Bill nor the County Council. That matter rested entirely with the Government, and he hoped the Government would carry out the scheme. ["Hear, hear!"] He wished to impress upon the House that this scheme was not promoted by one party or the other in the County Council—it was neither a Progressive nor a Moderate scheme. [*Cheers.*] And the composition of the majority of the Council who voted for the present proposal was very significant, and bore out his statement that the scheme was not at all one of a party character. In that majority there voted 16 present chairmen of committees of the Council, equally divided between Moderates and Progressives; 15 ex-chairmen of committees, and two ex-chairmen of the Council. So that it might fairly be said that the proposal was backed up by the authoritative voice of those in the Council who had most experience and responsibility. ["Hear, hear!"] It was dictated by absolute administrative necessity. The site proposed was not only a good one, but it was really the only available site, and the price was not an extravagantly expensive one. [*Ironical cheers.*] He knew it would be stated and reiterated that the object of the Bill was to erect a palace for the pleasure and pride of the Progressives of the County Council. ["Hear, hear!"] No such idea had entered into the minds of those who were supporting the proposal. What they wanted was simply to meet the absolute administrative necessities of the Council. He did not think it would be necessary to rebuild the present Council Chamber; the new buildings would be strictly allocated to the staff and proper housing of the several committees of the Council. It would also be said by the opponents of the Bill that any extension of buildings for the County Council at the present moment was premature—["hear, hear!"] —that there was likely to be a reconstruction of the system of London local government, and that there was likely to be a great devolution of authority and powers from the County Council to local authorities. ["Hear, hear!"] There was no good mincing words on this matter, no good in cherishing false hopes and indulging in vain dreams. He was perfectly convinced himself that they never would be able to make any very large or very material subtraction from the powers the County Council now had. There were many small powers, no doubt, which could be transferred from the County Council to local authorities, and for his part he thought the sooner those powers were transferred the better it would be for the local authorities and for the London County Council. But it was vain to suppose that the settlement which was arrived at by the great Act of 1888 could be fundamentally or essentially varied. The County Council must remain the central administrative authority for London. [*Opposition cheers.*] Even when these smaller duties were transferred to the local authorities they must not suppose that the volume of the work of the Council would not continue to increase. The natural growth of the population and the tendency of all modern legislation must very quickly redress the balance. Therefore, he said that any hopes that might be raised on the plea that it was premature now to erect buildings of this kind were false hopes, founded on expectations which never could be realised. In the last place, no doubt the opponents of the Bill would rest their opposition on a feeling which, though they might not express it, was deeply felt, of, "Oh, bother the Council and all its works." It was not for him to eulogise the County Council, but he did say that all of them, Radical and Conservative, Progressive and Moderate, were interested in making that body as good an administrative body as they could make it. ["Hear, hear!"] The way to attract good Londoners to its service was not by constantly depreciating it, by constantly carping at everything it did, was not by harassing it, and not by preventing the further progress of any Measure which it thought was necessary at the Second Reading stage. After all this was not a matter of politics. It was not a matter even of municipal politics. It seemed to him to be esentially a question of cost, which ought primarily to be decided between the ratepayers and their duly-constituted representatives. This Bill came before the House with a respectable majority, irrespective of party, of the Council at its back, and he asked the House to look at the real merits of this particular

Bill and not lightly or hurriedly to arrest its further progress. [*Cheers.*]

MR. E. BOULNOIS (Marylebone, E.) said he rose to move to leave out the word "now," and at the end of the Question to add the words "upon this day six months." [*Cheers.*] He claimed on this occasion to represent a large minority on the London County Council, and also the vast body of the ratepayers of London, who were opposed to this scheme. Unfortunately in a Bill of this kind, if it went to a committee, the ratepayers *per se* had no *locus*, and the opinions of London could not be expressed before an ordinary Select Committee of that House. The only opportunity the ratepayers had of being heard was in that Chamber itself. The Bill was introduced by his right hon. Friend the Member for the London University, his hon. Friend the Member for Chelsea, and the hon. Member for Battersea. It was rather significant that the first two Gentlemen were Aldermen of the County Council—["hear, hear!"]—and, though he desired to speak with every respect of the Aldermen, he ventured to suggest that they represented no one but themselves. ["Hear, hear!"] As to the hon. Member for Battersea, it could hardly be maintained that he represented the whole of the ratepayers of London. ["Hear, hear!"] Then he objected to the title of the Bill. The title, the London County Buildings Bill, had misled members of the County Council, the public, and, he said without hesitation, a certain number of Members of that House. The Bill was originally called the London County Hall Bill, but at the instigation of the right hon. Member for the London University it was altered to its present title, and it thus secured the support of some weak-kneed members of the Council, who, he understood, had since become rather lukewarm in their praise of the scheme. The scheme was hastily considered, and it was ill judged. The site, in the first place, was a great deal larger than was really required for the purposes of the Council. He supposed the House could hardly conceive the fact, but he was told that the site was as large as that upon which the Foreign Office, the Home Office, the India Office, the Colonial Office, and the Local Government Board Office altogether stood. [*Laughter.*] His next objection was that it was probably the most expensive site that could be chosen in London. He imagined that, with the exception of the Bank of England, they would not find a more expensive site than that on the south side of Trafalgar Square. It was said there was no other site; but, in the opinion of those who had taken a deep interest in this matter, there were several very available sites for this purpose. The Council let slip the very good site that was offered to them in the Hotel Cecil, and the equally good site in the Haymarket where Her Majesty's Theatre stood. But there were still available the site of Christ's Hospital in the City; of Clare Market—a site which the Council had in its own hands practically; of the Aquarium; the site now occupied by Morley's Hotel and the Golden Cross Hotel; and, there was also a site on the Thames Embankment. ["Hear, hear!"] In addition to these it was quite clear that, sooner or later, the County Council would have to make a wide street from Holborn to the Strand, where they might get any number of sites. He maintained that no proper inquiry had been made as to sites, those who supported this scheme having set their minds upon Trafalgar Square. It was necessary to say a word on the cost, because his hon. Friend had stated he had mentioned figures which were not accurate. In the statement circulated the cost was set down at 1½ millions. This figure was taken from the London County Council statement. In their Bill they named the sum of £851,000 for the site alone.

Mr. C. A. Whitmore.

*MR. WHITMORE explained that the cost of acquisition of site was £850,000, but it was practically concluded that there should be a transfer of part of the land to the Government, which accounted for the difference between £850,000 and £830,000.

MR. BOULNOIS said in addition to the sum for the acquisition of land there was an estimate of £500,000 for building, so that taking the £500,000 and the £851,000 named in the Bill the total was not very far short of 1½ millions. This total, his hon. Friend said, would be greatly reduced by shops and business offices, which would be placed on the ground floor of the contemplated building. But the Council had not pledged themselves to build shops, they only mentioned that this could be done, but they went on to say it would be premature to suggest any conclusion as to this part of the scheme, and as a matter of fact this had never been agreed to by the Council. The amount of £500,000 for the building was admitted to be simply a loose estimate on the part of the architect, not based on plans, elevations and details, the architect was simply asked "What do you think the building would cost?" and he named the sum of £500,000. But did any hon. Gentleman imagine for an instant that a building could be put on a site of 84,000 square feet for £500,000? He would undertake to say that anyone with experience in such matters would estimate the cost at at least a million of money. On the question of site and building he would like to allude to the much abused London School Board. That body was not usually credited by the people with any strong disposition in favour of economy, but they had a very fine and suitable building on the Embankment good enough for any municipality, including even the London County Council, and he found that the total sum expended upon the site, building, and all charges was £201,024. The building accommodated 300 clerks, and his hon. Friend said the Council required accommodation for 500, say double the number of the London School Board, or treble or quadruple it, and it did not come to anything like the sum the London County Council proposed to spend in Trafalgar Square. ["Hear, hear!"] But the London School Board did not go there, they were content with a modest site on the Thames Embankment which the London County Council could have if they chose. The ratepayers had never been consulted in this matter. ["Hear, hear!"] His hon. Friend said two or three times, what the ratepayers had to decide was this or that, but if the Bill passed the ratepayers would have no voice in the matter, and certainly they could not decide. This was essentially a ratepayers' question which had never been put before the ratepayers in any shape. He challenged the hon. Member for Battersea or any Member of the London County Council to say if there was any allusion made to this gigantic proposal at the last Council election in addresses or speeches of candidates. There were plenty of matters that did engage attention, water supply, tramways and matters of that sort, which, of course, they might very well deal with, but the idea of spending 1½ millions of money on a magnificent *Hôtel de Ville* was never presented to the ratepayers. ["Hear, hear!"] Until the ratepayers were consulted on this matter it was not right that Parliament or the Council should give assent to such a scheme. He admitted that there was a necessity for more accommodation, and larger premises for the London County Council, and no doubt the House would be told by the hon. Member for Battersea that the Council were "cabined, cribbed, confined," but it was not quite so bad as that. There was a necessity for larger premises, but this did not justify the London County Council in going to the most expensive site they could find in London, and spending 1½ millions of money. ["Hear, hear!"] He appealed to the House on behalf of the ratepayers, who were unable to protect themselves. There was no urgency in the matter, the delay of another year, what was all the throwing out of the Bill would mean, would not seriously hurt the Council, and for 25 years their predecessors, the Metropolitan Board of Works, had managed to get on pretty well in their building, and with the utmost confidence he asked the House to reject this costly, ambitious, and unnecessary scheme. [*Cheers.*] He formally moved that the Bill be Read a Second time this day six months.

Mr. C. E. TRITTON (Lambeth, Norwood) said be begged to second the Amendment. The House would agree that it had been treated to an interesting and edifying spectacle, two hon. Members who sat on the same side, both in the House and in the London County Council Chamber, being diametrically opposed in their views upon this Bill. As an independent London Member having nothing to do with the County Council, he would briefly give his reasons for supporting the Motion for the rejection of the Bill. The hon. Gentleman who had moved the Second Reading told the House very plainly, and in no hesitating language, of the feelings that animated those who were going to oppose the Bill, they were actuated, he said, by a vague and general prejudice and deep disgust of the London County Council, which he summed up in the expression "Bother the London County Council and all its works." He objected to have his feelings represented in that way by one who could know very little of those feelings. He acted on this occasion out of no spirit of general opposition to the London County Council, and he was not aware that he had ever said a word against the Council. As a Londoner, he recognised the immense good the County Council had done in a great many directions, more especially in relation to parks and open spaces, a subject in which he took great interest. Having put himself right with his hon. Friend he would first justify his action in the interest of the London County Council itself, and he was not without hope that the promoters of the Bill would even yet see that they had been rather premature in bringing this Bill forward. In the interest of the London County Council he was sorry to see the unpopularity of the Council in some parts of London. He would like to see the Council thoroughly popular among all London people, and ventured to suggest that this move of the Council would not add to its popularity. He had been in conversation with a good many ratepayers in the last few days, and had found amongst them nothing but a feeling of absolute horror at this scheme in the Bill. He earnestly hoped the Council would reconsider its position. It was a young and vigorous body and its parent sitting below (Mr. Ritchie) must be surprised to find what a lusty young Council it had become, and how far it had exceeded the hopes with which it started on its career. Its position, however, was not yet clearly defined, and the Council might well wait before embarking upon expenditure of this kind. There was a great want of space it was said, and Members of the Conservative Party had every sympathy with overcrowding, seeing how they were crowded in the House and its precincts. Still, overcrowded as they were, they went diligently on striving to do their duty to the State without murmur or complaint. The County Councillors might well do the same. The ratepayers looked with great anxiety on the ever-increasing debt of the London County Council. The debt of the County Council amounted to £19,250,000 and was constantly increasing. In face of these facts he did not wonder that many thoughtful citizens and ratepayers of the great Metropolis were seriously pondering in their mind how much further this ever-growing expenditure of the London County Council was to be allowed to go. [" Hear, hear! "]

Mr. C. E. Tritton.

As one of the representatives of a division of poor parishes in Lambeth, where great suffering was entailed owing to the rates, he hoped the House would not pass a Bill which would considerably increase the local burdens. [" Hear, hear! "] There were many improvements which they earnestly desired to see carried out, but which, for want of money, could not be pushed forward, and whilst that was the case, the London County Council were not justified in asking for £1,500,000 for the purpose of the erection of a new county hall. They wanted in the Metropolis more street improvements, the removal of insanitary spots, and better dwellings for the toiling masses, rather than such a building as the London County Council proposed to erect for themselves, and of which the ratepayers had hitherto heard little. [" Hear, hear! "]

MR. JOHN BURNS (Battersea) desired to say that a large minority of men who shared the views of the hon. Member for Marylebone in the County Council disagreed very strongly indeed with the views he had expressed that afternoon. As to the ratepayers, there had not been an election since 1889 at which the necessity for this new building had not been dwelt upon, the opponents of the Council's policy using the county hall argument as a reason why the Progressives should be defeated. From the point of view of the cost, he submitted that was not a matter for the House of Commons, but for the ratepayers electing the Council, who only wanted that opportunity of doing for the London ratepayers what Manchester, Glasgow, Leeds, and Bradford had done in relation to similar schemes for their municipalities. [" Hear, hear! "] He denied that this was a hasty project, for the sub-committees of the Council, in consequence of the present lack of accommodation, had often been compelled to meet in rooms which, if they had done their duty as a sanitary authority, they ought to have scheduled as insanitary areas. The question had been before the Council for eight years. The hon. Member for Marylebone had said the site proposed was too large. Its measurement was 84,000ft., or about two-thirds of the area occupied by the two adjoining Admiralty buildings together. Then it was said that sites could be obtained elsewhere. He would ask where?

Take the Victoria Embankment site. The hon. Member knew that the bulk of the site opposite the Thames Conservancy offices had already been acquired for newspaper offices, and he ventured to say if it had been offered at one-fourth of the price that had been paid for it by the two newspapers that were erecting buildings upon it, such was the character of the ground that they could not have put upon it any building which they expected to last 200 or 300 years. On account of the nature of the subsoil it had been found necessary to put down a blanket of concrete 8ft. thick before building operations could be commenced. As to the Hotel Cecil, which had been spoken of, that building was unsuitable for the work of the London County Council. Then they were told about the Haymarket site. It was not the fault of the London County Council that they could not get it, and when it was mentioned it was met with the same kind of opposition that was offered to the present proposal. It was suggested that they should pull down Christ's Hospital. That was the suggestion of a vandal and a Philistine. [*Laughter.*] He objected to either the House of Commons or the County Council, or Progressives or Moderates, identifying themselves with the cheap and nasty policy of getting rid of old buildings that made up the history and traditions of their great city. [*Laughter and* "Hear, hear!"] That was a worthy Conservative sentiment. [*Laughter.*]

SIR FREDERICK DIXON-HARTLAND (Middlesex, Uxbridge) wished to point out that the site of Christ's Hospital had been condemned and a new site bought in the country, so that the present building had to be pulled down. The building was a comparatively modern one, so that it was not necessary it should be kept by reason of its antiquity.

MR. BURNS said that the condemnation of the site of Christ's Hospital came long after it was possible for the County Council to consider the question.

SIR F. DIXON-HARTLAND: It is now open. ["Hear, hear!"]

MR. BURNS: But it is too late, and it is unsuitable for us even if it had not been condemned.

SIR F. DIXON-HARTLAND: It is not too late.

MR. BURNS, in continuation, traversed the argument that the building could not be erected on the proposed site for £500,000, expressing his conviction that it could be entirely constructed for from £350,000 to £400,000. The County Council did not want a palace, or *Hôtel de Ville*, but what they did want was a workshop in which they could do their municipal work. ["Hear, hear!"] Above all, if they were to have such a building it must be of either brick or stone, sufficiently solid to justify the intended outlay upon it, and architecturally and artistically blend with the splendid Government offices which were to be built in close proximity. The County Council were green with envy of the London School Board's offices. The tea room of the London School Board office has a floor space equal to that of three of the five Committee rooms that the County Council were imprisoned in. The hon. Member for Norwood wanted the County Council to trouble less about the overcrowding of its own members and more about overcrowding in the dwellings of the poor. The Council had eleven rehousing schemes, on which alone it was spending £400,000, in the East End of London. It was not to be expected that men of all shades of politics, who devotedly gave their time to the service of the ratepayers would spend six, eight, or ten hours a day, five days a week, in offices fit only for a slum and in an atmosphere not so good as that of the stable in which hon. Members put their horses. [*Ministerial cries of* "Oh!"] Eleven sites had been suggested and abandoned, either because they were too dear or inappropriate. The conditions on which they held them tied them to their present offices. There was a 62 years' lease to run, for one thing. Several of the Council's officials' offices were scattered about the neighbourhood—as in Craven Street and Cranbourne Street, a quarter of a mile away. When the Main Drainage Committee, that had purified the river and done excellent work the last eight years, were sitting, and they wanted the engineer and the chemist, the engineer would be in the building at Charing Cross and the chemist half-a-mile away. Frequently they had to delay or postpone work for want of time to find their officials. The Council had fourteen departments and a staff or 500 persons.

The Technical Education and Metropolitan Asylums Boards held their meetings at the Council's offices, and other similar bodies would be able to do so if they had more room. The hon. Member for Chelsea said the scheme would only represent a rate of one-seventh—he believed it would only be one-twelfth or one fourteenth of a penny in the pound. He himself believed that, even if it represented one fourth of a penny, the London ratepayers would grant it, and the Council would have a right to demand it. Glasgow, with a population one eighth that of London, spent £700,000 on its town hall; Manchester spent £400,000 on the site, and £600,000 more on the building. Leeds and Bradford also had fine town halls, and what great provincial towns like these had, should not be denied to London. The *Pall Mall Gazette*, which had been heading the agitation against the Bill, urged that the site proposed would be costly, the plan extravagant, and the hall ought not to be located where it was proposed to place it. The *Pall Mall* had persistently attacked the project, and asked hon. Members to rally, not on the side of economy, efficiency, or the appropriateness of site, but to rescue the dustbin of the proprietor of the *Pall Mall*, whose residence was next door to the offices of the County Council, from having its ventilation and access to light and air interfered with. Let the House contrast this niggardly petty policy with the splendid behaviour of the hon. Member for Greenwich, their next door neighbour. The Council were prepared to deal with him in a neighbourly spirit. It was an abuse of London hospitality, it was not fair or gentlemanly for a new millionaire from America to dump his city offices next those of the London School Board and prevent their extension, and his own house next to the offices of the London County Council, and to complain because the Council came "between the wind and his ability." His appeals to hon. Members were based on selfish, personal reasons, by which he himself hoped they would not be deceived. He could stand a decent duke—[*loud laughter*]—or a militant marquess—[*renewed laughter*]—but here was a new millionaire enjoying the hospitality of London, in whose ground rents he was investing heavily, and whose sanitation he was partaking of—[*laughter*]—sanitation which he could not get in Fifth Avenue or Broadway. Why did not his public spirit rise to the level of that of the city of which he was a citizen, and propitiate those who scorned delights and lived laborious days in the service of the people of London. Why should they be herded together in rooms that the House of Commons would not kennel a dog in? ["Hear, hear!" *and cries of* "Question!"] The Council did not want a palatial building, but one in which they could meet and do their work properly. ["Hear, hear!"]

MR. W. F. D. SMITH (Strand, Westminster) said that on that side of the House they were not opposed to the idea that London should have a proper Hall in which to carry on municipal affairs. He had been approached in regard to this matter, however, by numerous ratepayers of the Strand, whom he represented, and at least one of the public bodies in the Strand borough, who believed that there was, at any rate, a good case for the postponement of this Bill. ["Hear, hear!"] It had been objected that the scheme was for a site larger and more valuable than was needed, and he thought that the admission that the London County Council intended to use the lower floor for shops was proof that the site was too big. He did not know whether that use of a part of the buildings would add to the dignity of the new County Hall. ["Hear, hear!"] He thought it would give the Hall a rather similar appearance to that of the hotel on the opposite side of the square. Something had been said with regard to the cost of the site, and he could not help fearing that the estimated price for the site was lower than the County Council could reasonably expect to get it for. The offices there were particularly valuable to those who used them. He knew certainly of one case of a large firm which had been disturbed no less than three times within a comparatively short period. He thought they would agree that in such a case there would be a strong case for considerable compensation. There were some exceptionally hard cases of that sort. He did not think either that it would be found that the premises on the lowest floor, which it was proposed to let, would be useful to such firms as those he referred to. He thought therefore that the estimated revenue which was expected from the letting of the premises on the ground-floor had been very considerably exaggerated. They did not think that there was no case to be made out for the County Council, but they thought that this was a site which the County Council need not acquire.

Sir J. LUBBOCK (London University) said that the opposition to this Bill was founded very much on a misapprehension, and the expense contemplated had been much exaggerated. Hon. Members who opposed this Bill did not seem to appreciate the great difficulties under which the business of the Council was carried on. It was no question of the Council Chamber. That was simple but convenient. The staff, however, were scattered in 14 different houses. Some were working in attics and rooms intended for bedrooms. It was impossible, however, to rearrange them, because the tenancies were so short, in some cases only yearly tenancies. Under these circumstances the heads of departments could not exercise any proper supervision. Moreover, the houses were much scattered, in one case half a mile away. This was very inconvenient. Sometimes a committee telephoned for a particular officer, and when he came a paper was wanted, which had to be sent for, involving great loss of time. There were 24 committees, and eight to ten meetings a day, but there were only five committee rooms. There was only one waiting-room, and, when deputations came from Vestries and other bodies, there was no proper room for them, and they had to stand about waiting in passages. The Committee had been considering sites for some years, and were of opinion that this was the best, and, everything considered, the most economical. They had a sixty years' lease of their main building, and if they went elsewhere it would be unsuited for other purposes. He had been Chairman for two years, and could assure the House that additional space was urgently required. When the Bill was before the Council it was supported by sixteen Chairmen of Committees, and not one voted against it. The Bill did not raise the question of the building, it merely enabled the Council to acquire a proper site. If it were thought necessary, the expense might be greatly reduced by letting off the frontage towards Trafalgar Square. The present was an opportunity which ought not to be lost. If the Motion were passed the Bill would be rejected. If the Second Reading was passed the Council would still have to satisfy the Committee upstairs. The Bill was supported by all those who knew most of the work of the Council—by the Chairman, Vice Chairman, Deputy Chairman, and sixteen Chairmen of Committees. He hoped, therefore, that it would not be summarily rejected on *ex parte* and exaggerated statements, but that the House would at least give them the opportunity of proving their case before a Committee upstairs. ["Hear, hear!"]

*Mr. CHARLES HARRISON (Plymouth) said that, as a member of the London County Council since it was originally instituted, and as the representative on the Council of South West Bethnal Green, one of the poorest districts of East London, he ventured to make some remarks on the Bill. Parliament had protected the ratepayer in London over and beyond ratepayers in all other municipalities. It had placed the control of all capital expenditure and finance under the absolute veto of the Treasury, who control the public finance. They were also further protected by the Standing Order of this House, which required all Bills relating to the finance of the London County Council to be introduced as public Bills, so as to give the whole House control over capital expenditure. But in assuming control and giving this protection in regard to capital expenditure it had not hitherto been suggested that Parliament should extend its control beyond capital expenditure and exercise it as regards rate. On all measures the Council was left answerable to the electors, the ratepayers, and the question was whether Parliament should now extend the doctrine of control, and apply it to rate. This particular scheme was adopted by the Council, upon the report of a special committee. That report dealt with the rejected proposals for acquiring eight different sites. Amongst them that of Christ's Hospital, alluded to in this Debate, and the Victoria Embankment site; as to Christ's Hospital site the report stated that

> "inasmuch as the land had only a small frontage to Newgate Street, the remainder being back land over which there were several rights of light, it was considered that the site would

be worthless, unless valuable property, including valuable property fronting Newgate Street, were included."

As to the Embankment site the report found that only 53,043 square feet were available, of which 7,300 were over the Metropolitan District Railway. Under these circumstances the present site was recommended and adopted, and in favour of that scheme on the division there voted the three City representatives on the Council. They knew what was wanted. There was a staff required to be housed of 500, but the Council administered and had a staff of 2,097 yearly contract men, and 5,795 weekly wages men. A point had been raised that the powers of the Council were likely to be affected by the transfer to local bodies of some of those bodies, and that, in consequence, the requirements of the Council would not necessitate such a large scheme as that proposed by the Bill. But there was now a common consensus between the Council and the local authorities that any powers which might be transferred would be of a limited nature, and would not affect the staff and organisation. It was never suggested that the administration of the 12,000 or 13,000 pauper lunatics in the different asylums, the 830 men of the Fire Brigade, the 1,040 acres of parks and gardens, the 2,626 acres of open spaces, all distributed in every conceivable part of London, north, south, east and west; the powers over the action of local authorities in reference to health, the licensing in reference to the storage of petroleum, the licensing of slaughter houses, and of infant reception houses, should be transferred to local authorities. It was admitted on all hands these would have to be retained, and, if so, the Council required the scheme put forward, which involved a cost on rate of less than ¼d. in the pound, and after the most careful examination by the Council was approved of by members representing both parties as being necessary and the only reasonable plan to carry out.

Mr. Charles Harrison.

MR. C. T. MURDOCH (Reading) said he desired to speak on behalf of those who would be dispossessed of their places of business if the scheme of the London County Council was carried out. In the opinion of those most qualified to give a decision on the point, the estimate of the cost of acquiring this site at which the County Council had arrived was greatly underrated. Those who had seen the plans would notice the enormous frontage on Trafalgar Square—a frontage entirely disproportionate to the size of the whole area. That frontage was occupied by some of the most expensively constructed and highly rented buildings in England. He might mention that amongst the buildings were one of the leading banks, four of the leading insurance offices, the offices of four or five of the principal steamship companies, and a great many shops well known to many Members of the House, especially the shop of Messrs. Stanford, the map sellers, in which they all took an interest. To acquire all these premises would cost the London County Council an enormous amount of money. His right hon. Friend the Member for the London University seemed to throw upon those who opposed the Bill the onus of trying to prevent the London County Council from erecting such offices as they required. He was sure they had no wish to do anything of the kind. All they wanted was that when the County Council decided upon having new offices they should not expend an unnecessary amount in taking an immense frontage on one of the most expensive sites in London. A question of this kind in which the expenditure of an enormous sum of money was concerned ought to be laid for decision before the ratepayers who elected the London County Council. It was idle for his right hon. Friend the Member for the London University to say that the ratepayers could appear before the Committee of the House. He was not aware that the ratepayers would have any *locus standi* before the Committee; but even if they could appear it would be a very expensive business for them; and, what was more, they could not arrive by such a process at the opinion of more than a fraction of the electorate. He did not believe that there was a strong feeling against the London County Council in the House. On the contrary there was a great wish that the London County Council should be able to do its work properly. He was sure also that the ratepayers would not object to the County Council being properly housed. But the ratepayer should have a voice in the decision of the question. If the Bill were passed the control of the ratepayers was gone for ever, the expenditure would have been sanctioned, and the ratepayers could have nothing further to do with the matter. There was no doubt that other sites might be procured by the London County Council. Indeed, he would have thought that the County Council instead of attempting to get one of the most expensive sites in the Metropolis would have cleared away some slum, erected houses for the working classes, and put up their offices there.

MR. G. C. T. BARTLEY (Islington, N.) said he approached the question solely from the point of view of the interests of the London ratepayers. The question was not whether the London County Council was properly housed, but whether the House was going to sanction an enormous expenditure which would place a heavy burden on the ratepayers of the poor districts of London. It was said that the buildings would cost about £1,300,000. That estimate was quite inadequate. He believed the cost would be at least £2,000,000 sterling. Anyone who knew the site and was acquainted with the value of property would know that the scheme would at least cost that amount. The House was told that the London County Council had 500 clerks to house. That meant that each clerk would cost about £4,000, capital sum. That capital sum at 4 per cent. would produce about £120 a year. The cost was absurdly extravagant. An office could be built for all the necessary purposes for a sum immensely less. London ought to know that an estimate had been prepared by the London County Council and sent to that House for an outlay of something like £3,000 or £4,000 per clerk. The expenditure of £2,000,000 upon the site and buildings would involve every constituency in London in an expenditure of almost £25,000. He invited metropolitan Members to go to their constituents and ask them whether they were prepared to provide £25,000 for a house for the London County Council. He felt certain that scarcely a single constituency would give an affirmative answer. In Islington they would have to pay considerably over £100,000. If the London County Council wanted a site let it go to the East End or the South of London, where the cost would be a mere fraction of the sum now contemplated, and where a building could be built which would be an improvement to the district. He should resist in every possible way this project to burden the ratepayers with an extravagant expenditure.

*THE CHAIRMAN OF WAYS AND MEANS (Mr. J. W. LOWTHER, Cumberland, Penrith) did not think that the details of this scheme could be considered properly in the House. On more than one occasion he had protested, without much effect unfortunately, against the practice of discussing the details of private Bills at the stage of Second Reading. He intended to vote for the Second Reading of the Measure on broad grounds. Here was a body which governed the metropolis, and which had made up its mind that it was not adequately housed. The representatives of the ratepayers accordingly came to that House with a scheme for providing the accommodation which they wanted. If that scheme involved too large an expenditure out of the rates, that was a matter in which that House was not primarily concerned. Those who were chiefly concerned were the electors of the County Council, and their representatives who were responsible for this scheme must answer to their constituents for any large increase of expenditure that it involved. Then the question of an alternative site was one which the House at the present stage could not properly go into. Statements were made on the one side and contradicted on the other; sites were suggested only to be dismissed from consideration at once. Those were questions which could be raised with advantage when the Bill came before a Committee upstairs. The House was not the proper place in which to discuss them. The present occasion was the time for taking objection to the general principle of the proposal. If hon Members objected to a majority of the representatives of a municipality coming to the House and asking for leave to purchase a site on which to erect buildings for their official purposes, let them vote against and reject the Measure. But he would point out that in the case of no other municipality in the Kingdom would the House think for a moment of taking such a course. [*Opposition cheers.*] If Liverpool, Manchester, Glasgow, or any other big municipality were to come to the House with a similar scheme, no matter how extravagant it might be considered, no matter how large the area proposed to be purchased—that House on the Second Reading of the Bill would not venture to reject it. The scheme would be sent to a Committee. He asked the House to do now in the case of London what it would do in the case of any other great municipality. Whether the scheme was a very extravagant one; whether it was proposed to acquire too costly a site; whether the area to be occupied was too large—were questions which could only be decided upon evidence taken before a Select Committee. ["Hear, hear!"] He urged the House to come to a decision now and to hesitate before it rejected the Bill. ["Hear, hear!"]

SIR J. B. MAPLE was surprised that the hon. Gentleman should have spoken in such a decided way in depreciation of the opposition to this Bill. What were they sent to Parliament for if it was not to express their opinions. ["Hear, hear!"] This Bill was supported in the London County Council by a very small majority, and some Members of that majority had voted in error, whilst others had since changed their views upon this subject. The Bill was only carried in the County Council by 54 against 46. The proposed site was in his opinion one of the worst in London for the purpose, in addition to being most expensive. The noise in the neighbourhood would be great. It had been said that there could be shops on the ground floor of the building. That certainly would not be convenient. The building would not cost less than £2,000,000, possibly £2,500,000. As to the construction of the new street to which the introducer of the Bill had referred, it ought to be clearly understood that the Government had not consented to allow the street to be made except on the condition of payment by the ratepayers, the burden on whom would be enormous. Just over Westminster Bridge there were many sites available. They could be purchased for less than £200,000, and the neighbourhood was quieter. The proposed new street, he was told by the police, would increase the dangers attending the traffic in the locality. He objected to the hon. Gentleman's addressing hon. Members as if they were a lot of schoolboys, and he hoped that the result of the Division would show that the House disapproved of these plans of the extravagant Members of the London County Council. ["Hear, hear!"]

MR. B. L. COHEN (Islington, E.) observed that the Chairman of Committees had said that this Bill ought to be sent to a Committee upstairs, because what was done by the representatives of ratepayers did not concern that House. There would be something in that argument if the ratepayers had had an opportunity of pronouncing upon this scheme. He asked the House not to allow this Bill to pass until the ratepayers should have had an opportunity of pronouncing upon the issue which was now sought to be raised prematurely. There would be an election next year, when County Councillors would be able to advocate this scheme before their constituents, if they were courageous enough to do so. The hon. Member for Battersea had said that he had put this issue before his constituents at the time of the last election. Perhaps that accounted for the enormous reduction of his majority. ["Hear, hear!"] The necessity for larger offices, and the urgency for them, could not be disputed by anyone who had served on the County Council; but that was not a reason why a site should be selected in the most expensive, instead of the most economical, part of London. He had never attacked the County Council, but he said that the worst enemy of that body was the County Council itself. ["Hear, hear!"] If it wished to become popular and to impress the ratepayers with the good work it had done, the County Council should show Londoners that it went about its work in an economical, businesslike, regular fashion.

MR. C. J. DARLING (Deptford) protested against the doctrine which had been laid down for the guidance of London Members by the Chairman of Committees. London Members looked upon the Second Reading stage of Bills intended to lay a burden on the ratepayers as a very important period. [*Cheers.*] It should be remembered, also, in considering the doctrine of the right hon. Gentleman that there were other Bills before the House introduced by the London County Council. There were the Water Bills. Were the London Members not to debate those Bills on the Second Reading? [*Cheers.*] Were they to be told that, because the ratepayers elected the London County Council, and that if this body by a majority of one, two, three, or half-a-dozen, should bring in any number of Bills, the House was obediently and humbly to read them a second time, and that then the Council might instruct counsel and adopt expensive methods before the Select Committees, whereas they had ready to their hands the opinion of those who were also interested in the ratepayers of London, and who were capable of scotching the evil at a very early period?

*The CHAIRMAN of WAYS and MEANS: What I said was, that if any hon. Member dissented from the principle of the Bill this is the proper time to deal with it; but surely this is not the proper time to consider the details? When the Water Bills come on I shall say the same thing. This is not the proper stage to consider details.

Mr. DARLING said that the principle here was that the ratepayers had not been consulted. When it was proposed in the County Council that the matter should be deferred for a year it would have come before the newly elected Council; and this proposal was only carried by a majority of six. Was it not a principle, moreover, that when they were proposing to spend the money of the ratepayers, and when they asked on what it was to be spent, or what necessity there was for spending it? was it not a principle to urge in opposition to the Trafalgar Square site that there were other sites equally good and cheaper? If the House passed the Second Reading of this Bill it would authorise the acquisition of the Trafalgar Square site. [*Cheers.*] His belief was, that the site had not been fixed upon because it was convenient for those who came from the east or the south of London; it was fixed upon for political motives. ["No, no!"] There was another question of principle involved. If they authorised the building of this hall for the London County Council who was going to build it? It was one of the rooted principles of the County Council that they would not employ anyone to build for them. Were they to sanction the expenditure of a million or a million and a half of the ratepayers' money, and then hand the work over to be dealt with by the Works Committee of the London County Council? [*Cheers.*] Surely when the Council's Building Department was on its trial, almost on a criminal charge, they were entitled to ask whether the ratepayers were prepared to entrust the building of this new palace to those who had shown so little regard for the money of the ratepayers and to the keeping of their accounts. [*Cheers.*] They believed that the ratepayers had a right to be consulted, and the London Members thought that they were acting in their best interests in postponing this question. The Bill should not be sent to a Committee, but should be thrown out, in order that the ratepayers might express their opinion whether the County Council really needed a house like that proposed.

Mr. C. E. SCHWANN (Manchester, N.), as an independent ratepayer of London, heartily supported and approved this proposal. In his judgment the Debate had been carried on in a pettifogging spirit, and it was absurd that a large Municipal Council like that of London should be housed in a back slum. In Manchester they had placed the Town Hall in the finest and best site that could be found in the city; in Birmingham and Glasgow it was the same; and they ought to be ashamed in London to descend to the mean arguments that had been used in respect to the Council proposal. ["Oh, oh!"] The hon. Member for the Strand, and the hon. Member for the Dulwich Division were interested in huge industrial undertakings. Did the House find these hon. Gentlemen housing their workpeople in 15 or 16 small buildings? No; they had concentrated their business undertakings under one roof. It was unworthy to attempt to limit the Municipal Council of the metropolis so as to prevent it from having all the employees within reach, and to show a desire to relegate that body to some mean portion of the metropolis. They had equalised the rates throughout the metropolis, so that they did not rest on one special division. It would be a good piece of economy, as well as an act of justice to London, to provide a proper building for transacting the business of the County Council. In his opinion, therefore, the Bill should be read a Second time, and sent to a Committee upstairs.

*Mr. GIBSON BOWLES (Lynn Regis) said the hon. Member, who called himself a "free and independent" ratepayer, was "free" with other people's money and "independent" of the arguments addressed to him.

Mr. SCHWANN: I am a ratepayer of London.

*Mr. GIBSON BOWLES: Yes, but the hon. Member does not pay all the rates of London.

Mr. SCHWANN: No, but I pay my share.

*Mr. GIBSON BOWLES went on to say that those who meant to vote against the Second Reading of this Bill must have derived great encouragement from the speech of the hon. Member for the Penrith Division of Cumberland. The hon. Gentleman was one of the Members of the Front Bench, one of those secondary pillars of the Government, who had not yet appointed themselves Ministers of the Crown. [*Laughter.*] When those Gentlemen recommended the House to take a certain course the House was apt to take the contrary one—[*Opposition cheers*]—and the speech in question might be regarded as a good omen for the division which was to follow. He was surprised, considering the position of the hon. Gentleman, that he should have said this matter had been too fully discussed. Why, what was the Second Reading stage for? Did he wish them to swallow the Bill whole without any discussion at all? What did the First Lord of the Admiralty think of this precious scheme? And, still more, what was the opinion of the President of the Board of Trade about it? For he was the inventor of this new system, full of new rates and new debts. He submitted that the proper course for the promoters of this stupendous undertaking to have pursued was, first of all, to consult the ratepayers as to whether they desired it; and, secondly, to put prepared plans and detailed estimates before the House. The hon. Member for Battersea put it quite properly when he said the County Council wanted workshops in order to do their business. But Trafalgar Square was the last place in the world where workshops should be set up. ["Hear, hear!" *and laughter.*] Workshops should be in a quiet place; Trafalgar Square was one of the least quiet places in London, as the hon. Member must well know. [*Laughter.*] Did the House realise what the frontage was? The whole of the south side of Trafalgar Square was to be taken, a frontage of 183 yards, or as long as many a rifle range. [*Laughter.*] For aught he knew, the next thing they might be asked to do might be to establish a rifle range in front of the County Council palace.[*Laughter.*] There was another conclusive argument against this scheme at the present time. They could not tell how long the County Council was going to last in its present situation and condition—how long it might be before a considerable change took place in the government of this great metropolis; and if, in the meantime, they allowed the County Council to blossom out into a "palace lifting to eternal summer," the result might be that the County Council palace would be tenanted by the owl and the bittern. [*Laughter.*] In an adjoining country, as everybody knew, the *Hôtel de Ville* had been the centre of every kind of revolutionary idea, and in every time of disorder there had been conflict between the *Hôtel de Ville* and the Chamber of Deputies, often coming to fighting. If the House of Commons allowed a County Council palace to be built close to this House they might one day have great reason to regret it.

Admiral FIELD (Sussex, Eastbourne) rose in his place, and claimed to move, "That the Question be now put"; but Mr. Speaker withheld his assent, and declined then to put that Question:—Debate resumed.

Mr. EVELYN HUBBARD (Brixton, Lambeth) said he voted for this Measure in the County Council, but he proposed to vote against it in this House, because he had since then come to the conclusion that the alternative sites had not been as exhaustively inquired into as was represented at the time. At the same time, he entirely dissociated himself from the suggestion that the Charing Cross site had been selected from any political or sinister motive, a suggestion which was at once unwise, impolitic, and unjust. He considered this simply as a business matter, and, as a business man, he had been much struck during the two years he had been a member of the Council with the practical value of the work done there. No doubt as a young body it had a tendency towards recklessness and extravagance, but its members generally showed a zeal for the public service and a devotion to hard work which he had seldom seen equalled in any other assembly. But it appeared to him that the Charing Cross site was an unnecessarily costly one, and, while he recognised that an extension of premises was absolutely necessary, no harm would be done by delaying the Measure for a year and giving the ratepayers an opportunity of pronouncing upon it at the next elections.

*MR. BURDETT-COUTTS (Westminster) said that it would not be dealing with the subject in the pettifogging spirit mentioned by an hon. Gentleman opposite if he expressed his strong dissent from the doctrine laid down by the hon. Gentleman who spoke from the Front Bench, and who said that if great Corporations like Manchester and Liverpool were to send up a Bill like this to the House of Commons, no Member would think of opposing its principle. The deduction from that argument was clear—that London Members had no right to oppose a principle decided upon by a majority of the London County Council. He, for one, and, he believed, every one of his Friends on that side of the House at least, indignantly rejected a doctrine which would exclude them from the consideration of any proposal, be it of principle or detail, which came before that House, and which affected the interests of the London ratepayers whom they represented. He opposed the Bill also because there was in the municipal atmosphere a very strong movement towards the decentralisation of London government, and he thought it would be extremely foolish for this House or for London Members to assent to an expenditure, which, once assented to, could not be recalled, before they knew how the respective relations and the different functions of the County Council and the separate municipalities, which, no doubt, would come into being, were to be settled and established. His own constituency had taken a leading part in the movement referred to, and he thought that it was premature and wasteful to erect, as was proposed by that Bill, an enormous framework before they knew the proportions or the functions of the machinery which would be placed in it.

SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT (Monmouthshire, W.) declared his entire concurrence in the opinion expressed by the Chairman of Ways and Means. The right hon. Member for London University and the hon. Member for Chelsea put before the House the opinion of the greatest municipality in the country as to what was proper to be done for the convenient administration of the municipality's affairs. Thereupon the hon. Member who moved the Amendment called upon the House to consider whether the site chosen was the best, and suggested a number of other sites. The members of the County Council were responsible to their constituents, and they represented them just as much as hon. Members represented the constituents by whom they were elected. Of course, the House of Commons would not think of treating the proposals of Liverpool, Manchester, or Birmingham as they were asked to treat those of the London County Council. What would the Colonial Secretary say if the House attempted to decide what site the municipality of Birmingham should choose, or what the expenditure should be? The spirit of this extraordinary attempt had been condensed into a single sentence; it was the spirit of "Bother the London County Council." It was well known that among certain people there was a dislike of the County Council; but the proper course for such persons was to alter the Council's constitution by an appeal to the ratepayers. The present question was of such purely domestic interest that the House could not possibly decide it; the House could not judge as to the accommodation necessary for transacting the business of 5,000,000 people; and the House ought not to set aside the opinion of a municipality invested with proper authority and created by hon. Gentlemen opposite. [*Cheers.*] If the Bill were read a Second time all the objections which had been urged by the Mover of the Amendment could be considered in Committee.

MR. BOULNOIS: My objection is that the ratepayer cannot be heard before a Select Committee. He has no *locus standi.* [*Cheers.*]

Sir W. HARCOURT asked what would be said if the House were dealing with the site of a public office and objection were raised to the Bill going to a Committee because the constituencies had not been consulted on the subject. If ever there were a question which a municipal authority had a right to determine it was that before the House. No Party which professed to respect the principles of local self-government would reject the Bill on such a pleading as had been made. [*Cheers.*]

Question put, "That the word 'now' stand part of the Question." The House divided:—Ayes, 146; Noes, 227.—(Division List—No. 33—appended.)

AYES.

Acland, Rt. Hon. A. H. Dyke
Allan, William (Gateshead)
Arch, Joseph
Asquith, Rt. Hn. Herbert Henry
Baird, John George Alexander
Barlow, John Emmott
Beach, Rt. Hn. Sir M. H. (Bristol)
Beckett, Ernest William
Bentinck, Lord Henry C.
Bethell, Captain
Blake, Edward
Bond, Edward
Brigg, John
Bryce, Rt. Hon. James
Buchanan, Thomas Ryburn
Burt, Thomas
Caldwell, James
Cameron, Robert
Campbell-Bannerman, Sir H.
Causton, Richard Knight
Cawley, Frederick
Chamberlain, Rt. Hon. J. (Birm.)
Chamberlain, J. Austen (Worc.)
Cochrane, Hon. Thos. H. A. E.
Collings, Rt. Hon. Jesse
Colville, John
Condon, Thomas Joseph
Courtney, Rt. Hon. Leonard H.
Crombie, John William
Cross, Herb. Shepherd (Bolton)
Curzon, Rt. Hn. G. N. (Lanc. S. W.)
Dalkeith, Earl of
Dalrymple, Sir Charles
Dalziel, James Henry
Davies, M. Vaughan-(Cardigan)
Davitt, Michael
Dilke, Rt. Hon. Sir Charles
Dillon, John
Donelan, Captain A.
Douglas, Rt. Hon. A. Akers-
Dunn, Sir William
Ellis, Thos. Edw. (Merionethsh.)
Farquharson, Dr. Robert
Fenwick, Charles
Ferguson, R. C. Munro (Leith)
Finlay, Sir Robert Bannatyne
Flynn, James Christopher
Folkestone, Viscount
Fry, Lewis
Gilhooly, James
Goddard, Daniel Ford
Gold, Charles
Gordon, John Edward
Gorst, Rt. Hon. Sir John Eldon
Goulding, Edward Alfred
Gourley, Sir Edward Temperley
Graham, Henry Robert
Haldane, Richard Burdon
Hanbury, Rt. Hon. Robert Wm.
Harcourt, Rt. Hon. Sir William
Harrison, Charles
Hayne, Rt. Hon. Charles Seale-
Hazell, Walter
Heaton, John Henniker
Hedderwick, Thomas Chas. H.
Hobhouse, Henry
Hogan, James Francis
Holburn, J. G.
Holden, Angus
Holland, Hon. Lionel Raleigh
Jacoby, James Alfred
Jameson, Major J. Eustace
Jenkins, Sir John Jones
Joicey, Sir James
Jones, David Brynmor (Swansea)
Jones, William (Carnarvonshire)
Kay-Shuttleworth, Rt. Hn. Sir U.
Kearley, Hudson E.
Kinloch, Sir John George Smyth
Kitson, Sir James
Labouchere, Henry
Lambert, George
Lawson, Sir Wilfrid (Cumb'land.)
Leese, Sir Joseph F. (Accrington)
Leng, Sir John
Leuty, Thomas Richmond
Lloyd-George, David
Lockwood, Sir Frank (York)
Lough, Thomas
Lowther, Jas. W. (Cumberland)
Lubbock, Rt. Hon. Sir John
Luttrell, Hugh Fownes
Lyell, Sir Leonard
Lyttelton, Hon. Alfred
Macartney, W. G. Ellison
McArthur, William
M'Hugh, Patrick A. (Leitrim)
McKenna, Reginald
McLeod, John
Montagu, Sir S. (Whitechapel)
Morgan, J. Lloyd (Carmarthen)
Morley, Rt. Hn. John (Montrose)
Morrell, George Herbert
Morton, Edward John Chalmers
Mundella, Rt. Hn. Anthony John
Murray, Rt. Hn. A. Graham (Bute)
O'Connor, T. P. (Liverpool)
O'Kelly, James
Paulton, James Mellor
Power, Patrick Joseph
Price, Robert John
Provand, Andrew Dryburgh
Randell, David
Reckitt, Harold James
Reid, Sir Robert T.
Rickett, J. Compton
Roberts, John H. (Denbighs.)
Robson, William Snowdon
Roche, Hon. James (East Kerry)
Round, James
Russell, T. W. (Tyrone)
Samuel, J. (Stockton-on-Tees)
Shaw, Charles Edw. (Stafford)
Shaw, Thomas (Hawick B.)
Sinclair, Captain John (Forfar)
Smith, Samuel (Flint)
Souttar, Robinson
Spicer, Albert
Stevenson, Francis S.
Strachey, Edward
Tennant, Harold John
Thomas, Abel (Carmarthen, E.)
Thomas, Alfred (Glamorgan, E.)
Wallace, Robert (Edinburgh)
Wallace, Robert (Perth)
Warner, Thomas Courtenay T.
Wayman, Thomas
Webster, Sir R. E. (Isle of Wight)
Williams, John Carvell (Notts.)
Williams, Joseph Powell-(Birm.)
Wills, Sir William Henry
Wilson, John (Durham, Mid)
Wilson, John (Govan)
Wilson, J. W. (Worc'sh. N.)
Woodall, William
Woods, Samuel

Tellers for the Ayes, Mr. Whitmore and Mr. Burns.

NOES.

Allen, Wm. (New.-under-Lyme)
Allsopp, Hon. George
Ambrose, Robert (Mayo, W.)
Anstruther, H. T.
Arrol, Sir William
Ashmead-Bartlett, Sir Ellis
Atherley-Jones, L.
Austin, Sir John (Yorkshire)
Baden-Powell, Sir Geo. Smyth
Bagot, Capt. Joceline FitzRoy
Bailey, James (Walworth)
Baillie, James E. B. (Inverness

Balcarres, Lord
Baldwin, Alfred
Balfour, Gerald William (Leeds)
Banbury, Frederick George
Barry, Francis Tress (Windsor)
Bartley, George C. T.
Bathurst, Hon. Allen Benjamin
Begg, Ferdinand Faithfull
Bhownaggree, M. M.
Biddulph, Michael
Bigwood, James
Birrell, Augustine
Blundell, Colonel Henry
Boscawen, Arthur Griffith-
Bowles, Major H. F. (Middlesex)
Bowles, T. Gibson (King's Lynn)
Brodrick, Rt. Hon. St. John
Brookfield, A. Montagu
Brown, Alexander H.
Bullard, Sir Harry
Burdett-Coutts, W.
Campbell, James A.
Carew, James Laurence
Carlile, William Walter
Carson, Edward
Cavendish, R. F. (N. Lancs.)
Cecil, Lord Hugh
Chaloner, Captain R. G. W.
Channing, Francis Allston
Chaplin, Rt. Hon. Henry
Charrington, Spencer
Clare, Octavius Leigh
Clarke, Sir Edward (Plymouth)
Coghill, Douglas Harry
Cohen, Benjamin Louis
Colomb, Sir John Charles Ready
Colston, Chas. Edw. H. Athole
Compton, Lord Alwyne (Beds.)
Cooke, C. W. Radcliffe (Heref'd)
Corbett, A. Cameron (Glasgow)
Cranborne, Viscount
Crilly, Daniel
Curran, Thomas B. (Donegal)
Curzon, Viscount (Bucks.)
Dalbiac, Major Philip Hugh
Darling, Charles John
Denny, Colonel
Dickson-Poynder, Sir John P.
Dixon, George
Dixon-Hartland, Sir Fred. Dixon
Dorington, Sir John Edward
Drage, Geoffrey
Drucker, A.
Duncombe, Hon. Hubert V.
Dyke, Rt. Hon. Sir William Hart
Egerton, Hon. A. de Tatton
Ellis, John Edward (Notts.)
Fardell, Thomas George
Farquhar, Sir Horace
Fellowes, Hon. Ailwyn Edward
Fergusson, Rt. Hn. Sir J. (Manc'r)
Field, Admiral (Eastbourne)
Fielden, Thomas
Finch, George H.
Firbank, Joseph Thomas
Fisher, William Hayes
FitzGerald, Sir R. U. Penrose
Fitz Wygram, General Sir F.
Flannery, Fortescue
Fletcher, Sir Henry
Foster, Harry S. (Suffolk)
Galloway, William Johnson
Garfit, William
Gedge, Sydney
Gibbs, Hn. A. G. H. (City of Lon.)
Gibbs, Hon. Vicary (St. Albans)
Gilliat, John Saunders
Godson, Augustus Frederick
Goldsworthy, Major-General
Goschen, Rt. Hn. G. J. (St. G'rg's.)
Goschen, George J. (Sussex)
Gray, Ernest (West Ham)
Green, Walford D. (Wdnesbury)
Greene, Henry D. (Shrewsbury)
Gretton, John
Gull, Sir Cameron
Halsey, Thomas Frederick
Hamilton, Rt. Hon. Lord Geo.
Hardy, Laurence
Hare, Thomas Leigh
Heath, James
Helder, Augustus
Hermon-Hodge, Robert Trotter
Hill, Rt. Hn. Lord Arthur (Down)
Hoare, Edw. Brodie (Hampstead)
Hoare, Samuel (Norwich)
Hopkinson, Alfred
Howard, Joseph
Howell, William Tudor
Hozier, James Henry Cecil
Hubbard, Hon. Evelyn
Hutchinson, Capt. G. W. Grice-
Hutton, John (Yorks, N.R.)
Isaacson, Frederick Wootton
Jeffreys, Arthur Frederick
Jessel, Captain Herbert Merton
Johnston, William (Belfast)
Johnstone, John H. (Sussex)
Jolliffe, Hon. H. George
Kennaway, Rt. Hn. Sir John H.
Kenny, William
Kenyon-Slaney, Col. William
Kimber, Henry
King, Sir Henry Seymour
Knowles, Lees
Lafone, Alfred
Laurie, Lieut.-General
Lawrence, Wm. F. (Liverpool)
Lawson, John Grant (Yorks.)
Lecky, William Edward H.
Legh, Hon. Thomas W. (Lancs.)
Leighton, Stanley
Llewellyn, Evan H. (Somerset)
Llewelyn, Sir Dillwyn (Swansea)
Loder, Gerald Walter Erskine
Long, Rt. Hn. Walter (Liverpool)
Lopes, Henry Yarde Buller
Lowles, John
Lowther, Rt. Hon. James (Kent)
Loyd, Archie Kirkman
Lucas-Shadwell, William
Macaleese, Daniel
Macdona, John Cumming
Maclean, James Mackenzie
Maclure, John William
McKillop, James
Manners, Lord Edward Wm. J.
Maple, Sir John Blundell
Marks, Henry Hananel
Massey-Mainwaring, Hn. W. F.
Mellor, Colonel (Lancashire)
Melville, Beresford Valentine
Milbank, Powlett Charles John
Milward, Colonel Victor
Minch, Matthew
Monckton, Edward Philip
Monk, Charles James
Montagu, Hon. J. Scott (Hants)
Moon, Edward Robert Pacy
More, Robert Jasper
Mount, William George
Murdoch, Charles Townshend
Murray, Charles J. (Coventry)
Murray, Col. Wyndham (Bath)
Myers, William Henry
Nicol, Donald Ninian
Northcote, Hon. Sir H. Stafford
O'Brien, Patrick (Kilkenny)
O'Connor, Arthur (Donegal)
Orr-Ewing, Charles Lindsay
Palmer, Sir Charles M. (Durham)
Penn, John
Platt-Higgins, Frederick
Plunkett, Hon. Horace Curzon
Powell, Sir Francis Sharp
Pryce-Jones, Edward
Pym, C. Guy
Renshaw, Charles Bine
Richardson, Thomas
Ridley, Rt. Hon. Sir Matthew W.
Russell, Gen. F. S. (Cheltenham)
Samuel, Harry S. (Limehouse)
Scoble, Sir Andrew Richard
Seely, Charles Hilton
Sharpe, William Edward T.
Sidebotham, J. W. (Cheshire)
Simeon, Sir Barrington
Sinclair, Louis (Romford)
Skewes-Cox, Thomas
Smith, Abel (Herts)
Smith, Abel H. (Christchurch)
Smith, Hon. W. F. D. (Strand)
Spencer, Ernest
Stanley, Lord (Lancs.)
Stephens, Henry Charles
Stone, Sir Benjamin
Strutt, Hon. Charles Hedley
Sturt, Hon. Humphry Napier
Sullivan, Donal (Westmeath)
Sutherland, Sir Thomas
Talbot, Lord E. (Chichester)
Talbot, John G. (Oxford Univ.)
Taylor, Francis
Thorburn, Walter
Thornton, Percy M.
Tomlinson, Wm. Edw. Murray
Valentia, Viscount
Walrond, Sir William Hood
Warkworth, Lord
Webster, R. G. (St. Pancras)
Welby, Lt.-Col. A. C. E.
Wharton, John Lloyd
Whittaker, Thomas Palmer
Williams, Colonel R. (Dorset)
Willoughby de Eresby, Lord
Willox, John Archibald
Wilson, John (Falkirk)
Wilson-Todd, Wm. H. (Yorks.)
Wodehouse, Edmond R. (Bath)
Wolff, Gustav Wilhelm
Wortley, Rt. Hon. C. B. Stuart-
Wylie, Alexander
Wyndham-Quin, Major W. H.
Wyvill, Marmaduke d'Arcy
Younger, William

TELLERS FOR THE NOES, Mr. Boulnois and Mr. Tritton.

Words added.

Main Question, as amended, put, and agreed to. Second Reading put off for six months.

QUESTIONS.

ARMY IN INDIA (HEALTH).

MAJOR RASCH (Essex, S.E.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for India if he can say when the Departmental Committee of Inquiry on the Health of the Army in India will produce their Report; and whether it will be placed in the hands of Members when printed?

*THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR INDIA (Lord GEORGE HAMILTON, Middlesex, Ealing): It is hoped that the Report will be complete in a few days. I propose, after I have had time to consider it, to make it public.

GENERAL RUSSELL (Cheltenham): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for War whether he has any objection to state the names of the Members of the Departmental Committee which has been appointed to inquire into the health of the Army in India; and, whether he can state when it is probable that the Report of the Committee will be completed?

*LORD GEORGE HAMILTON: The Members of the Departmental Committee appointed to report on the health of the Army in India are: Lord Onslow, President; Sir James Peile, Member of the Council of India; Surgeon-Major-General W. Taylor, Army Medical Department; and Surgeon-Colonel J. Richardson, Indian Medical Service (retired). It is hoped that the Report may be ready in a few days for consideration by the Secretary of State.

INDIAN FAMINE.

MR. R. SOUTTAR (Dumfriesshire): On behalf of the hon. Member for Banffshire (Sir WILLIAM WEDDERBURN), I beg to ask the Secretary of State for India whether, pending the receipt of the complete statistics of mortality which have been called for, he will give the House an approximate estimate (based upon the reports of the local officials) of the number of deaths, up to the present date, believed to be due to famine in the various affected districts?

SIR JAMES FERGUSSON (Manchester, N.E.), asked whether the noble Lord the Secretary of State for India would consider the desirability of not disturbing officers in their beneficent labours in looking after distressed people by calling upon them to prepare returns of unnecessary statistics? [*Cheers.*]

*LORD GEORGE HAMILTON: As I stated in reply to a previous Question by the hon. Member for Banffshire, I shall include in the famine papers to be laid on the Table from time to time all the information received from India regarding mortality in the famine districts; and I have called for monthly mortality returns for all famine tracts in which the mortality was considerably above the normal. The second set of famine papers, which I hope to lay on the Table by Monday, will contain partial information on the matter. In reply to my right hon. Friend the Member for North East Manchester, I must say that I do not think it right to present to the House conjectural estimates in anticipation of correct information, or to ask the Government of India, whose time is more than filled up by urgent practical work, to transfer any portion of their attention from such work to the framing of speculative estimates of mortality.

CHILDREN'S METROPOLITAN ASYLUMS BOARD.

MR. WALTER HAZELL (Leicester): I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board whether the remanded children, who are one of the classes for whom it is proposed to establish the new Metropolitan Children's Asylums' Board, under the Local Government Board, are already under the Home Office and the London School Board; and whether, seeing that it is through the action of the School Board that many of them are first apprehended, and that they are subsequently placed under the Home Office, he will consider the advisability of leaving the temporary provision for them in the hands of one or other of the authorities which already have to deal with them?

THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF TRADE (Mr. C. T. RITCHIE, Croydon): Under the existing law the Guardians, and the Guardians alone, are responsible for the care and maintenance of children who, prior to the question of an order being made for removal to an industrial school being determined, are remanded to the workhouse. In many workhouses there is no suitable accommodation for these children, or only accommodation which does not properly provide for their being kept separate from other inmates. The provision of such accommodation for children of either sex in each of the 30 Unions in the Metropolis, with the necessary staff for supervision, will entail a very considerable expenditure—an expenditure greatly in excess of what would be entailed by separate provision for children of the class referred to. The total number of such children for which provision would be required would probably be not more than 100 or 120.

MR. J. G. TALBOT (Oxford University): I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board whether his attention has been drawn to a conference of Guardians of the various Unions and parishes of the Metropolis, and the managers of the District Schools in the same area, to consider the proposed order for the formation of a new Board for the management of various classes of children chargeable to the rates, which has been announced to take place on Friday 26th inst.; and, whether he will give an assurance that he will take no final action in the matter until it has been fully considered by the representative bodies of London?

THE PRESIDENT OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (Mr. HENRY CHAPLIN, Lincolnshire, Sleaford): I am aware of the proposed conference of Guardians on the 26th inst., and I do not contemplate issuing the Order before that date.

NAVAL INSTRUCTORS.

MR. GIBSON BOWLES (Lynn Regis): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Admiralty (1) whether his attention has been given to the regulations under which sub-lieutenants, midshipmen, and naval cadets are required to pay to the Naval Instructor 3d. a day each for tuition; and (2) whether the Admiralty will relieve sub-lieutenants, midshipmen, and naval cadets from the obligation to provide from their very small pay so large a proportionate contribution to the much greater pay of the Naval Instructors?

THE FIRST LORD OF THE ADMIRALTY (Mr. GOSCHEN, St. George's, Hanover Square): My answer to the first question of the hon. Member is in the negative. The payment of £5 a year by young officers to their instructors is of very long standing, but I have no objection to the question being considered by the Committee which I propose to appoint.

RAMS (WARSHIPS).

MR. GIBSON BOWLES: I beg to ask the First Lord of the Admiralty whether his attention has been called to the allegation that on Thursday, 4th February, in Portsmouth Harbour, H.M.S. *Inflexible* parted her bridles, and would have drifted, broadside on, on to the ram of H.M.S. *Hero*, which was only prevented by the promptitude and presence of mind displayed by the officers and crews of both ships; and whether the Admiralty will make further inquiry into the occurrences of narrow escapes of ramming one of Her Majesty's ships by another?

THE FIRST LORD OF THE ADMIRALTY: Our information says nothing about the ram of the *Hero*. Whenever any accident happens, or any occurrence takes place which seems to demand inquiry, inquiry is forthwith made.

MAIDSTONE ASSIZES.

MR. HENNIKER HEATON (Canterbury): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether his attention has been called to the fact that two prisoners, George Thompson and Thomas Pope, were tried and acquitted at the Maidstone Assizes on 19th November last, and that the former had been in prison five months and two weeks, and the latter in prison also awaiting trial over six months; what compensation are Pope and Thompson to receive for their incarceration; whether he is aware that at the Maidstone Assizes in November 1894 four prisoners were found not guilty; of these two were found to be not guilty by the Grand

Jury and two after trial, and that one of the four prisoners had been in prison 5½ months, and each of the other three for over three months awaiting trial; also that at the Maidstone Assizes in November 1895 five prisoners had been found not guilty, two by the Grand Jury and three after trial, and two were in prison over four months, the other three for three months, awaiting trial; and whether he has any objection to granting a Return showing the number of prisoners sent for trial to assizes last year and acquitted, and the period elapsing between the committal and acquittal?

*THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE HOME DEPARTMENT (Sir MATTHEW WHITE RIDLEY, Lancashire, Blackpool): Yes, sir; I am aware of the long detention in prison before trial of the two prisoners named. It is a matter of great regret that the present Circuit arrangements necessitated this; but I am afraid a claim for compensation could not be entertained. I have not the means of verifying the statements in the third paragraph of the Question, but have no reason to suppose they are inaccurate. Returns for 1895, giving the particulars suggested by the hon. Member, will appear in the forthcoming volume of the Judicial Statistics, which will be presented within a few weeks.

POST OFFICE LETTER WEIGHTS.

MR. J. E. GORDON (Elgin and Nairn): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury, as representing the Postmaster General, whether the Postmaster General will arrange to have tested letter weights on sale at all post offices?

THE SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY (Mr. R. W. HANBURY, Preston): The Postmaster General is not prepared to make arrangements for keeping letter weights on sale at post offices. Such a course would involve competition with the ordinary trade, and would, it is considered, be altogether outside the scope of the functions of the Department.

COMMUTATION OF SENTENCE (JAMES BATE).

MR. E. H. PICKERSGILL (Bethnal Green, S. W.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, with reference to the case of James Bate, who was convicted of murder and sentenced to death at Liverpool Assizes on the 20th November last, and left for execution on Tuesday morning, the 8th December, whether he communicated to the Governor of Walton Gaol his decision that the law must take its course in Bate's case; and, if so, on what day was this communication made; on what day did he order the respite of the execution of Bate; between these two dates did any new facts in the case come to his knowledge; and, if so, what were they; on what day and at what hour was the fact of the respite communicated to Bate; and, upon what grounds did he advise the Crown to commute the capital penalty in this case?

*SIR MATTHEW WHITE RIDLEY: I should be departing from the course which has been taken uniformly by all my predecessors in similar circumstances if I were to answer in detail the series of questions which the hon. Member has asked me. At the same time I have no desire to keep anything back which I can properly lay before the House. The murder, though committed in a moment of drunken fury and in circumstances of considerable provocation, was in other respects of such a nature that I felt that the circumstances as a whole, and regarded in themselves, did not justify reprieve, and that the recommendation of the jury to that effect must be disregarded. After my decision was made public, I received such clear evidence by numerous and weighty representations from all quarters of the existence of a genuine and unanimous sentiment in favour of mercy that I was forced to the belief that the execution of the extreme penalty would change indignation at an atrocious crime into compassion for the criminal, and, giving weight, as my predecessors have done in exceptional cases to this consideration, advised Her Majesty to commute the sentence.

AKASSA GARRISON.

SIR CHARLES DILKE (Gloucester, Forest of Dean): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether a company of West India troops has been sent to garrison Akassa during the absence at Bida of the forces of the Niger Company; and, whether the grievances of the Brass men, stated in Sir J.

Kirk's Report to be such as no Government would wish to see continued, have been redressed?

*The UNDER SECRETARY of STATE for FOREIGN AFFAIRS (Mr. Curzon, Lancashire, Southport): 100 men of the 2nd West India Regiment have been sent to assist in holding the Delta of the Niger, including Akassa, during the operations north of Lokoja. A *modus vivendi* with reference to the Brass men was proposed last year. But the matter has not been finally settled, and must be again taken in hand after the return of the Company's expedition.

DAUNT'S ROCK LIGHTSHIP.

Captain DONELAN (Cork, E.): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade if he can state by whom the Inquiry into the circumstances connected with the loss of the lightship *Puffin* will be held; whether arrangements will be made for the presence of a nautical assessor, and whether the Court will have authority to compel the attendance of witnesses and to examine them on oath; and, whether the Inquiry will be open to the Press and the public?

Mr. RITCHIE: The Inquiry into the circumstances attending the loss of the *Puffin* will be held by the Chief Magistrate at Dublin with Nautical Assessors appointed by the Secretary of State. The Court will have authority to compel the attendance of witnesses and to examine them on oath; and the Inquiry will be open to the Press and to the public according to the usual practice.

Captain DONELAN asked whether the right hon. Gentleman would consider the desirability of transferring the venue to Queenstown or Cork.

Mr. RITCHIE said he had not considered that point, but if the hon. Gentleman chose to make any representation on the subject he would consider it.

LISTOWEL BOARD OF GUARDIANS.

Mr. J. C. FLYNN (Cork, N.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether his attention has been drawn to a petition for the remission of a sum of £87 18s. demanded of the Listowel Board of Guardians as one month's interest on an overdue instalment of a seed loan at the rate of 60 per cent. per annum; whether, if the instalment due on the 1st August were paid on or before the 31st August no interest would be demanded, and whether the Guardians sent payment in full on 1st October, but the cheque was returned and £87 18s. additional demanded; and, in view of the fact that the Lord Lieutenant has power under Section 7 of the Seed Act to extend the time of repayment, if he will advise the Treasury not to press for this additional sum?

Mr. JOHN DILLON (Mayo, E.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, whether it is a fact that the Treasury demanded interest at the rate of 60 per cent. per annum from the Listowel Board of Guardians on a balance of an instalment under the Seed Loan Act of 1895, although the amount in question was tendered in full by the guardians one month after it became overdue; and, if so, whether he will use his influence with the Treasury to withdraw this demand?

The CHIEF SECRETARY for IRELAND (Mr. Gerald Balfour, Leeds, Central): It appears that the Listowel Board of Guardians obtained an advance of £3,517 14s. 9d. under the Seed Potatoes Supply Act of 1895, and that the first instalment amounting to £1,758 17s. 4d. became due on the 1st August, 1896. A Receivable Order for the lodgment of the latter sum was forwarded by the Board of Works to the Guardians on the 31st July, and their attention was called on the face of the document to the liability to poundage if the instalments were not paid within 31 days from that date. Poundage charge is in the nature of a penalty, and is not to be confused with interest. The Treasury have, I understand, fully considered the question raised in this and similar cases, and I see no advantage to be gained in asking them to reopen it.

Mr. FLYNN said the right hon. Gentleman admitted that there was only a month's delay. How could there be any question of impounding when there was no receiver appointed?

Mr. GERALD BALFOUR believed that what was done was strictly in accordance with the law.

Mr. FLYNN said he would repeat his Question on another day.

Mr. DILLON: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether his attention has been drawn to the great distress prevalent in the Union of Listowel, county Kerry, owing to the partial failure of the potato crop, and the almost total failure of the oat crop; and, whether the Government will consider the necessity of instituting relief works in the Union, and supplying the people with seed oats for the present year?

Mr. GERALD BALFOUR: On the 8th inst. I informed the hon. Member for West Limerick that careful inquiries had been made as to the condition of the poorer classes in the Listowel Union, but that the result of these inquiries did not point to the conclusion that it would become necessary to supplement the resources of the Poor Law by the opening of relief works. I see no reason to alter the opinion so recently expressed by me regarding the opening of such works. With regard, however, to the question of the supply of seed oats to the small occupiers in this Union, I believe it is a fact that the oat crop of last season in the Union was a bad one, but except in one or two instances Boards of Guardians have not signified a desire for legislation enabling them to be provided with a supply of fresh seed by means of loans. Should such a desire be generally expressed, I should be prepared to consider the matter; but I may observe the time is now running short.

MAIL DELIVERY (COUNTY CORK).

Mr. JAMES GILHOOLY (Cork Co., W.): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury, as representing the Postmaster General, whether his attention has been directed to the defective system of transit and delivery of the mails between Skibbereen and Crookhaven; and whether, in view of the fact that Schull and Crookhaven are important fishing stations, he will give improved postal arrangements in the districts referred to?

Mr. HANBURY: Schull and Crookhaven are served by mail car from Skibbereen. The mails reach Schull at 8.33 a.m. and Crookhaven at 10.35 a.m., and leave Crookhaven at 1.40 p.m. and Schull at 3.43 p.m. Up to the present this is the best arrangement of which the circumstances have admitted. The question of using the Skibbereen and Schull Tramway for the conveyance of mails has recently been pressed upon the Department, and the matter is now under inquiry. When a report is received the result shall be communicated to the hon. Member.

CASTLEBAR UNION.

Dr. ROBERT AMBROSE (Mayo, W.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether his attention has been called to the acute distress which prevails in the Nephin Mountain electoral divisions of the Castlebar Union owing to the failure of the potato crop and the low price of agricultural produce; and what steps he proposes to take to mitigate such distress, and to enable the people to crop their holdings during the coming spring?

Mr. GERALD BALFOUR: Representations have been made alleging the existence of distress in the locality mentioned in the Question, but the official Reports received do not indicate anything in the nature of abnormal destitution which the Poor Law will be unable to cope with, or which calls for the opening of relief works as suggested in the memorials addressed to Government.

CAIRN AT FINNER, COUNTY DONEGAL.

Mr. PATRICK O'BRIEN (Kilkenny): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for War whether he has any objection to give the name of the person who supplied the information relative to the cairn at Finner, County Donegal; whether he is aware that the Royal Society of Antiquarians of Ireland hold that the formation is properly described as a cairn; that human remains, believed to be those of Irish chieftains who died in battle, were discovered 20 years ago in the chamber, and are now in a vault adjoining the cairn; that there is no such place known as Muldoon's grave; and that the Society has taken up the matter with a view to disproving the statements made and protecting the place from further interference by the contractor for the rifle range; whether he is aware that the officer in charge of the construction of the rifle range, Mr. Hogg, was conducted over the place on the 11th instant by some local antiquarians and was given the fullest information concerning the cairn; and whether, as material for the construction of the rifle range is easily obtainable in other parts of the district, he will see that no more stones are removed from the immediate neighbourhood of the cairn?

*THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY TO THE WAR OFFICE (Mr. POWELL-WILLIAMS, Birmingham, S.): It is not usual to give the names of officers by whom reports of this character are made in the course of their duty. I have no doubt that in this case the officer reported according to the best information which was open to him at the time he wrote. The matter seems, however, to be one on which even antiquarians are not agreed. Whether there is a cairn or a grave or not no further removal of materials will take place.

POOR LAW RELIEF BILL (IRELAND).

MR. PATRICK O'BRIEN: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether attendants at present in charge of lunatics in Irish workhouses would be eligible for service in the auxiliary asylums to be established under the proposed Poor Law Relief Bill?

MR. GERALD BALFOUR: Competent attendants will, of course, be eligible for service in the central auxiliaries proposed to be established under the Bill.

LABOURERS' ACTS (COUNTY DONEGAL).

MR. ARTHUR O'CONNOR (Donegal, E.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland why nothing has yet been done in respect of a representation under the Labourers' Acts lodged six months ago by Charles M'Daid, Neal M'Namee, and John M'Geehan, of Aughygault, near Stranorlar, in County Donegal?

MR. GERALD BALFOUR: The Local Government Board have already authorised the erection of three cottages in this townland, and, pending the receipt of representations from other districts, the consideration of the applications from the labourers named was deferred, as the expense of proceeding with a scheme for a few houses would be out of proportion to the result. The three applications in question will not be lost sight of, however, but will be taken into consideration as soon as a reasonable number of other similar applications have been received.

SOUTH SHOAL, ORKNEY.

MR. J. W. CROMBIE (Kincardineshire: I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade whether he is aware of the dangerous nature to fishermen of the rock known as the "South Shoal" off Hoy Head, Orkney; and whether a buoy or bell-buoy could be fixed there?

MR. RITCHIE: I have communicated with the Commissioners of Northern Lighthouses on the subject of the hon. Member's Question; but I am informed that they are not aware of a danger to navigation known as the "South Shoal" off Hoy Head, Orkney. Perhaps the hon. Member will supply some information which will enable me to identify the rock to which he refers.

"NELSON'S ENCHANTRESS" (STAGE PLAY).

ADMIRAL FIELD (Sussex, Eastbourne): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether he will ascertain if the Lord Chamberlain has had his attention called to the performance of a play at the Avenue Theatre last week called "Nelson's Enchantress," in which the greatest Naval commander of the century, who died in the service of his country, is held up to public contempt; whether the Lord Chamberlain will call upon the manager of the said theatre to withdraw the play in question, under a distinct notice that otherwise the licence to perform stage plays will be suspended or withdrawn; and whether, seeing that a former Lord Chamberlain prohibited a certain performance in a London theatre which lampooned the Members of the Government of that day (1870-74), similar protection will be afforded to the memory of the honoured dead?

MR. HARRY FOSTER (Suffolk, Lowestoft): Before the right hon. Gentleman answers the Question, I should like to ask him whether he is aware that the public performance of the play named under the shadow of Nelson's monument has caused considerable indignation and pain in the counties of Norfolk and Suffolk, where the memory of Lord Nelson is especially cherished. [*Laughter and ironical cheers.*]

*SIR MATTHEW WHITE RIDLEY: I am not aware of any feeling of indignation in the counties mentioned. I had no knowledge of the play referred to until my attention was called to it by the Question on the Paper. I am informed by the Lord Chamberlain that the play was duly submitted to him for licence, and that, as the play contained nothing which in his Lordship's judgment would justify a refusal, the licence was granted, and it is not proposed to withdraw it.

ADMIRAL FIELD: Am I to understand from that answer that the Lord Chamberlain will sanction dragging up the Duke of Wellington and other heroes—

MR. SPEAKER: Order, order!

ADMIRAL FIELD: Then, Sir, I beg to give notice that, in consequence of the answer that has been given, I will draw attention to the matter when the salary of the Lord Chamberlain comes up to be voted. [*Laughter.*]

PRISON-MADE GOODS.

MR. J. H. DALZIEL (Kirkcaldy Burghs): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade what is the cause of the delay in the publication of the correspondence with foreign countries on the subject of prison-made goods?

MR. RITCHIE: The correspondence has been presented, and will be delivered to hon. Members on application to the Vote Office.

CHAIN PIER, BRIGHTON.

MR. GERALD LODER (Brighton): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade whether he is aware that the remaining piles and stumps of the Old Chain Pier at Brighton are a serious cause of danger to pleasure boats and fishing smacks; and whether he can take steps to have them removed without delay?

MR. RITCHIE: I am aware that the piles and stumps of the Old Chain Pier at Brighton have not been removed, and that they may become a cause of danger to shore navigation. The removal of this Pier is provided for by the Brighton Marine Palace and Pier Acts, 1888, 1893, and 1896, the effect of which is to impose the duty upon the Pier Company of removing the piles and materials within 12 months after notice in writing from the Brighton Corporation, and further to empower the Board of Trade to remove them if the Company abandon the removal after it has been commenced. I have been in communication with the Company as to their statutory duties, and have been informed by them that they have entered into a contract for the removal of the remaining piles and stumps, which will be effected as soon as the weather permits. The attention of the company has been directed to the requirements of the Act as to providing buoys and lights, under the direction of the Trinity House, to obviate danger to navigation.

MAGISTERIAL DISTRICTS (IRELAND).

MR. D. MACALEESE (Monaghan, N.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland if in Ireland it is customary for the Lord Chancellor when appointing magistrates to assign certain districts of a county in which they are to adjudicate; if so, why in their deed of commission are they nominated county magistrates; should they insist on adjudicating in districts of their county outside those mentioned in their deed of commission, what punishment would be inflicted; and when did the custom begin to exist of Lord Chancellors limiting the exercise of judicial functions to particular districts in the case of the appointment of county magistrates?

MR. GERALD BALFOUR: It is the practice of the Lord Chancellor, as it was of his predecessor, to notify each person about to be appointed to the county magistracy the district or districts in which only he is to attend at Petty Sessions, and that the commission will be issued to him on the understanding that without the sanction of the Lord Chancellor he shall only attend the Petty Sessions of the district or districts assigned to him. The Lord Chancellor cannot anticipate what course he would deem it his duty to adopt in the event of a magistrate disregarding this regulation, as each case must depend upon its own circumstances.

RIOT (COUNTY FERMANAGH).

MR. MACALEESE: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that on the night of 28th August 1896 a riot took place in Tempo, county Fermanagh, in which 17 houses tenanted by Roman Catholics were wrecked by Orangemen, that the residence of the parish priest was smashed, and the church attacked; has his attention been drawn to the fact that John Breen, Tempo, in his statutory declaration forwarded to the Attorney General, deposed that an attempt was made by the Orangemen to burn his house, and that his child was twice struck by stones in its cradle; is he also aware that the police were frequently attacked with stones during the night by the Orange crowd, and that two women in their houses were seriously assaulted; and, in view of the fact that the police gave sworn testimony that between 150 and 200 Orangemen took part in the riot, will he state how many of these alleged rioters have been brought to justice?

MR. GERALD BALFOUR: The facts are generally as stated in the question, though very slight injury was done, I am informed, to the Roman Catholic Church, and no serious injury was sustained by any person on the occasion. Five of the most prominent rioters of each party were prosecuted and tried at the Belfast Winter Assizes, the trials resulting in nine convictions, carrying terms of imprisonment varying from 14 days to four months, and one acquittal. The decision of the Government to proceed against five of the principal rioters of each party was arrived at after a full consideration of all the circumstances of the case. I may mention that in the earlier stages of the rioting both the Roman Catholic and the Protestant parties were nearly evenly matched, and were equally to blame; the Protestant party, it is true, was afterwards reinforced, and got the upper hand. By the course followed by the Government peace and good order have been happily restored at Tempo.

EXECUTION OF MR. STOKES.

MR. H. D. GREENE (Shrewsbury): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs when the documents and information and correspondence in the possession of Her Majesty's Government, with reference to the execution of Mr. Stokes and the confiscation of his property, and the proceedings in Boma and Brussels, which were promised on the 10th August, will be circulated; whether the Congo Government has complied with the request of Her Majesty's Government to restore the property of Mr. Stokes, or has refused to comply; and whether Her Majesty's Government will insist on their requirements in relation thereto?

*MR. CURZON: The Papers relating to the Stokes case have been delayed in order that they may include the result of the negotiations with the Congo Government concerning Mr. Stokes's property. These have now been completed, and have resulted in an offer from the Congo Government to hand over the sum of 147,550 francs as representing the total value of all the goods belonging to the estate. This offer has been accepted by Her Majesty's Government, and the Papers will be circulated as soon as possible.

NAVAL FORCE OF POWERS AT CONSTANTINOPLE.

MR. F. S. STEVENSON (Suffolk, Eye): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs what is the total number of European gunboats at present stationed at Constantinople; and whether, in view of the possibility of a fanatical outbreak, the Ambassadors have requested or advised the adoption of further precautions?

*MR. CURZON: The ships of Her Majesty's Navy now at Constantinople are the *Cockatrice*, which is on her way to the Danube; the *Melita*, and the *Imogene*. We do not know the total number of gunboats there, but it is believed that Austria, France, and Italy have each two, and Germany and Russia one each, making a total in all of 11. Her Majesty's Ambassador reported on the 3rd instant that precautions were being taken by the authorities, in view of the possibility of disturbances occurring during the month of Ramazan.

SCHOOL ENDOWMENT (IRELAND).

MR. WILLIAM JOHNSTON (Belfast, S.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland when the Scheme passed by the Privy Council relating to Limerick, Killaloe, and Kilfenora Diocesan School Endowment will be laid upon the Table for consideration by the House; and, whether Canon Gregg's petition, and that of 34 ratepayers of Limerick City, will at the same time be submitted to the House?

Mr. GERALD BALFOUR: The supplemental scheme for the government and management of this Endowment was laid on the Table of the House on the 11th inst. Copies of the two petitions referred to were attached to the Scheme, and all three documents have been ordered to be printed for circulation.

LAND SUB-COMMISSION (IRELAND).

Mr. E. CARSON (Dublin University): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland on what grounds the Irish Land Commission have refused to allow Mr. Harvey, who gave evidence of value before the Sub-Commission Court in certain cases of Mr. Collum in Fermanagh and has since been appointed a Sub-Commissioner, to give evidence upon an appeal brought by Mr. R. Collum; and whether the Land Commission have power to prevent Mr. Harvey from attending to give evidence if served with a subpœna ad test?

Mr. GERALD BALFOUR: It has been found necessary to refer this Question to the Land Commissioners, who are at present on Circuit, and I am not in a position to reply to-day. I hope, however, to have the information necessary to enable me to reply to-morrow, but, if not, I will be able to do so on Monday next.

BRITISH SOUTH AFRICA (SELECT COMMITTEE).

Mr. FLYNN: I beg to ask the First Commissioner of Works whether his attention has been called to the very defective arrangements for ventilating the Committee Room in which the British South African Committee now meet; and whether it is possible to arrange for an improvement on this condition of things?

The FIRST COMMISSIONER OF WORKS (Mr. Akers-Douglas, Kent, St. Augustine's): The ventilating arrangements of the room in question are not all that could be desired when so large a number of persons as occupied the room on Tuesday last are present. I am doing my best to improve the ventilation, and to this end I have given directions that an electric fan shall be erected to increase the circulation of air in the room.

ELECTION OF CORONER (COUNTY TIPPERARY).

Mr. PATRICK O'BRIEN: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, is he aware that the meeting of the Justices of Tipperary called in connection with the pending election of a coroner was held on the 11th instant, and decided not to change the places of polling used at previous elections of a coroner for the south division of Tipperary; and, has the writ for the election yet been issued; if not, why; and when will it be issued?

Mr. GERALD BALFOUR: A meeting of the Justices of the County of Tipperary was held on the 11th inst., for the purpose of dividing the South Riding of the county into coroners' districts, but the Justices, under a misapprehension as to what was necessary, failed to comply with the requirements of the Act of Parliament, inasmuch as they neither fixed a place for the holding of the election nor did they make any order as to polling places. To remedy this defect the Lord Lieutenant has been advised that the proceedings for a re-division must be gone over de novo, and he has intimated his readiness to grant a new Warrant for that purpose at the earliest convenient date. The Writ for the new election of a coroner will at once be issued when the re-division of the Riding has been carried into effect.

POLICE PROTECTION DUTY (COUNTY CLARE).

Mr. PATRICK O'BRIEN: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland (1) whether he is aware that that the police of Kilcooney and Ballyvaughan, County Clare, are in the habit of patrolling farms belonging to Thomas Markham, and at times, in the absence of the herdsmen, counting the cattle and sheep on the lands; and (2) whether this is within the duties of the police; if not, will the police be instructed to confine themselves to protection duty?

Mr. GERALD BALFOUR: The facts are substantially as stated in the first paragraph. Markham is under police protection, and the police, in the discharge of their duties and as a precautionary measure, occasionally examine and count his cattle and sheep.

ARMY WARRANT OFFICERS (GOOD CONDUCT MEDAL).

Mr. CHARLES COLSTON (Gloucester, Thornbury): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for War whether, having regard to the fact that the good conduct medal is greatly prized by Warrant Officers, who find its possession of great value to them when seeking civil employment, and the further fact that members of the Army who attain Warrant rank before 18 years' service are under present regulations debarred from receiving this particular medal, the Government would place them on the same footing as those who become Warrant Officers after having served 18 years in the Army?

*Mr. POWELL-WILLIAMS: I would refer my hon. Friend to a reply made in this House in 1894 by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Stirling District on this subject, in which the Secretary of State fully concurs. The point of that answer was that Warrant rank is in itself a better testimony of good conduct than any medal could afford. The wish of the military authorities is to make the status of a Warrant Officer approach more nearly to that of a Commissioned Officer than to the conditions which hold in the ranks, and they consider that to reward a Warrant Officer for ordinary good conduct by the grant of a medal would be a step in the opposite direction.

CARBIDE OF CALCIUM.

Mr. HUDSON KEARLEY (Devonport): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade whether he is aware that large quantities of carbide of calcium are being imported to this country; and whether, having regard to its dangerous nature when exposed to air, any steps are being taken to regulate its storage; and, if not, whether Clause 14 of the Petroleum Act can be made to extend to its inclusion?

*Sir MATTHEW WHITE RIDLEY: The dangers attending the storage and conveyance of carbide of calcium have been occupying the attention of the inspectors of explosives for some months, and steps are being taken to apply to this substance by an Order in Council the provisions of the Petroleum Acts. A memorandum will eventually be issued to local authorities suggesting the precautions to be adopted for preventing risk.

"CHURCH LEY" (MANCHESTER).

Mr. CARVELL WILLIAMS (Notts, Mansfield): I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board whether he is aware that, notwithstanding the objection taken by the Local Government Board to the practice of including "Church Ley" in the demand notes of the township of Manchester for poor and other rates, a paper headed "due on demand" is still issued with the item "Church Ley at 1d. in the pound for the year—(optional)"; and, whether the Board will take steps to prevent the inclusion of a voluntary church rate in a demand for rates which are compulsory?

Mr. CHAPLIN: I was not aware that the practice referred to had been continued. Although in the form of demand note it is stated that the payment of the "Church Ley" is optional, the inclusion of this item in the demand note which is headed with the words "due on demand" is, I think, reasonably open to objection. I am advised that it is not clear that the Local Government Board have any power which would enable them to prevent the inclusion of the "Church Ley" in the demand note, but the Board will communicate with the overseers on the subject.

MUSSULMANS IN CRETE.

Sir ELLIS ASHMEAD-BARTLETT (Sheffield, Ecclesall): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether Her Majesty's Government have confirmation of the reports that 300 Mussulmans have been massacred by the Cretan insurgents in Sitia, that 13 Mussulman villages have been there destroyed, and that Mussulman women and children have been killed and mutilated at Kisanmo Kasteli; whether there has been a general massacre of the Mussulman inhabitants of Sitia; and, whether he will direct special inquiry as to the fate of the Mussulman inhabitants of the interior of Crete?

*Mr. CURZON: Her Majesty's Consul telegraphed on the 12th instant that the Commander of Her Majesty's ship *Dragon* had been informed by the Governor of Sitia that 300 Turks had been killed there, and that he feared the massacre of the Christians in the towns in revenge. We have received no confirmation of this report, nor have we heard that there has been a general massacre of the Mussulman inhabitants of Sitia. On the 9th instant the Turkish authorities informed Her Majesty's Consul that 23 Mussulmans had been murdered at Kissamo Castelli, but of this report also no later confirmation has yet been received. I am afraid that in the present condition of affairs, Her Majesty's Consul has few opportunities of communicating with the interior of the island; but I have no objection to telegraphing to him for any information that he may be able to give on the subject.

Mr. DILLON: Will the right hon. Gentleman include in his telegram an inquiry as to the truth of a report that six Christians were put into a bakery and roasted alive?

*Mr. CURZON: I think that allegation applies to Canea, where the Consul is, and I doubt not that he will inform us of any such occurrences.

Mr. DILLON: But will the right hon. Gentleman mind asking him; it is a very horrible allegation?

*Mr. CURZON: I will do so.

BENIN EXPEDITION.

*Sir JOHN COLOMB (Great Yarmouth): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Admiralty (1) what is the approximate number of blue-jackets, Marine Artillery, and Marine Infantry, respectively, engaged in active operations at Benin; and (2) what is the rank of the senior officer of Marines present, and is he under the control and command of naval officers during these purely military operations?

The FIRST LORD of the ADMIRALTY: The telegrams which we have received give no details which enable me to answer the first question of the hon. and gallant Member. We have also no knowledge of the particular officers landed, beyond those mentioned in the telegram which has been published. The whole force is under the control and command of Admiral Rawson.

*Sir J. COLOMB asked whether it was in accordance with Admiralty rules that in active operations on shore officers specially trained in military operations on land should be under the command of officers specially trained in naval operations on water?

The FIRST LORD of the ADMIRALTY: I believe it is a question of seniority to a great extent.

FELON CONVICTS.

Mr. E. H. PICKERSGILL (Bethnal Green, S.W.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether as life was taken by Warders Rogers and Coulton at Dartmoor Prison on the 24th December last, and with a view both to do justice to the warders and to satisfy the public mind, he will, in the exceptional circumstances of the case, consent to lay upon the Table a copy of the report which he has received from the visiting director of the prison, together with notes of the sworn evidence taken by him?

*Sir MATTHEW WHITE RIDLEY: For the reasons which I have already given to the hon. Member I am afraid I cannot consent to lay these papers on the Table.

Mr. PICKERSGILL: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what Standing Order or Instruction in force in convict prisons requires that convicts convicted of felony shall be kept apart from convicts convicted of misdemeanour; and, what is the date of such Order or Instruction?

*Sir MATTHEW WHITE RIDLEY: There is no Standing Order on the subject. The separation while at labour of these two classes is a long-existent practice.

AFFAIRS IN NORTHERN SYRIA.

Mr. JAMES BRYCE (Aberdeen, S.): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether any information has been received by the Foreign Office to the effect that considerable bodies of Turkish troops have been recently landed at or near Alexandretta, and that great alarm exists among the Christian inhabitants of the adjacent parts of Northern Syria and Asia Minor lest fresh massacres should be perpetrated?

*Mr. CURZON: We have received no official information of any recent landing of Turkish troops at or near Alexandretta. Her Majesty's Vice Consul reported on January 15th that the state of Payas, a sub-district in that Province, was far from satisfactory, and representations on the subject were made to the Turkish Government by Her Majesty's Ambassador.

MR. BRYCE asked whether any information had been received to the effect that great alarm existed among the Christian inhabitants of the adjacent parts of Northern Syria and Asia Minor lest fresh massacres should be perpetrated?

*MR. CURZON: My recollection of the reports does not confirm that statement, but I will look at them again and inform the right hon. Gentleman.

OTTOMAN EMPIRE REFORMS.

MR. C. J. MONK (Gloucester): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether he can confirm the statement contained in the lately-issued French Yellow Book, and purporting to have been made by the French Ambassador to M. Hanotaux on the 22nd of December last, to the effect that Great Britain had given her adhesion to the following preliminary agreement of the Great Powers, namely, the maintenance of the integrity of the Ottoman Empire, no Condominium, and no action on any point?

*MR. CURZON: In reply to my hon. Friend I beg to refer him to the collection of Papers Turkey No. 2, 1897, recently laid before Parliament. He will find in Nos. 27, 28, and 29, that these points were mentioned in the instructions sent by the French Government to their Ambassador at Constantinople, and that Lord Salisbury stated that the instructions appeared to be in harmony with the proposals of Her Majesty's Government.

ARMY MEDICAL SERVICE.

MR. T. R. BUCHANAN (Aberdeenshire, E.): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for War whether the increase of pay announced by him for the Army Medical Service is to be paid by the Indian or by the British Exchequer; and whether the proposal for this increase of pay originated with the Government of India; or, if not, whether their consent was obtained before this extra charge was laid on Indian finances?

*MR. POWELL-WILLIAMS: Service in India is paid for by the Government of India. The Secretary of State for India has granted this increase of pay after full consideration, and the new regulations promulgating it will be issued by the Indian Government.

MR. BUCHANAN inquired whether the proposal for this increase of pay originated with the Government of India, or, if not, whether their consent was obtained before this extra charge was laid on Indian finances?

*LORD GEORGE HAMILTON: I believe in the first instance it was suggested by the War Office, then correspondence ensued and the India Office agreed to the proposal.

MR. BUCHANAN: Were the Government of India consulted?

*LORD GEORGE HAMILTON: Yes.

JAMESON RAID INDEMNITY.

MR. JAMES ROCHE (Kerry, E.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies whether the South African Republic has yet presented to Her Majesty's Government or Her representative at Pretoria their claim for an indemnity for the late raid; if so, whether he is prepared to state the amount of such claim and from whom it is demanded.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES (Mr. J. CHAMBERLAIN, Birmingham, W.): I have received the following telegram from the High Commissioner:

> "17 February No. 2. Following telegram received from British Agent in the South African Republic. (Begins.) 16 February. I have just received note from this Government asking to send to your Excellency enclosed bill of indemnity to be paid by Her Majesty's Government or to be caused to be paid by them for raid by Dr. Jameson and British South Africa Company's troops. The amount claimed falls under two heads—first, material damage, total of claim £677,938 3s. 3d.—[*laughter*]—second, moral or intellectual damage, total of claim, £1,000,000. Government desires to observe that above claim does not include legitimate claims which may be demanded by private persons on account of proceeding of Dr. Jameson and his troops. I am sending you note by post."

MR. GIBSON BOWLES: Is the last an additional or separate claim?

MR. CHAMBERLAIN: Yes; I believe it is. There is a little ambiguity in the telegram. I am not quite certain. Yes, I think the moral and intellectual damage is valued at a million separately. But it might be that it is only £322,061 16s. 9d.—[*laughter*]—in order to make up the round million when coupled with the material damage. I am not quite certain, but I believe it is the first of these interpretations.

REFORM PRISONERS (PRETORIA).

MR. J. M. MACLEAN (Cardiff): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies when he proposes to lay upon the Table the correspondence respecting the British political prisoners at Pretoria?

MR. J. CHAMBERLAIN said correspondence, so far as available up to date, in reference to the British political prisoners at Pretoria, would shortly be laid on the Table.

LOCAL TAXATION ACCOUNT.

MR. W. W. CARLILE (Bucks, N.): I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board when the payments to the Local Taxation Account will be made, under the Agricultural Rating Act, 1896?

MR. CHAPLIN: Payments to the Local Taxation Account for the purpose of the Agricultural Rates Act, 1896, have been commenced. The payments of the grant to the spending authorities in respect of the half year commencing on April 1st next will be paid either next month or early in the half-year referred to.

FINANCIAL RELATIONS (GREAT BRITAIN AND IRELAND).

MR. DALZIEL: I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether, in view of the appointment of a new Royal Commission to inquire into the financial relations between Great Britain and Ireland, he will propose, for the information of Members of this House, the reprinting of the Parliamentary Return (No. 366 of Session 1869), ordered by the House on 24th July 1866, giving a detailed account of the public income and expenditure of Great Britain and Ireland separately from 1688, or will consent to the issue of a further Return bringing the figures to the close of the present financial year.

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR, Manchester, E.): I have made inquiry and have ascertained that there are considerable numbers of copies of this Return still in print—310 of Part I. and 370 of Part II., and these are on sale in the usual manner. The Return has proved of very great value, but there is a later Return issued on the Motion of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Wolverhampton, giving the required facts of expenditure in a form more convenient for discussion.

SUPPLY (CIVIL SERVICE ESTIMATES).

MR. F. A. CHANNING (Northampton, E.): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury when the Civil Service Supplementary Estimates will be presented and considered in the House?

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY: I am afraid I cannot tell the hon. Member when the Supplementary Civil Service Estimates will be taken. They will not be taken on Friday. I may state to the House that the Estimates to be taken on Friday will be the Army Estimates, not the Civil Service Estimates on the Motion that the Speaker leave the Chair. It had been arranged to take the Civil Service Estimates, a course which the authorities of the House were of opinion would be in order, although it is a fact that the whole of the Estimates have not been circulated. Mr. Speaker has since informed me that on further consideration of the point raised now, for the first time, such a course would, in his judgment, be irregular, so the Army Estimates will be taken.

MR. CHANNING: The right hon. Gentleman has hardly answered my question when the Supplementary Estimates for Civil Service will be circulated and discussed?

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY: I have given all the information in my power; they will not be taken on Friday.

MR. CHANNING: Is the right hon. Gentleman aware they have not been circulated yet?

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY: I am as anxious as the hon. Member, and indeed more anxious, to have all the Estimates printed and circulated, but this does not rest with me, but with the Departments concerned. I will do my best.

MR. BUCHANAN: Will the right hon. Gentleman give an assurance that the Motions on the Order for the Speaker to leave the Chair will not be taken until the whole of the Civil Service Estimates are printed and circulated?

The FIRST LORD of the TREASURY: Had the hon. Gentleman done me the honour to listen to my answer, his question would have been unnecessary. What has happened is this. The authorities of the House were consulted as to whether the discussions on the Motion for the Speaker to leave the Chair would be regular, and it was the opinion of the authorities that they would be. Upon further consideration, however, it was decided they would not be in order. We shall, therefore, defer putting down the Civil Service Estimates until they are printed, and we should be directly contravening the ruling of the Chair if we did take them.

Sir C. DILKE: In what order will the Army Estimates be taken to-morrow?

The FIRST LORD of the TREASURY: They will be taken in regular order, with the exception of the Ordnance Factory Bill.

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

MILITARY WORKS (MONEY) BILL.

Order for Second Reading read:—

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now Read a Second time."

Mr. T. LOUGH (Islington, W.) moved to leave out from the word "That," to the end of the Question, and to add instead thereof the words—

> "it is desirable before proceeding with the Second Reading of this Bill to have further information as to the necessity for the proposed works and fuller details as to where the expenditure is to be made."

He said that the object of the Bill was to obtain 5½ millions without putting that amount into the ordinary Estimates, and by that means the expenditure was withdrawn from the cognizance and control of the House. Upon this arose a question of principle. He quite admitted that there might be occasions when it was necessary to proceed by loan—when a very large expenditure for some definite purpose was required. But he desired to submit that, for the works specified in the schedule of this Bill, and with the fuller particulars which had since been distributed, to proceed by loan was not a very convenient manner, and he did not think the precedents which the right hon. Gentleman quoted would help him through all the difficulties which his present proposal raised. The chief precedent which he quoted was the Barracks Act 1890. The last Return issued by the Financial Secretary to the War Office showed that one and a quarter millions were available under that Act in the year ending the 31st of March 1896. The expenditure in the last year for which they had particulars, was only £500,000, and in the year before that £600,000, so that according to the expenditure for the last two years there ought to be enough to go on with for a year or two under the Barracks Act of 1890. He submitted that it would be made convenient to put them on the ordinary Estimates. The proposal of the right hon. Gentleman was to take a certain amount, but not to spend it all immediately. Probably the amount he would expend in each year would not be more than £500,000. If the Act was passed he would have to provide in the Estimates something like £250,000 every year, so that if the Act were not passed it would only be necessary to add £250,000 or £500,000 to the Estimates; and then all the purposes the Government had in view would be secured. He was of opinion that the particulars they got in the Estimates would be a great deal better than they had got in the schedule of the Bill. They had really only the rough amounts given to them in the schedule, whereas in the ordinary Estimates they got information under four columns. First, how much the total work was to cost; second, how much had already been spent; third, how much required for the present year; and fourth, how much would be required to finish it—representing opportunities for discussion on the Estimates, which this Bill did not offer. Under the first head was "Barracks, £3,000,000," and in connection with that, further particulars had been distributed by the right hon.

Gentleman. His point was, that if it were one large expenditure that was required, such as £2,000,000 for the fortification of Dover, this procedure by loan would be very good, but where there were a number of small items, then it would be much better to proceed by means of the ordinary Estimates. There were many small items here. There were £18,000 for Devonport; £13,000 for Halifax; and £11,000 for Ceylon. It would have been much better to have placed these small items on the Estimates so that they might be properly criticised by the House in the ordinary way. The largest item was the one for St. Lucia, £260,000, which was described as the completion of the scheme for the transfer of headquarters from Barbadoes. He had been trying to get some particulars of the scheme, but they had not had them, so far as he knew. St. Lucia was one of the most insignificant islands in the Windward Islands, and, although it was supposed to be a convenient coaling station, it was rather an unhealthy spot. The whole population was only about 40,000, and yet they were going to spend there £260,000 to make it the headquarters of the district. They had had no argument in support of it yet, and he thought they ought to have some explanation before they passed such a large item as this. There was also an item of £169,000 for the Mauritius. He thought it would be desirable that they should hear something about this item too. The chief item, perhaps, out of this country, was the Irish expenditure. There was no less than £600,000 provided here for the building of barracks in Ireland. He protested against that expenditure. At the present time the Irish were raising a very grave question with regard to their treatment financially, and if this expenditure was approved of, he ventured to say it would be urged as a sort of set-off to the claim that might be made on financial matters by Ireland. Whether that were so or not, he could not help thinking that it would prove to be a gross waste of money if all these barracks were built in Ireland. Under the Act of 1872, no less than £300,000 were spent on buildings in Ireland. Under the Act of 1890 another £500,000 had been spent, and now they were asked to spend £600,000 for barracks, and, he supposed, something like £400,000 for making Berehaven and Lough Swilly impregnable. This he regarded as a waste of something like £1,000,000 in Ireland. The waste was something tragic, for many of these barracks were now useless. His point here was that as the old idea of scattering the troops in small barracks all over Ireland was very costly, and had been abandoned, so the present idea of building huge barracks at the Curragh and Dublin would also prove not to be a lasting one, and that the large sum they were now asked to spend would be totally wasted. He wished to take another point. Under the Barracks Act of 1890 a grave scandal arose in connection with the Royal Barracks in Dublin, and formed a splendid illustration of the mistake of proceeding by loan. It was estimated that the Royal Barracks would be completed for about £60,000, but the result was nearly £200,000 was spent, and he estimated that about £130,000 was wasted in this single bit of extravagance. These large sums, he submitted, would probably be wasted, in the first place, because he believed that the buildings would not be found to be permanent, and, in the second place, because in carrying out work by means of loan instead of by the ordinary Estimates that came regularly before the House, there was a tendency to create great waste and extravagance in the execution of the work. No justification had been made out for this expenditure. He had shown that under the one Act which the right hon. Gentleman had quoted, great waste had taken place in proceeding in this matter. He thought they might take out some of the small items in this schedule and modify the scheme relating to the barracks. The next item was for defence works, £1,140,000, and they had received very scanty information on this head. They had been told that four harbours were to be made impregnable. Falmouth was the only harbour that commended itself to his judgment, and he should like more detail with regard to the precise proposals, as all the money spent at the other three places mentioned would very likely be wasted. He believed the understanding was that coaling stations were to be provided in the harbours which were to be made impregnable. But the theory recognised by the highest military authorities was that there should be no attempt to make the coaling stations impregnable against a fleet, but only sufficiently to guard them against the predatory raids of a hostile cruiser. A very distinguished writer in *The Times* also fastened on the expression that the harbours were to be made impregnable, stated that a large expenditure upon them would be out of place, and that they only should be fortified to the extent he (the hon. Member) had indicated. It was in connection with proposals of this kind that they had seen the greatest waste of money, and they ought to hesitate before they sanctioned the spending of such a large amount. He thought that Falmouth was a good case, but to spend money on making impregnable places like Berehaven and Lough Swilly, which were almost impregnable in their natural state, seemed to be a mistake. The next proposal involved an expenditure of £1,149,000 on ranges and manœuvring ground. He thought they should provide any ranges they required under ordinary Estimates, which would avoid suspicion of jobbery. The proposal which excited most interest under this head was that which related to the fortification of London.

*Mr. BRODRICK: I have never used any expression "fortification of London," and I entirely denied, in answer to a question put to me, that that was the intention.

Mr. LOUGH said the exact words of the right hon. Gentleman would show that there really was here a proposal of an alarming character, which the Committee ought to look into with care. The right hon. Gentleman said, in explaining this matter:—"The principle on which our troops will be employed for defence in case of invasion was drawn out ten years ago by the most eminent soldiers of the day, and was then approved by the Government. London must be surrounded by defensive positions strongly held and fortified."

*Mr. BRODRICK: Would the hon. Gentleman kindly read on?

Mr. LOUGH: "And fortified with artillery as a second line of defence."

*Mr. BRODRICK: "Fortified by artillery." That means strengthened. I did not mean to convey that a line of forts was to be built.

Mr. LOUGH observed that the words the right hon. Gentleman used were that "London must be surrounded by defensive positions strongly held and fortified with artillery as a second line of defence. Since 1888, thirteen sites have been acquired, and storehouses erected, and work commenced." In order to show that he had not taken an unreasonable view of the right hon. Gentleman's language, he would quote from the communication which recently appeared in *The Times*. [An hon. Member: "Who wrote it?"] He did not know who wrote it, but he heard the writer was a good military authority:—

> "London must be surrounded by defensive positions strongly held and fortified with artillery as a second line of defence. If, however, this extraordinary proposition is carried into effect, it would be not a second, but a fifth line of defence. The first line is the Navy observing or blockading the ports from which an invading army is to issue. The second is the Navy operating against the enormous fleet of transports when it has sailed. The third is constituted by the extensively fortified ports of the United Kingdom, backed by the action of the Navy. The fourth is the field army. To these are to be added defensive positions strongly held and fortified by artillery, at a cost of £164,000. The idea of creating any valid defences on a line of at least 120 miles for such a sum as this is absolutely illusory."

The right hon. Gentleman told them that £68,000 had been spent on this matter during the last seven years. He should like to ask him if only £68,000 had been spent, because he observed from the letter in *The Times* it was believed that a very much larger sum must have been spent over the scheme? Assuming that the expenditure was £68,000, it was argued that because they had spent that amount they should proceed to expend the £96,000 more which was asked for in the Bill. He would commend to the right hon. Gentleman the maxim that the first loss was the best loss, and if they were to stop a bad proceeding they should stop it now, when only £68,000 had been spent, rather than to-morrow, when £160,000 might have been expended on this rather absurd proceeding. What justification had the right hon. Gentleman given? He told them that the sites had been chosen deliberately, and the object had been to form storehouses there in order that the supplies concentrated at Woolwich might be scattered over more convenient places, and that it was the opinion of officers who assembled ten years ago that it would take six weeks to distribute the stores, in the event of war, from Woolwich. Distribution was the science of commerce best understood in London, and if this proceeding was to be justified on the ground that it would take six weeks to distribute supplies from Woolwich, sight must have been lost of the costly and splendid railway system which had been created in London, and which would be available for this purpose. Anything in Woolwich Arsenal could be got out in from 24 to 48 hours, with the assistance of the railways, and if the War Office could not do it, let them call in one of the great distributing merchants of London, and he would soon do it. The right hon. Gentleman cited as an authority for these proposals the Emperor Napoleon. Was ever anything so absurd? Napoleon did not know anything of the railway system, which had more to do with mobilising an army and with distribution than anything else. These were antiquated notions, and not the kind which ought to govern their consideration of this Bill. He believed the Government were right in distributing the stores from Woolwich Arsenal, but wrong in creating storehouses on the tops of hills within a range of a certain number of miles around London. They would have to carry their stores up the hills by horses and men, and when they had got them up they would be no use there. To erect the storehouses on the line of railway where ingress and egress were easy, would be far more practicable than the Government proposal. Then there was the item for the purchase of a manœuvring ground on Salisbury Plain. That was an idea that commended itself to a great many people, but it was one which, nevertheless, ought to be looked into. He did not think 100,000 troops would ever be got together in time of peace, and if they could be, he did not think Salisbury Plain would be a healthy or useful place whereon to manœuvre them. It would be very different from the ground an army would encounter in actual warfare. It might be an interesting experiment for two or three years, but the permanent purchase of a large piece of land would not be necessary for the purposes for which the Government intended to acquire it. He suggested that huts and similar buildings would be required, and that the purchase of land would lead to the development of a great camping ground. It would be a healthy place for a camp, and some of the money proposed to be spent at Aldershot and the Curragh would be more wisely spent there. Too much money was being spent on military enterprises, but, as far as the sanitary housing of soldiers was concerned, if a moderate scheme were presented he would not oppose it. Mixed up with what was good and useful were some large, and doubtful, and bad proposals, and the Under Secretary for War would do well to agree to the Amendment and withdraw the Bill for further consideration.

MR. HUDSON KEARLEY (Devonport) seconded the Amendment, and said he thought the Mover was amply justified in taking exception to this money being secured by loan instead of being voted in the Estimates. The precedent of 1860 was an extremely bad precedent for two reasons: first, it was the first time such an expedient was adopted; and, secondly, the major part of the money voted was wasted. Lord Palmerston recognised at the time that the proposal was not one that could be justified. But there was this excuse for him, that the country was in a state of panic from the widespread belief that France contemplated invading us. Lord Palmerston said it was contrary to principle to raise money by loan for the expenditure of the country in time of peace. For many of the purposes to which the money was to be applied, such as the re-construction of Winchester Barracks, money was usually voted in the Estimates. The House was asked to acquiesce in the Bill because it was said the work to be done would be speedily accomplished, whereas if they voted the money in the Estimates it would drag along some time. But when this Bill was passed the House lost all control over the expenditure of money; whereas, if placed in the Estimates it could be criticised annually. It had become far too much the fashion for Governments to come down and tell a plausible story and get Members of the House to surrender one of their most cherished rights to criticise the expenditure of money from the national purse. He objected to this money being taken out of the control of the House for that reason. But the proposal that chiefly excited his opposition was that to erect defences on "fortified positions" round London. It was said these positions were to be strengthened by artillery, and to contain entrenching tools and ammunition. The work that could be done for the money asked for would be utterly insignificant, and if more were required a large sum would have to be expended. He objected to the proposed fortified positions because he believed they would be worthless, and positively dangerous. If an invading army once succeeded in landing on our shores it would make straight for London. The first duty of our military commanders would be to bring this invading army to an engagement, and concentrate the whole of our forces for that purpose. But the proposal under the Bill meant locking up large bodies of men. They would not only be locked up but concentrated over a circle of 120 miles. They would have a great amount of fighting force locked up in these positions, and for that reason alone he considered that these fortifications would be a failure. The right hon. Gentleman had refused to give them any information as to where these fortifications were to be erected, but all Europe would know in a few months. He objected to the scheme, further, because it was a waste of money, and in this connection he should like to quote to the House an opinion given by Lord Palmerston in 1860, when he was bringing forward his proposal. Someone said to him, "Why not fortify London?" He replied that no doubt London might be open to attack, but London was too vast to be surrounded by fortifications. He said, "You cannot fortify London, London must be defended by an army in the field." If they were going to erect fortifications here, what about the other large commercial centres? Why not fortify Liverpool, Glasgow, and Manchester? ["Hear, hear!"] There were plenty of strong natural positions between the coast and the metropolis, and these could easily be turned to account when the occasion arose. He hoped the right hon. Gentleman would make a point of dealing with the contention he made, that these places would occupy a large body of men. He wanted to take a view apart from the military question; he wanted to keep up the heart of Londoners. Londoners had a great affection for these hills. They were in great request for residential purposes, but if the War Department once got possession of them it naturally followed that no houses would be erected there. He had some experience of what happened when the War Office got hold of places for defensive purposes. In Devon and Cornwall the coasts were in several directions in possession of the War Office, and very necessarily, but the public were warned off, and the neighbourhood which the War Office held became a wilderness. The people did not mind that, but if they came to do the same in London it would be very different for the Londoners, who would protest against it. The amount proposed to be taken showed that they did not contemplate putting up any valuable works. What was proposed was something for which the Londoners would not thank you. He hoped that this proposal would be dropped so far as these fortifications were concerned. The idea was not a new one. He thought every military faddist had propounded some wonderful scheme to protect London from an enemy, and the only thing he was surprised at was that they were not already overburdened by some grand scheme; but the good sense of the House had resisted any such proposal. Take the case of Paris, where the fortifications on which millions had been spent were useless. Then what was the use of talking about fortifying London? If they had carried out all the schemes which had been recommended this country would have been bankrupt years ago.

*General RUSSELL (Cheltenham) said he should only make a few remarks on the Amendment of the hon. Member for West Islington. He saw that he had taken exception to the expenditure on barracks. There was the sum asked in connection with St. Lucia, a small and unhealthy island; regarding this he thought the House ought to have some explanation. He thought hon. Members from Ireland, so far from complaining of the amount of money spent in Ireland with regard to barracks, ought to rejoice. He regretted, however, he could not approve of some of the money spent there. For instance, the Royal barracks in Dublin, which were pronounced unhealthy, the Messrs. Guinness wanted to purchase the site for a storehouse for their corks, but it was refused, although they offered to build new barracks on a site which they proposed to purchase. Since then, much money had been wasted, and many soldiers and officers had died in those barracks, in which now only about 700 men were accommodated. Let them, again, take the Island Bridge Barracks. It was most unhealthy, on the banks of the Liffey, below a churchyard, and had been condemned long since. The railway company offered to buy it from the Government and build a barracks anywhere near Dublin on a healthy site without cost to the Government. The site of the barracks would have been extremely useful for their works, but the Government refused this offer, and kept on patching up those old buildings, and now the whole site was condemned and the entire barracks were to be constructed elsewhere. He wished especially to make some remarks regarding the objections taken to what was termed the fortification of London. Hon. Members opposite appeared to have entirely misunderstood the whole of this scheme. He thought he was in a position to assure them that the scheme brought forward now was the result of careful inquiry, and the deliberate judgment of the principal authorities for the last 20 years. It had been confirmed and accepted by successive Governments, and it was now being carried out in by no means a too liberal manner by the present Government, in accordance with the wishes of their predecessors. There was no question of the fortification of London. He was sorry to say that this word was used in *The Times* by one who was spoken of as a distinguished writer, who in many ways talked great nonsense. About 20 years ago it was his good fortune to visit the Russian Army, and to see the preparations for defence being carried out in Turkey. He reported to the Home authorities that war was inevitable, and would be declared as soon as the roads were clear for transport. In reply to various Members of the Government of the day, who were good enough to send for him, he also expressed his conviction that there was nothing to prevent the Russians from reaching Constantinople about three or four months after they had declared war, that was to say, about two months after they succeeded in crossing the Danube. That Report was not accepted by the Military Authorities or by Her Majesty's Government; the only exception to that was the present Commander in Chief, who pointed out to him the line of operations which the Russians would take, and predicted that they would disregard Varna and Shumla, and that unless something unforeseen occurred they would be in Constantinople in the middle of August. The Russians adopted the line of operations which the present Commander in Chief had predicted. They disregarded Varna and Shumla, and they would no doubt have been at Constantinople in August, or if not, early in September, if it had not been that they were delayed in crossing the Danube, which gave the Turks the opportunity of erecting temporary fortifications at Plevna, very similar to those which it was now contended should be made round London. The Russians were consequently delayed two months before Plevna until the bad weather set in, and did not reach Constantinople until January. Similarly, when war seemed imminent, our Government, with the sanction of the Turkish Government, sent out engineer officers to survey certain lines round Constantinople, on which temporary fortifications might be erected, and no doubt these would have saved the capital if it had not been for the treachery of the Turkish Commander, who allowed the Russians to encamp within them. These works which were now proposed, consisted simply of block houses, or *points d'appui*, to hold stores, at the important points where it would be necessary in time of invasion to raise temporary fortifications round London. They had heard that it would be almost impossible to invade London. ["Hear, hear!"] The hon. Member for Islington said "hear, hear," but that was not the opinion of foreign strategists. It had been his good fortune to have conversation in a friendly way with some of the principal and most able strategists of the continent, and without exception, they had always said that the invasion of England was not only possible but under certain circumstances quite feasible. If that event ever happened what an enormous boon it would be if it were possible for our troops to occupy defensive positions in intrenchments which, by means of the huge population available in London, could be thrown up in three or four days. So impressed were the Russians with the advantage of such defensive preparations as were here contemplated in the case of London that they had planned no less than two or three such positions on the line of the supposed march of an army from the western frontier to St. Petersburg. If it should so happen that we lost the command of the Channel what an advantage it would be if our Volunteers, by intrenching themselves behind such defensive works as were now indicated, could hold any hostile columns in check before London for, say, a week. The objections of hon. Gentlemen opposite were entirely opposed not only to the military experts in this country and on the Continent, but to the practice and preparations which foreign countries had adopted for their defence in case of invasion. It would be utterly impossible to get the stores out of Woolwich in four days, as had been suggested. He thought that some of the criticisms in *The Times* were, to say the least, injudicious, and he could not accept them. He hoped that the House would pass this Bill without delay, especially that part of it which related to the defence of London, which he regarded as the most important and best part of it. ["Hear, hear!"]

On the return of Mr. SPEAKER, after the usual interval,

MR. W. H. MYERS (Winchester) said that the hon. Member for Devonport had said that there was no urgency in the matter of the rebuilding of the Winchester barracks. He ventured to think that there was very great urgency in the matter in view of the great inconvenience caused by the present state of affairs. As the House was aware, only part of the barracks were burnt down in December 1894. Two blocks of buildings remained intact and only the central block, which formed the quarters of the married men of the depôt. Consequently temporary accommodation had to be found for those turned out of their quarters. He hoped his right hon. Friend would endeavour to press this Bill on with all speed, not merely on the ground he had mentioned, but also because Winchester was a very first-rate military centre, lying within a convenient distance of Portsmouth, Southampton, and London, and also of the new manœuvring ground it was proposed to set up near Salisbury.

MR. D. F. GODDARD (Ipswich) looked upon the Bill from two standpoints—the standpoint of the policy involved and the standpoint of finance. He was not for a moment prepared to raise any technical objection to the defence works proposed, but it seemed to him that the estimate for these works was altogether inadequate. It could not be seriously supposed that this expenditure of £1,120,000 would anything like complete the works that were contemplated. Was it not a fact that 18 years after the Act of 1860 was passed, under which £11,000,000 were voted for certain military works, the whole of the money was expended, but not a single one of the works really completed? What the ultimate cost of those works was likely to be no one knew. It had become mixed up with other figures, and probably it would be half as much again as was asked for. It seemed to him that the Government were falling into exactly the same error. They were really formulating a programme of military works which they knew perfectly well could never be completed for the money asked for. The note at the bottom of the schedule of this Bill stated that these works were partly new works and partly works begun and not completed under the Imperial Defence Act of 1888 and the Barracks Act of 1890. Payments under those Acts were being made now, and some of the money for which the Government were asking would go to defray liabilities incurred some time ago. With regard to the proposed earthworks, shelters, and storehouses, he would like to know whether the military authorities had not seriously questioned the utility of such works. If there was the slightest doubt as to their utility in the minds of the military authorities the House ought to be told of it. They had been assured that the shelters were required to contain the tools of workmen building earthworks. If that was the only purpose of these shelters why should the structures be very substantial? Why should they be of considerable magnitude and strength, as if intended to resist an enemy's shot? Was this Vote for the defences of London after all only a part of an outlay which it was intended to incur at a future time? Was there some undisclosed plan for the complete fortification of London? In that case they had good reason to complain. There was, he feared, rather a tendency to give information piecemeal in these matters, and he would like to know whether the Imperial Defence Council had really recommended the policy of spending this large sum of money in the defence of London. A good part of the proposed expenditure on barracks he gathered from the schedule was rendered necessary by the contemplated increase of the Army. That raised a question of policy which they had a right to discuss in that House. Did we want this increase of the Army? ["Hear, hear!"] Was there a real necessity for it, or was it not some better organisation of our existing forces that was wanted? We were paying about 21 millions for our Army and there ought to be some really searching inquiry into the expenditure so that the country might ascertain whether it was getting the full benefit of it. He complained of the lavish expenditure to which the Government were committing the country. ["Hear, hear!"] Last year on the Budget night the Chancellor of the Exchequer made a very strong and earnest appeal for aid in checking the large expenditure that was going on. The appeal of the right hon. Gentleman was worthy of very serious consideration. They had before them the indeterminate cost of the Egyptian campaign, and they were confronted with these quickly recurring Works Bills. He warned the Government that when the taxpayers came to understand thoroughly how lavishly their money was being spent upon these works, for some of which it was difficult to find any justification, they would resent it greatly. He knew the stock argument that these things ought to have been done long ago, that they had been neglected; but he did not think that the argument was available, because large sums of money had been spent from year to year for these purposes. He agreed entirely with the Amendment that had been moved, because he was of opinion that enough information had not been supplied to the House. By passing this Bill they would be giving the Government a free hand to lay out some £5,500,000 on some kind of military works or other. The money would be beyond the control of the House of Commons. Against that he thought it right to protest. It was true that mention was made in the Bill of a reference to the Treasury, but he regarded that as worth very little. The reference would simply be from one public Department to another, and that could not be held to constitute an effective check upon this enormous expenditure. The term of thirty years was too long for the repayment of these loans, and they were confusing, because they overlapped. Then some of this expenditure ought to be provided for in other ways. Take the item for converting the female prison at Woking into barracks for the Royal Artillery, was that the kind of expenditure that ought to be met by a loan for a long period? He held not, and he held the same opinion with regard to the expenditure for replacing wooden huts by others at the Curragh, Colchester, etc. He thought that the application of a surplus, if there was any, for the purposes of this Act was a highly objectionable method of doing business. It seemed to him financially that it was becoming the practice of the Government to apply surpluses to extraordinary expenditure. That was a very serious point to consider. It raised the whole question of method in our National Accounts; it raised the whole question of the National Debt and its system of liquidation; and this question ought to be very carefully considered if the practice was to become common. Let the full expenditure of the country be disclosed to the taxpayers in an account as plain as it could be made, so that they might know what was being expended on different departments. Then there would be a chance of getting sound and correct judgments on such a proposition as this. This system of finance was a bad one, and needed to be altered; this system of finance at any rate did not show a very robust confidence in the approval of the country for the Measures which the Government were bringing forward for the expenditure of this money. He should vote against the Bill.

Colonel MURRAY (Bath), speaking on the Bill from a military point of view, said that if the proposed works around London were to be in the form of storehouses, connected by lines of entrenchment, if necessary, later, but without regular forts, they would be valuable in imparting strength to concentration in the event of an imminent invasion. For hundreds of years the Navy had kept the country free from invasion, but it was desirable to have a backing of troops. Many of our troops were suitable as a mobile force; there were other troops whose qualification lay more in a passive form; and for these it would be a source of great strength if earthworks were constructed. Without finding spots of concentration regiments would be scattered around London without any organisation, and with no means of taking a proper share in the defence of the country. London was the central point in our system of defence, and we should have a local chain of strong points. He therefore congratulated the Government on the decision they had made to construct this chain of works round London, and he hoped they would carry the proposal forward with determination. As to manœuvring on Salisbury Plain, he thought it would be very satisfactory to have a large drill ground. We had outgrown Aldershot, which was too small for extended drills, especially for cavalry. He urged the Government to acquire certain rights of movement over ground near Salisbury where troops could manœuvre freely without disturbing game.

Mr. JOHN DILLON (Mayo, E.) said he had listened with astonishment to the speech of the hon. and gallant Member. According to his argument, the conditions of modern warfare required troops not to have any fixed plan or places of fortifications, while it was necessary for the Volunteers if they took the field to fight from behind trenches. The hon. Member's speech was really an argument against wasting money on one of the most monstrous propositions ever submitted to the House of Commons, namely, the fortification of London. The hon. Member said that he was proud to hear that these fortified places were to be connected by trenches or long lines of defence, so as to make them one continuous position. That would mean trenches 120 miles round London, and the only argument the House had heard in defence of the plan was the suggestion to waste £150,000 in defence of London because £60,000 had already been wasted. If London was beset by an army large enough to surround the City or seriously to threaten it, the people would be eating each other within a fortnight. He therefore supported the Amendment of the hon. Member for West Islington. He objected to the Bill on two grounds, first, because of the inadequacy of the arguments as to the necessity of these armaments; and, secondly, because he was opposed root and branch to all these monstrous increases in expenditure on the Army and Navy. Apart from that, in carrying out this policy, the Government were pursuing a most vicious course in providing extraordinary Budgets for the Army and the Navy, and, following the German method, withdrawing the expenditure from all control or criticism in this House. Last year the House of Commons assented to an enormous increase on naval armaments, and the First Lord, who then talked of the splendid isolation of England, stated that between 1889 and 1899 there would have been an aggregate expenditure of nearly 55 millions upon construction. The taxpayers were entitled to expect, having made such sacrifices in order to place the fleet ahead of all the other fleets of the world, that at least the burden would be lightened as regards military expenditure. They were now assured that, owing to some kaleidoscopic change, England was no longer in a position of splendid isolation, but was bound hand and foot with other European Powers, so much so, that even though people were being roasted alive, she could not move the most powerful ships afloat unless other nations gave her permission to do so. All the millions voted had not enabled England to redeem the honour of her flag or to strike a single blow for civilisation and Christianity in the East of Europe. He did not think a single shred of justification had been afforded by the Under-Secretary for these demands. He objected to increased expenditure in the Army. If England was determined to strain her almost boundless resources so as to retain the undisputed mastery of the sea, there might be a great deal to be said for it, only he could wish she would use her power in a more humane and decent way; but she ought to apply herself to reducing expenditure on the Army. The British Army was a very small concern. If England would give up her monstrous system of land-grabbing in all parts of the world there would be no shadow of reason for calling for increased expenditure upon the Army, and though at the present moment everybody must recognise—

MR. SPEAKER: Order, order. I must remind the hon. Member that there is no question of increasing the Army in this Bill.

MR. DILLON said there was a large increase for barracks and accommodation for troops in all parts of the world, but, of course, he would not pursue the argument in the circumstances. He objected, then, to the whole policy of the Bill, but he also very much objected to the finance of the Bill, and the way in which the money was to be provided under Clause 2. As to the borrowing powers under Clause II., by means of terminable annuities to be paid out of the moneys provided by Parliament for Army services, he wished to know whether moneys provided by Parliament were to be specifically earmarked for those annuities. Clause 3 appropriated the surplus for the year 1896-97, and suspended the Sinking Fund Act of 1875, which provided that the surplus of each year should go to the payment of the National Debt. He objected to this scheme. The English people at least were enjoying a period of exceptional and enormous prosperity; yet not only was an eightpenny income tax being maintained, but fresh debt was being contracted to provide this enormous naval and military expenditure, and the Sinking Fund, which ought to provide a reserve for periods of emergency, was being destroyed. Now England was at the top of the wave; presently she would be in the trough. The Radical Party, as the party of economy and sound finance, always came into power when the country was in the trough, and when they had built up a surplus the Tory Party came in to squander it, and to disorganise finance. The great surpluses, provided partly by the new Death Duties and partly by increased prosperity, ought to have led to a revision of the whole taxation, with a view to further concessions to the working classes, but all the surpluses had been seized upon for bloated expenditure on armaments, and even the £120,000 which last year was to have gone to the Voluntary Schools had been swallowed up. As to Ireland's relation to this Bill, about £600,000 was to be spent on barracks and huts and harbours. He wanted particulars as to those harbours. Were they to be available for the people? He had no objection to money being spent in Ireland, but, in view of a coming inquiry, it became important to know whether this expenditure would be charged as local expenditure in Ireland. He claimed that if £600,000 were to be spent in Ireland, it should be spent in a way which would be beneficial to the country. This was a year of great depression in Ireland, and the money could be applied to a better purpose than the building of barracks. If the Government would take this sum out of the Bill, and apply it to the relief of those districts in which the people were on the verge of starvation, he would reconsider his attitude to the Bill.

*MR. GIBSON BOWLES said that there was a great deal in the hon. Member's remarks about Clause 3, which dealt another serious blow at the settled financial system of the country. It destroyed the "annuality" of our accounts, which secured that each year's revenue and expenditure should be complete in themselves, and that any surplus should go to the reduction of the National Debt. That was a very proper and necessary arrangement, which should only be disturbed in times of emergency. Of recent years it had become the practice of Governments to interfere with the proper financial relations of the Empire. As to the provision of ranges and manœuvring grounds, he believed them to be necessary for the Army. In buying a large tract of country in and about Salisbury Plain, the Government would be acquiring the best site available. New barracks were eminently necessary also; and by replacing the insanitary barracks now existing, money would be saved, because it would no longer be necessary to be continually moving regiments about, so that all might have their turn of the healthy and of the deadly barracks. As to the defence works, however, the scheme was open to serious objection. He could not understand why not merely the Navy, but the Army, should be wild to go into bricks and mortar. It was not by them, but by action in the open field, that the country was to be defended. The chain of forts by which Paris was surrounded only served to prolong the agony of the siege; and as to forts for defending London, why, if the enemy got as near as that, the game would be up. Nothing could be more injudicious than a chain of detached forts round London for the purpose of defence. It was said that only storehouses were proposed; but the storehouses would only precede and be the foundation of the forts. If not, what was the purpose of the stores? He hoped no Minister would rely for the defence of any part of the country on forts, but would depend on coping with the enemy in the open field. But the part of the defence works in which he was particularly concerned was that relating to the Scilly Isles. He believed he was the only Member of the House who had ever asserted that the Scilly Isles would make a most important naval strategical station. He had constantly urged that the first and most necessary thing to do was to make them an absolutely good and safe naval station by building a breakwater. The forts might come in their proper order. Undoubtedly, the first step to take was to build the breakwater across the Broad Sound and make a proper and safe anchorage. Unless that was done it was useless to build forts in any case. To build forts before they built the breakwater seemed to him the height of absurdity. He could understand the building of the breakwater without the forts, but could not understand the building of the forts without the breakwater. What was suggested reminded him of the words—he believed they were Swift's:—

> "Here is proof of Irish sense, here Irish wit is seen,
> "When nothing's left that's worth defence, they build a magazine."

[*Laughter.*] He took great interest in the naval affairs of the country—["hear, hear!"]—and his belief was that the more forts we built the more difficulties and not facilities we placed in the way of the Navy. Bricks, mortar, and mud were useless. This country was only to be defended by ships. Once the line of our warships was broken through, we were gone and nothing was left.

*MR. REGINALD McKENNA (Monmouth, N.) hoped the House would not suspect him of being an authority on military questions. He made no such pretence; but this Bill had an aspect which was not at all military—namely, a financial aspect—and it was upon that point he proposed to address a very few words to the House. Part of the Bill was to provide for barracks, and the money for that purpose amounted altogether to nearly three millions sterling. The expenditure on barracks was to a certain extent a permanent one, and it was therefore perhaps reasonable that the whole charge for barracks should not be included in the Estimates of any one year; but, until they had a careful system of separating annual and permanent expenditure, it appeared to be most unreasonable to mix up the accounts of the Estimates with the accounts in Bills like the present. What took place as a matter of fact in practice? An item for barracks might be put down in the accounts for the Estimates, and the Secretary of State might think the item would not look well in the Estimates. He could at once put it in a Loan Bill. The House had never before it the actual expenditure being made from year to year; never did they get a complete and comprehensive view of the whole of the Army expenditure. Anyone with any regard to finance must see that that is a very undesirable method to pursue. If the House were to retain any control whatever over the Army expenditure they must know from year to year what they were expending. Although all the items for barracks should not appear in one year because the works were permanent, why should not the charges be spread over several years' Estimates? A great deal of the money expended under such Bills as that now before the House was money they would not be willing to continue to expend if they ever had an opportunity of revising their judgment. It was ludicrous to consider that London could be defended by the methods suggested in the Bill. If the authorities wanted a Metz they must spend millions and not £96,000. A letter which recently appeared in *The Times* appealed very strongly to him. The writer signed his name Lieutenant Colonel J. R. Povah. That Gentleman said:—

> "Lord Lansdowne's present scheme is offered as the sole alternative to asking the country for £225,000 more; at the same time he asks for £96,000 alone for works on the North Downs. Now, there seems some doubt what

these works really are to be. Are they to be merely quartermasters' stores for mobilisation, or real fortifications? If the latter, no money is asked to arm them; while the idea of fortifications in any shape is opposed to all naval and military expert opinion. But works without guns are less useful than even soldiers without rifles, because men unarmed can run away, but permanent works cannot; while they are positively more dangerous to a defence, as they may be turned by a victorious assailant on their original garrison."

That was an expert opinion, and a most reasonable and common-sense one, upon these supposed fortifications. It certainly appealed to him, if it did not to hon. and gallant Gentlemen opposite. No case had been made out for the expenditure of £96,000, and he asked right hon. Gentlemen to accept the Amendment in as far as it meant the postponement of the Bill possibly for another year.

*THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR WAR (Mr. BRODRICK, Surrey, Guildford) said that, in introducing the Resolution on which this Bill was founded, he went as fully as possible into the various items of expenditure which the Government intended to undertake, and hon. Members had contended that the amount of money provided could not possibly furnish all the works proposed. By far the more serious criticisms had been directed to the Government dealing with this question by means of loan. ["Hear, hear!"] But, when he introduced the Resolution, he introduced what he believed seemed to many Members of the House the cogent arguments why the Government should deal with the matter by means of loan, and not by means of annual Estimate, and although he was reluctant to recapitulate what he then stated, he would remind the House that it would be absolutely impossible to enter upon big works on the system of annual Estimate without causing either very great financial inconvenience or very wasteful expenditure of money. But, as matters were, one of two things must happen. Either the contractor must, when the Vote for the year was exhausted, suspend hundreds of workmen at great inconvenience to him, or, if he kept on with a smaller number of men to avoid those suspensions, and a frost occurred or anything to stop the works, the Department would find itself towards the end of the financial year with a large sum of unexpended money, and it would press upon the contractor to spend money which would then surely be expended in a wasteful manner. ["Hear, hear!"] If the Department did not do this, perhaps £100,000 or £200,000 would have to be surrendered to the Exchequer, and the Chancellor of the Exchequer would have to raise taxes in the next year for purposes for which the people had already been taxed. ["Hear, hear!"] If the House liked to change its whole financial arrangements, and say, what has never yet been said, that it would allow the money voted for one service to be carried on to the next year, or even the year after that, then the difficulty of providing for such works by annual Estimate would disappear. But he repeated that in the present financial arrangements of the House a scheme for paying those large works by annual Estimate would be a wasteful, an extravagant, and a shortsighted policy. ["Hear! '] When he introduced this Resolution he explained that one of the strongest points in favour of bringing forward a Measure of the kind was that it gave Parliament increased control, and enabled it to estimate the expenditure as a whole, and either to modify, reject, or accept it. Let them take the case of the defence of London. That subject was introduced by Mr. Stanhope in a speech in 1889, when he put £20,000 into the Estimates. That sum was voted, and it was renewed in subsequent years, both by Mr. Stanhope and by the Administration of which he late Secretary for War was a member. But under this plan the principle involved in the question was never discussed and decided on by Parliament. ["Hear, hear!"] He, on the other hand, in introducing the Resolution, made a frank statement of what was intended, not merely as regarded the same class of expenditure, but also as to the completion of the original scheme. The plans of the Government, as unfolded by him, had been discussed by the House and the country, and whatever else might be said on the subject, at all events, the result of including that portion of the expenditure in the loan had been a full, careful, and, he hoped, a sufficient consideration of the subject by the House. ["Hear, hear!"] The hon. Member for Islington (Mr. Lough) had continued to talk of the scheme of fortification for London. Subsequent speakers had taken up the point, and while some had urged that the Government were spending far too little if London was really to be fortified, others had contended that the Government were spending too much because the expenditure would be useless. ["Hear, hear!"] Many mutually destructive arguments had been used that night. Let them consider the principle involved. But whatever that principle was—whether good or bad—it was considered and accepted nine or 10 years ago, and he would urge this important fact on the attention of the House—that the Government had not departed one inch from the principle laid down, or from the scale of amounts it was thus proposed to adopt. Those who regarded the Navy as being an absolute defence to the country, and as meeting all the numerous chances of war, would, of course, support no expenditure on the Army at all for National Defence. They might support expenditure on the Army for striking power abroad; but, obviously, if the Navy were an absolute defence, they required no Army and no fortifications on land. Everybody knew there were chances in war. Everybody knew that the highest military authorities, not merely in this country, but also abroad, admitted that there was the possibility of a temporary reverse at sea. The Duke of Devonshire—and he was sure every Member in that House would recognise that the Duke of Devonshire was a man who had given this subject the most careful consideration and was a man of immense weight and authority on the subject—["hear, hear!"]—speaking the other day, said:—

> "Between the permanent loss of the command of the sea and the possibility of a temporary reverse which might expose some portion of our coast to the risk of invasion there is a very wide interval."

That was their position exactly. They were preparing against this risk in this way. Undoubtedly, as had been said by many hon. Members that night, the task of the Army defending this country was not to remain stationary. ["Hear, hear!"] They had had some means within the last few days of estimating what the power was of a hostile force to land even on a comparatively small portion of territory protected by cruisers. ["Hear, hear!"] It was not a certain, scientific axiom that they could prevent a force from landing on any particular spot. Supposing there should be an invasion. The organisation of the Army was this in such a case. There would be a mobile force, of very large size, whose duty it was to march on the enemy, at whatever point he might attempt to land, without a moment's hesitation. But there was also the chance, laid down by the highest military authorities, that, at the same moment their Army was engaged with the enemy which had landed, they might have another force of troops landed at another spot endeavouring to strike in the rear of the Army towards London. It was in respect of that chance that they took up the position around London. When Mr. Stanhope introduced this scheme in 1889 he used these words:—

> "Neither officially nor unofficially has any plan been brought before me for building permanent fortifications for the defence of London. Such a scheme is extravagant, visionary, and wholly unecessary."

And then he went on to say:—

> "Everyone hopes and thinks that our first line of defence should be strong enough to defend this country from the possibility of invasion, and the scheme now adopted is an additional security, necessary only in what may be a remote contingency. It is necessary to prepare and strengthen the position they would occupy, so as at once to protect the defenders and to make up for their necessary deficiencies. There are certain strategical positions round London commanding roads and railways which are essential to its defence. These have been carefully examined by our most experienced officers, and places have been marked out where, upon the occurrence of grave emergency, certain steps, arranged in every way beforehand, could at once be taken."

[*Cheers.*] Why did Mr. Stanhope make that declaration, by which the Government stood? That question was brought before Parliament in the year 1887 by Sir E. Hamley, who was admittedly one of the best strategists this country had ever produced, in a most serious speech, in which he called attention to the very action now to be taken. That speech was taken up, amongst others, by the London Chamber of Commerce, who urged upon the Government the serious importance of taking steps to see that there was some second line of defence in this country in case of any reverse of the field Army. Mr. Stanhope then appointed a number of military authorities to investigate the subject, and the action that was then taken was taken on the report of Lord Wolseley, Sir R. Buller, an eminent engineer, and an eminent artilleryman. Those four officers examined and chose certain sites with a view, not of putting up fortifications, but of putting up centres on which the temporary intrenchments that might be necessary would be founded. That was the principle which was adopted by Mr. Stanhope, and accepted by the right hon. Gentleman when he came into office. It had been urged by the hon. Member for Devonport that, as they were going to fortify London, why did not they fortify Liverpool in the same way? But the hon. Member himself supplied the answer. ["Hear, hear!"] He said, a moment before, that any hostile force landing in England would have for its objective the metropolis. That was the very reason they had proposed to defend it, and they proposed to defend it in the way they did because they knew that besides their field artillery they must have a very considerable body of less-trained troops whom they desired to give the strongest positions and all the assistance they could have in defending and executing the defences which they might have to undertake. ["Hear, hear!"] The hon. Member for Devonport said they were locking up a large force in these positions. That was not the case. They were placing them in the very positions in which they would be most available to be trained off into the field army if their services were required. He could assure the hon. Member for Devonport and the House that this subject was not one which had been taken up lightly. It was considered most carefully by the military authorities before the scheme was placed before Parliament. It had been held, too, by every military authority who had had to do with the matter to be the very best scheme that could be adopted. He could quote Lord Wolseley, Sir R. Buller, the present Inspector-General of Fortifications, and the present Inspector-General of Ordnance, who were absolutely at one as to the advisability of this scheme.

*SIR JOHN COLOMB (Great Yarmouth) was understood to ask a question as to sea transit.

Under Secretary of State for War.

*MR. BRODRICK said he could not admit that this question of risk was one for naval authorities alone. The naval authorities would undoubtedly do all they knew to prevent the risk of invasion. But if his hon. and gallant Friend told him that there was no risk and no chance of invasion then he was at issue with him. There was a chance. ["Hear, hear!"] The advice of military authorities was not asked in reference to the formation of the fleet for defence, nor did they invite the opinion of naval authorities as to action to be taken after an enemy had landed. ["Hear, hear!"]

*SIR J. COLOMB: But before the enemy has landed?

*MR. BRODRICK said before the enemy landed he could not attack London. [*Laughter.*] His hon. Friend must allow the military authorities to deal with the enemy on shore. Naval authorities might believe that a landing never would take place, but if it did, naval authorities would have their hands pretty well occupied with their own business. Let it not be supposed for a moment that naval and military authorities were at issue. Military authorities wished to provide for their share of the work being properly done if at any time England should be left open to invasion. ["Hear."] Criticisms had passed in reference to the expenditure for barracks at St. Lucia. Troops were necessary for the defence of the coaling station, and it was necessary to have quarters for them; this was the opinion of the Colonial Defence Committee and approved by the late Government. Obviously it was useless to have a coaling station at St. Lucia unless it was defended; and it was necessary that the coaling station should be maintained there, having regard to its geographical position in respect of other Powers. With regard to the other barracks, it must not be supposed that the defence of coaling stations alone made necessary an increase of expenditure on barracks. It was proposed to complete the system upon which the House set its seal in 1890 to replace barracks which were worn out or insanitary by barracks fit for the habitation of troops. ["Hear, hear!"] As he had pointed out earlier, the Government were not going beyond the amount, nor had they reached the amount, which was put before Parliament and Lord Randolph Churchill's extremely economical Committee and received approval in 1888; but they were going ahead as fast as they could with all regard to economical expenditure of money. Let the House notice this. The Government were not asking for more than they hoped to spend in five years, in order that they might not withdraw from the notice of Parliament expenditure beyond a reasonable period. It had been said that these loans were mixed up with the annual Estimates, but that was not in accordance with facts. He did not think that Members would find any items for defence purposes in the Estimates during the time the Defence Loan Works were being carried out. The loan was taken for works of a permanent nature, and in the Estimates were the items for armament, and if at any time the House desired to criticise the expenditure on armaments there was always an opportunity on the Vote for Stores. With regard to barracks, undoubtedly they asked for what was necessary in order that they might at once start with contracts in the most economical manner. His hon. Friend behind him criticised the proposed defence of the Scilly Islands, not because he thought they should not be defended, but on the ground that there ought to be a breakwater. All he could say was they were doing exactly what they were asked to do by the joint Naval and Military Committee, and if they consulted three or four experts from the Admiralty and the War Office, and checked their opinion by the sanction of the Secretary of State and the First Lord of the Admiralty, and brought the result before the Defence Committee to consider and to decide what shall be done, after hearing all who had a right to be heard, they had as near an ideal system for protection in an expert manner as could be got under our Constitution and Parliamentary arrangements. The only thing a civilian could do was to endeavour to follow out the proposals arrived at, and he might add those proposals had never been seriously challenged as regarded defence of coaling stations, of harbours, and ports. He assured the House it was the desire of the Government to give the fullest information on all points so far as was consistent with national interest and the purpose of these defensive works. The nature of these works was not known in detail in foreign countries and to foreign critics, although Members had asserted that all our preparations were known abroad. That assertion did not square with the immense desire of many foreigners to become better acquainted with the state of affairs. If these matters were so well known, the authorities would not have to be so careful in this respect. ["Hear, hear!"] The Department had furnished the House with a full schedule of all that they thought ought to be known to the world, and if any Member had any doubt on any point he would be glad to satisfy him. There was no desire to magnify official reserve, and they would be glad of advice on any point from those acquainted with the public needs, and any suggestion would be carefully weighed. But at the same time he trusted sincerely that this Measure, having been brought in on the highest expert judgment, having been carefully examined and cut down to the narrowest limits consistent with efficiency, would be accepted in the spirit in which it was proposed to meet the protective needs of the Empire. [*Cheers.*]

*Mr. W. WOODALL (Hanley) said the interesting and in the main reassuring speech of the right hon. Gentleman was, he thought it would be felt, ample justification for the Motion of his hon. Friend requiring further information before this Measure was proceeded with. The inconvenience and loss which were entailed by the necessary and legitimate enforcement of the rule as to March 31 was a matter too familiar to need emphasising at this time. At the same time the House of Commons must be aware there was a danger incidental to this practice of proceeding by way of loan as to which Parliament ought to be always on guard, and that was evidenced in the figures that had been submitted to them in the memorandum of Lord Lansdowne, in which he explained that the works estimated for in the present War Office Votes were diminished by the fact that the Government had been able to include in their scheme dealt with under the loan system a number of works which, to that extent, reduced the annual Votes for which Parliament was to be asked. As to the defence of military ports and commercial harbours, it would not be contended for a moment that there was anything novel in the proposals. The responsibility for dealing with them had been recognised by every successive Government. He wanted to say a word with regard to the four ports for which defensive works were included in the scheme. It might have been assumed that the proposal to create harbours at Berehaven and Lough Swilly, for example, was a new idea, whereas during the term of office of the late Government the lands were acquired, the works carried on, and the armaments much advanced. He hoped the necessary works would now be pushed on to completion. ["Hear, hear!"] With reference to the barracks, it was impossible to overrate the importance of the proposals of the Government. It was a scandal to see that the huts erected at Aldershot, the Curragh, and other places had been allowed to continue so long. They were in an insanitary condition and, he was afraid, not free from vermin. He was glad they were about to make provision for better quarters for their soldiers generally, and especially for the married soldiers. ["Hear, hear!"] If the right hon. Gentleman was unfortunate in regard to any of his observations, he must by this time feel that he was, at any rate, not happy in his references to the scheme for the defence of London. They now learned with great satisfaction that there were to be stations—in which were to be stored implements and, it might be, ammunition—as rallying points under the scheme of mobilisation. It was perfectly true that this scheme had been recognised at the War Office, and there was a certain continuity in regard to it during the term of the late Government. But what was the extent of the contribution of the late Government to this alarming and sensational work? He believed that during their last year of office there was included in the Votes the sum of £5,000 for establishing stations in which some of the forces assigned to the defence of London could be mobilised as quickly as possible. He thought the House would gather from what had been said in the Debate that any Government charged with the defence of the country would be open to very serious reproach—he might almost say impeachment—if they failed to contemplate the possibility—the grievous and hardly conceivable possibility—of an invasion of this country, of the breakdown of their national defences, and of the failure of the Volunteers and others to prevent the landing of an enemy. He should be very much surprised to learn that at the War Office those responsible for the defence of the country had not provided against the landing of an enemy—he would not say on the south side of London, but in any part of the United Kingdom. He should also be surprised if there were not schemes by which entrenchments might be thrown up and every point of vantage rendered capable of defence, whether the enemy landed in Suffolk, Essex, Kent, or any other part of the coast. That on approaching London the enemy should be met by a carefully studied resistance was also obvious. But that was a very different thing from what the right hon. Gentleman startled the country with in his statement with regard to the ultimate defence of London. His words, to the gravity of which he would again call his attention, startled the leader writer in *The Times* and created a sensation throughout the country generally, speaking, as he did, not merely of this scheme of mobilising the Volunteers, the Militia, artillery, and the rest according to the method suggested by Sir Edward Hamley, but going on to say,

> "London must be surrounded by defensive positions, strongly held, fortified with artillery, as a second line of defence."

The Under Secretary's explanation diminished the gravity which seemed to lie in his words as to fortified positions round London. There was nothing like the difficulty suggested in getting stores from the Ordnance Department at Woolwich. If it occupied six weeks it would be a grave reproach, and the Under Secretary ought not to give sleep to his eyes nor slumber to his eyelids until such a scandal was removed.

*Mr. BRODRICK said he was speaking of ten years ago. Since then decentralisation had taken place which it was intended to carry further.

*Mr. WOODALL said that decentralisation was to be approved of, but it was an enormous administrative advantage to have a central point from which to draw stores of all kinds. The adoption of the new rifle rendered ranges of greater distance necessary, the acquisition of which presented difficulties. He gathered that on Salisbury Plain the Government would be able to provide ranges which would be available for all arms of the service. The Financial Secretary of the War Office, in an address to the Bloomsbury Rifles, indicated that the Government had undertaken the responsibility of providing ranges in different parts of the country accessible to Volunteers. He should be glad if this were so, because hitherto the responsibility of providing ranges had been thrown on the Volunteers themselves. He hoped the idea of acquiring Cannock Chase as a desirable site for ranges, manœuvres, and other useful military purposes had not been abandoned.

*SIR J. COLOMB said he could not vote for the Amendment, because a portion of the money was to be applied to barrack accommodation and ranges, which were very necessary. The Under Secretary for War had given the House an interesting historical sketch of the sums of money that had been spent on fortifications and defences since the time of Lord Palmerston. But £900,000 had been spent on the defence of coaling stations, etc., which had been left out of account. Now, that was an important fact. It was under Lord Carnarvon's scheme that the money was all spent upon the ports. Then, in 1888, they had the Imperial Defence Act. The sum then was £2,600,000, and of that £2,500,000 was spent on fixed defences of ports. Then there was the Naval Works Bill of last year, and between two and three millions more were spent on fixed defences and harbours. Now, again, this year they had this Bill providing 5½ millions over one million of which was to go to defray the expenses of defending the ports. They were not at the end of it, because between this and 1901 there was a further million to be provided to complete the defence of enclosed harbours under the Naval Works Act, so that altogether that House, by this method of procedure would spend between 1884 and 1901 a sum approaching six millions upon one item of defence—the defence of the ports. It was time they should have an end put to the confusion as to who was responsible for these ports. One year they had the Admiralty coming forward, and then in the next year they had the War Office coming forward and advocating the expenditure on naval grounds. Between the two they were, he feared, getting into considerable confusion. He thought it was time that they should differentiate and settle who was responsible for the defence of the ports. The First Lord of the Admiralty came last year with his big bill for enclosed harbours, and he justified it on the ground of strategical necessity. He then ventured to say, if they came to look at the strategical necessities, they would find Berehaven a very important place; but the Admiralty repudiated the importance of Berehaven. [The FIRST LORD of the ADMIRALTY: "No."] When last year the question of Berehaven was raised the Admiralty had not a word to say. What had happened this year? His right hon. Friend comes down to the House and puts Berehaven in the front rank for naval reasons. He wanted to know which Department was responsible for the selection. [The FIRST LORD of the ADMIRALTY: "Jointly."] Then he thought it was very desirable, when expenditure was proposed, a full statement should be made to the House. If they attempted to go into naval affairs on a military Bill or into military affairs on a naval Bill Mr. Speaker would rule them out of order. In conclusion, with regard to—he hardly knew how to describe them; they were sometimes called magazines, sometimes stores, sometimes block houses—the places to be erected round London, when he asked who recommended them, they were told "the highest naval authorities." When he asked his right hon. Friend what naval authorities, he replied, "They have nothing to do with it; it is a military affair." Then there was some talk about "absolute defence by the Navy." He did not know any sane man who talked about absolute defence. When the naval command of the sea had gone, would anybody who knew anything of the economic conditions of this country hold that there would be anything for us but capitulation? He was in favour of reasonable security against military raids, and for the sea faces of the ports, but who was going to be responsible for keeping the ports open? Was the War Office or the Admiralty to provide security for the free ingress and egress of the shipping into and from the ports? He believed that the present method of the Admiralty and the War Office, asking at different times large loans for these purposes, was getting us into great confusion in our defensive policy.

Sir WILFRID LAWSON (Cumberland, Cockermouth) agreed that the present system led to confusion. The Bill asked for 5½ more millions for the defence of the country, and he believed the country was not averse to all this expenditure. There were a few of them, however, who objected most strongly to this enormous expenditure on our armaments. There was an old saying of Mr. Disraeli's, that expenditure was not policy. It was not his policy. He belonged to the Manchester school, which had now got another name, and was called the "Little England" school. He was proud of the name, because he believed that a "Little Englander" was honest. For years past he had listened to the Army Debates, and some grand new scheme was always being brought forward by which it was urged we should attain a state of permanent defence, and of peace and happiness. A few years afterwards, however, he had always heard that nothing was right, that increased expenditure was required, that past expenditure had been of very little value, and that the regiments were all imperfect, that the arrangements were all in confusion, and that all our boilers were bursting. [*Laughter.*] If the Army could not defend the country, then the money devoted to it was absolutely wasted. Since the days of the Crimea our Army had had the sense not to fight the big Powers, but the very small Powers—which was better far, he admitted. [*Laughter.*] He should give his vote heartily against this enormous and uncalled for expenditure, first, because they were deprived of discussing the matter on the Estimates, and secondly, because there was no more necessity for it now than in past years. Now that there was a Concert of Europe, and we agreed with everybody, what was there to be afraid of? [*Laughter.*] He opposed the Bill still more because he agreed with Mr. Gladstone that this country ought not to enter into a system of competition for enormous armaments with foreign nations.

Major RASCH (Essex, S.E.) said that he could not agree with the suggestions that had been made in the course of this Debate that the money required for the purposes of the Bill should form an item in the Estimates of each year. He entirely agreed with the contention of the right hon. Gentleman the Under Secretary for War that it was far better that the matter should be settled once for all by means of a Bill instead of the question being discussed every year in Committee upon the Army Estimates. It must be remembered that the unexpected always happened, and that until an item in the Estimates had been agreed to in Committee no contracts with regard to it could be entered into, because if the Vote were rejected the money it involved would go towards the redemption of the National Debt. For his own part, he was extremely glad that the policy of the late Mr. Stanhope was being carried out. The state of some of our barracks at the present time was shocking, and was a discredit to the country. In some places the troops were placed in a miserable collection of huts and hovels, and the men had to change their cots from side to side of the rotten structures with every change of wind. With regard to the acquisition of the 40,000 acres of land in the neighbourhood of Salisbury Plain under the Bill, he was of opinion that it was scarcely adequate for the purpose of military manœuvres, seeing that it was only a territory of eight miles long by eight miles wide. At the same time, half a loaf was better than no bread, and he was decidedly in favour of agreeing to the Government proposal upon the point. He could quite understand hon. Members like the hon. Baronet the Member for the Cockermouth Division of Cumberland, who objected to military force altogether, voting against the Army as an entirety, but he could not understand those who desired that we should have an Army voting against a proposal that would insure its efficiency. Everyone who had studied the subject knew that the cause of the defeat of the French Imperial Army by the Prussian Army was that the latter had attained its great superiority by means of its annual manœuvres. The great Austrian manœuvres of three years ago, which had attracted so much attention from military men, had been conducted on far larger territory than that which was now asked for under this Bill. With regard to the suggested lines of defence around London, he was entirely in favour of the proposals embodied in the Bill, which he thought was the best that the War Department had brought in for many years, and which he should support most heartily.

SIR HENRY CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN (Stirling Burghs) said his hon. and gallant Friend who had just sat down had courage enough to compare this loan of several millions to "a ha'porth of tar." [*Laughter.*] He could not regard it in that light. He thought it was a large and serious step for the House of Commons to take. ["Hear, hear!"]

MAJOR RASCH: I am sure the right hon. Gentleman does not wish to misrepresent me; but I only alluded to a part of it, the manœuvre part, as "a ha'porth of tar."

SIR HENRY CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN said that even that was a pretty big "ha'porth." ["Hear, hear!" *and laughter.*] At all events, he was not surprised, and he did not think the Government had any occasion to be surprised that the Second Reading of this important Bill should have created a disposition to somewhat prolonged Debate. ["Hear, hear!"] His hon. Friend the Member for West Islington had brought forward an Amendment in favour of further information. There were some points upon which further information could not be given with great advantage to the public. [*Ministerial cheers.*] But he was not surprised on the whole that his hon. Friend should hesitate to give an unequivocal support to the Bill. The House of Commons was within its right when it regarded all Bills involving loans of public money with considerable suspicion. [*Cheers.*] He was quite aware that under the modern system, which differed from the old system, the House was not altogether parting company with the money, because the annual Estimates would have to show the yearly interest necessitated by the expenditure under the loan and also the yearly sum for the repayment of the loan. That was, perhaps, an improvement on the old system. At the same time it was a very doubtful point indeed, especially for those who took a high financial ground in those matters—which he was not inclined by personal disposition to take—whether it was altogether sound finance that they should vote this large sum of money, not for any definite, separate, and distinct purpose, but for certain purposes which were also included in the annual Estimates. ["Hear, hear!"] Still, he should admit that he himself had in his official capacity administered Bills of this sort and Estimates of the same character, and had derived considerable advantage from the fact that they were running together. [*Laughter and* "Hear, hear!"] There was no doubt that a Bill of this sort gave great facilities to a Minister—he had, as he had said, experienced those facilities himself—by enabling him to pass from Estimate to loan, and from loan to Estimate, expenditure according as it might suit his purpose. ["Hear, hear!"] In regard to the question of barracks, the late Mr. Stanhope—whose removal from among them they would always regret—["hear, hear!"]—was immensely impressed by the necessity for erecting more sanitary, and, indeed, he might say, more decent barracks, for the accommodation of the troops in the country—["hear, hear!"]—and he introduced a loan of this character for the purpose of erecting such barracks. The sum which was then obtained was not adequate for the purpose, and was now pretty nearly exhausted; and the Government now asked for an additional sum to continue the work. So far as that went, there was not a word to be said against it. ["Hear, hear!"] At the same time it verged very closely upon the services, which were affected by the ordinary Estimates of the year, and created a certain amount of confusion; but the object was so good, so necessary, and so urgent that he did not think the House would hesitate to vote the money for the purpose. ["Hear, hear!"] It was when one looked closely into the particular items that were set out in the schedule of the Bill that objection to the course proposed by the Government arose. One of the items deserving of the greatest censure was one to which he personally could raise no objection—he referred to the provision for a military hospital in Edinburgh. [*Laughter.*] It was a small sum of £18,000, and had been proposed in the Estimates year after year only to be postponed in favour of some more urgent service. But it justified the suspicion that items which ought to be provided for out of the ordinary Estimates were contained in the schedule of the Bill. ["Hear, hear!"] However, he did not make any very strong point on that ground. One reason alleged for dealing with this great matter of barrack buildings by loan rather than by Estimate was capable of being pushed a little too far—namely, that the Estimates might be passed at so late a period of the year, that building could not be carried on at the best period of the year. That only affected the first commencement of the building. Once the House of Commons had given its consent to a certain work the work could be gone on with in anticipation of the approval of the House. [" Hear, hear ! "] Still, he admitted that in the case of a large undertaking such as was involved in replacing insanitary barracks by more decent accommodation, the House might very well grant a loan of this character—that was to say, the House might very well take it that that was a matter not to be borne by the taxpayer of the year, or next year, or the year following, but might justly be spread over the next 20 or 30 years. [" Hear, hear ! "] Whether the same argument might not be applied to public buildings under the Civil Service Estimates, such, for instance, as the South Kensington Museum—[" hear, hear ! "]—he did not stop to inquire, but in the meantime, he thought it was a fair argument that, although in the long gone past loans of this kind were, so far as he knew, confined to definite fortifications or purposes which could be confined within themselves, they were now allowed to be applicable to the building of ships, to the providing of guns and the building of barracks. That principle having been admitted, he did not think the House had any great cause to complain of the proposals of the Government in that respect. [" Hear, hear ! "] As to the money to be expended notoriously for sanitary purposes, he quite admitted that within the last ten or 15 years there had been a not altogether economical expenditure of money on barracks in Dublin, but there were certain barracks in Dublin which were notoriously insanitary, and surely it was an urgent matter to get over that—[" hear, hear ! "]—and he hoped no objection would be raised on that head. Another object for which part of this money was required was the acquisition of a larger extent of land on Salisbury Plain in order to facilitate manœuvres. It was hardly manœuvres in the ordinary sense of the term—[" hear, hear ! "]—that would be facilitated. It was rather cavalry training. He did not doubt at all that that would be a very useful thing because there were very few parts of the country in which cavalry could be properly trained by reason of the inclosed nature of the country; but, on the other hand, he was bound to say that would not take the place of ordinary manœuvres —[" hear, hear ! "]—for the simple reason that while it might train commanding officers and troops in exercises so far as they were applicable to an open country, it did not train them in taking advantage of the features of an inclosed country, and that was surely the thing most wanted for the defence of this island. [" Hear, hear ! "] He had repeatedly pointed out the difference between this country and all European countries he knew. He dared say the right hon. Gentleman opposite would say, Why was not the Manœuvres Bill of last year passed into law? [" Hear, hear ! "] That Bill was not passed because it was a little too rigid and repellant in its terms for the ordinary sentiment of the British public. [" Hear, hear ! "] The Government were kind enough to say they would accept any Amendments on that Bill which were approved or suggested by the Leader of the Opposition and himself, but they could not undertake the duties of the regular government of the country. [*Cheers.*] It was a little too much to expect that they should say what should be inserted in that Bill, but if on a future occasion the Government introduced a Bill providing for facilities for manœuvres, a little less drastic and alarming, he would be very glad to see it carried into law. [*Cheers.*] The Bill also proposed to provide for the fortification of coaling stations, and upon that it was difficult for them to pronounce an opinion. Certain branches of the military profession were likely to be the most competent advisers on the subject of the defence of these positions. As he understood, the greater part of the money was required in consequence of the great development that had taken place in recent years in the quick-firing armament which, in substitution for, or unfortunately, as often happened, in addition to, the old heavier armament, was to be provided in marine stations. He believed that the proposals in this Bill were the result of the joint opinion of the best officers of the Army and Navy. The Under Secretary for War had referred, on a previous occasion, to Berehaven and Lough Swilly as if the works there were novel. As a matter of fact, those places had been provided for year by year for many years past. Now, under naval advice, the Government had added two other fortified stations, and to that he did not think the House would raise any objection. This was a matter respecting which it was most undesirable that further details should be given. ["Hear, hear!"] He was not in favour of undue secrecy or mystery, but there were points in regard to the defence, not only of these isles, but of our possessions throughout the world, which it was very undesirable to drag before the public so that they should become known to all the world. ["Hear, hear!"] He came now to the most contested matter in the Bill—namely, the money which was to be voted for certain positions in the neighbourhood of London. His withers were unwrung in connection with that matter. When he came into office in 1892 a certain amount of money had been spent in acquiring rights over certain sites in the neighbourhood of London, and in the two or three years over which his responsibility extended certain small sums were voted and expended for the purpose of improving them. He could not say that he had ever been very enthusiastic upon the subject, or had considered this a very vital part of their preparations. It was all very well to say that schemes of this kind had been recommended by the highest military authorities. The name of Sir Edward Hamley had been introduced, and the names of others who had approved of this particular mode of defence, and those names, no doubt, ought to be received with all the respect that was due to them. He was all in favour of the advance that had been made in recent years in perfecting our schemes of defence, both naval and military, but they ought not to be the slaves of those schemes. ["Hear, hear!"] Upon them they should bring to bear such common sense as Providence had endowed them with, and if those schemes, however high the authority for them might be, conflicted with their common sense they ought to be a little cautious about expending money upon them. ["Hear, hear!"] But in the present case he thought that too much had been made of a comparatively small matter. Whether it was the Under Secretary's fault or not he could not say, but an idea had certainly got about that there was some grotesque scheme of encircling London either with a wall, a circumvallation, or with a chain of forts. He need hardly say that by the mass of the people such an idea would be looked upon as perfectly absurd. He shared that opinion himself. But if all that was meant was this, that our technical and skilled advisers, knowing the particular route of any force which by some unfortunate hazard was able to land on our coasts and to approach the metropolis, selected certain positions as those upon which temporary fortifications should be thrown up and a stand could be made against them, and if this was merely a provision for making the subsidiary preparations for such a defence, then he did not think there was much to be said against them. [*Cheers.*] His idea was if that were contemplated under this loan or in the Estimates, the less said about it the better; and if any disposition had been shown to magnify and make it a rather large item in this expenditure, and a strong point in justification of the House voting the money, then he thought it was a great mistake, because they could not obviously justify it without stating the positions which they were to hold, and if they stated the positions they did away with half the benefit of the whole scheme. He believed that this was one of those cases in which they might trust a little to the opinion of the high military authorities, to whom he should be in any case indisposed to bow the head completely; but the House might trust to them if the scheme only involved a small amount of money, and if they found some slight completion of preparations at the places which they had selected as necessary to employ troops which could not be otherwise used in the defence of the country, and at the same time add to the security of the metropolis and the sense of the security of the inhabitants, then he did not think any great objection could be made to it. His hon. Friends had spoken the language of common sense. They did not profess to be strategists or technical soldiers when they protested against the exaggerated view of those fortified positions. He imagined that there were positions of that kind not only around the metropolis but in other parts of the south of England, which had been selected by our skilled advisers as being the bases on which in case of necessity a rally should be made. If that was only meant why should they object to it? [*Cheers.*] He agreed with everything that had been said against the idea of anything in the nature of a ring of forts round the metropolis, but if the proposal had only the limited meaning he had referred to he did not think that was any reason for the House rejecting the proposal of the Government. He took what might be called the Scotch side on this question. [*Laughter and cheers.*] It was the cautious side. [*Laughter.*] Whether it was likely that an enemy should invade the country and successfully land a body of troops or not, they should be "canny" enough to provide against the possibility even if it did not exist; and in that modified and reasonable sense he was not unwilling even to support this much maligned proposal of the Government. On the whole, therefore, he had sufficient feeling in him that the House ought to support the Government of the day who came forward on the advice of their best advisers to make proposals, and he had sufficient loyalty to agree to them, provided they did not notoriously conflict with the common sense which they all possessed. [*Cheers.*]

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR, Manchester, E.) felt that the right hon. Gentleman had continued the tradition which had honourably distinguished Parties in the House on a matter in which Party politics were not really concerned in any sense, but in which it was their duty to carry out, to the best of their ability, the advice of the military and naval experts of the country. The right hon. Gentleman had given that support to the Government of the day which he hoped had been on similar occasions given by those who had sat on the Benches which the right hon. Gentleman adorned. ["No!" *and laughter.*] He simply rose, having made these few words of acknowledgment, to say he hoped the House would now consent to give the Government the Second Reading of the Bill.

Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman.

*MR. JOHN BRIGG (Yorkshire, Keighley) said it had been his disadvantage to have lived outside the military atmosphere which appeared to surround Gentlemen opposite. He could even remember the time when there were soldiers pensioned off after 20 years' service who never fired a shot in earnest in their lives. His life's work had been directed to constantly improve the methods of making and saving and extending commercial supremacy instead of military and naval supremacy. He could not, however, but utter a protest on his own account, and on behalf of some quarter of a million of people in his immediate neighbourhood, who, by the fortunes of the last election had now no voice to speak for them in this House, against the tendency to spend the results of our prosperity in expenditure which, to his mind, the advocates of this Bill had not been able to justify. To listen to Members opposite one might think war had already been declared, and an hostile fleet was in the Channel; but it was a comfort to find that our experts not only knew how and where we must place our defences, but could also tell us exactly whereabouts our enemies were going to deliver their attack. He was thankful the danger was not so imminent as they were asked to believe, and that

Consols were yet at 112. He watched with the greatest jealousy this spending of our surplus saving, and while our trade and commerce had lately shown signs of life and vigour they must remember it was not a long time since wise men in England believed that the highest tide of our prosperity had been reached; and even now he would be a rash man who would depend upon our present prosperous condition being of long duration. It appeared to him that the Navy having obtained large grants last Session without much difficulty, the Army was now to be treated in the same way. Against this Bill, therefore, he entered, for himself and a large number of his constituents, his earnest protest.

Question put, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question." The House divided :—Ayes, 194; Noes, 43.—(Division List—No. 34—appended.)

AYES.

Allen, Wm. (Newc. under Lyme)
Allsopp, Hon. George
Arnold-Forster, Hugh O.
Arrol, Sir William
Ashmead-Bartlett, Sir Ellis
Atkinson, Rt. Hon. John
Baden-Powell, Sir Geo. Smyth
Bailey, James (Walworth)
Baillie, James E. B. (Inverness)
Balcarres, Lord
Balfour, Rt. Hon. A. J. (Manch'r)
Balfour, Gerald William (Leeds)
Banbury, Frederick George
Barry, Francis Tress (Windsor)
Bathurst, Hon. Allen Benjamin
Beach, Rt. Hn. Sir M. H. (Bristol)
Bentinck Lord Henry C.
Bethell, Commander
Blundell, Colonel Henry
Bond, Edward
Boscawen, Arthur Griffith-
Bowles, Major H. F. (Middlesex)
Brodrick, Rt. Hon. St. John
Brookfield, A. Montagu
Buchanan, Thomas Ryburn
Bullard, Sir Harry
Caldwell, James
Campbell, James A.
Cavendish, R. F. (N. Lancs.)
Cecil, Lord Hugh
Chaloner, Captain R. G. W.
Chamberlain, Rt. Hon. J. (Birm.)
Chamberlain, J. Austen (Worc'r.)
Chaplin, Rt. Hon. Henry
Charrington, Spencer
Clare, Octavius Leigh
Clough, Walter Owen
Coghill, Douglas Harry
Collings, Rt. Hon. Jesse
Colomb, Sir John Charles Ready
Colston, Chas. Edw. H. Athole
Compton, Lord Alwyne (Beds.)
Corbett, A. Cameron (Glasgow)
Cranborne, Viscount
Curzon, Rt. Hn. G. N. (Lanc. S. W.)
Curzon, Viscount (Bucks.)
Dalbiac, Major Philip Hugh
Dalkeith, Earl of
Dalrymple, Sir Charles
Darling, Charles John
Davenport, W. Bromley-
Digby, John K. D. Wingfield-
Dilke, Rt. Hon. Sir Charles
Dorington, Sir John Edward
Douglas, Rt. Hon. A. Akers-
Drucker, A.
Duncombe, Hon. Hubert V.
Dunn, Sir William
Farquharson, Dr. Robert
Fellowes, Hon. Ailwyn Edward
Fergusson, Rt. Hn. Sir J. (Man'cr)
Field, Admiral (Eastbourne)
Fielden, Thomas
Finch, George H.
Finlay, Sir Robert Bannatyne
Fisher, William Hayes
FitzGerald, Sir R. U. Penrose
Fitz Wygram, General Sir F.
Folkestone, Viscount
Forster, Henry William
Foster, Harry S. (Suffolk)
Fowler, Matthew (Durham)
Galloway, William Johnson
Garfit, William
Gibbs, Hn. A. G. H. (City of Lond.)
Gibbs, Hon. Vicary (St. Albans)
Godson, Augustus Frederick
Goldsworthy, Major-General
Gordon, John Edward
Gorst, Rt. Hon. Sir John Eldon
Goschen, Rt. Hon. G. J. (St. G'rg's)
Goschen, G. J. (Sussex)
Goulding, Edward Alfred
Graham, Henry Robert
Gray, Ernest (West Ham)
Green, Walford D. (Wednesbr'y)
Greene, Henry D. (Shrewsbury)
Greene, W. Raymond- (Cambs)
Greville, Captain
Hamilton, Rt. Hon. Lord Geo.
Hanbury, Rt. Hon. Robert Wm.
Hardy, Laurence
Hare, Thomas Leigh
Heath, James
Heaton, John Henniker
Hermon-Hodge, Robert Trotter
Hill, Rt. Hn. Lord Arthur (Down)
Hoare, Edw. Brodie (Hampstead)
Hobhouse, Henry
Houldsworth, Sir Wm. Henry
Hubbard. Hon. Evelyn
Hutchinson, Capt. G. W. Grice-
Hutton, John (Yorks. N.R.)
Isaacson, Frederick Wootton
Jeffreys, Arthur Frederick
Jenkins, Sir John Jones
Jessel, Captain Herbert Merton
Johnston, William (Belfast)
Jolliffe, Hon. H. George
Kennaway, Rt. Hon. Sir John H.
Kenny, William
Kenyon-Slaney, Col. William
Kimber, Henry
Knowles, Lees
Lafone, Alfred
Laurie, Lieut.-General
Lawson, John Grant (Yorks.)
Lea, Sir Thomas (Londonderry)
Lecky, William Edward H.
Leighton, Stanley
Leng, Sir John
Lockwood, Colonel A. R. (Essex)
Loder, Gerald Walter Erskine
Long, Rt. Hn. Walter (Liverpool)
Loyd, Archie Kirkman
Lucas-Shadwell, William
Lyttelton, Hon. Alfred
Macdona, John Cumming
Maclure, John William
McKillop, James
Malcolm, Ian
Maple, Sir John Blundell
Mellor, Colonel (Lancashire)
Melville, Beresford Valentine
Milton, Viscount
Milward, Colonel Victor
Monckton, Edward Philip
More, Robert Jasper
Mount, William George
Murray, Rt. Hn. A. Graham (Bute)
Murray, Charles J. (Coventry)
Murray, Col. Wyndham (Bath)
Myers, William Henry
Nicol, Donald Ninian
Northcote, Hon. Sir H. Stafford
Orr-Ewing, Charles Lindsay
Parkes, Ebenezer
Platt-Higgins, Frederick
Plunkett, Hon. Horace Curzon
Pollock, Harry Frederick
Powell, Sir Francis Sharp
Provand, Andrew Dryburgh
Pryce-Jones, Edward
Pym, C. Guy
Rankin, James
Rasch, Major Frederic Carne
Renshaw, Charles Bine
Richardson, Thomas
Ridley, Rt. Hn. Sir Matthew W.
Ritchie, Rt. Hon. Chas. Thomson
Russell, Gen. F. S. (Cheltenham)
Russell, T. W. (Tyrone)
Scoble, Sir Andrew Richard
Seely, Charles Hilton
Sidebotham, J. W. (Cheshire)

Simeon, Sir Barrington
Smith, Abel H. (Christchurch)
Smith, Hon. W. F. D. (Strand)
Stanley, Lord (Lancs.)
Strauss, Arthur
Strutt, Hon. Charles Hedley
Sturt, Hon. Humphry Napier
Talbot, Lord E. (Chichester)
Taylor, Francis
Tennant, Harold John
Thornton, Percy M.
Tomlinson, Wm. Edw. Murray
Valentia, Viscount
Vincent, Col. Sir C. E. Howard
Wallace, Robert (Edinburgh)
Webster, R. G. (St. Pancras)
Webster, Sir R. E. (Isle of Wight)
Welby, Lieut.-Col. A. C. E.
Whitmore, Charles Algernon
Williams, Colonel R. (Dorset)
Williams, Jos. Powell- (Birm.)
Willoughby de Eresby, Lord
Willox, John Archibald
Wilson, John (Falkirk)
Wodehouse, Edmond R. (Bath)
Wortley, Rt. Hon. C. B. Stuart-
Wylie, Alexander
Wyndham-Quin, Major W. H.
Wyvill, Marmaduke d'Arcy

TELLERS FOR THE AYES, Sir William Walrond and Mr. Anstruther

NOES.

Abraham, William (Cork, N.E.)
Brigg, John
Burns, John
Channing, Francis Allston
Colville, John
Condon, Thomas Joseph
Davitt, Michael
Dillon, John
Foster, Sir Walter (Derby Co.)
Gilhooly, James
Goddard, Daniel Ford
Harrison, Charles
Hayne, Rt. Hon. Charles Seale-
Holden, Angus
Jones, William (Carnarvonshire)
Kilbride, Denis
Lambert, George
Lawson, Sir Wilfrid (Cumb'land)
Leuty, Thomas Richmond
Lloyd-George, David
Macaleese, Daniel
M'Hugh, Patrick, A. (Leitrim)
McLeod, John
Minch, Matthew
Morgan, J. Lloyd (Carmarthen)
Morton, Edward John Chalmers
O'Brien, Patrick (Kilkenny)
Power, Patrick Joseph
Price, Robert John
Roberts, John H. (Denbighs.)
Robson, William Snowdon
Samuel, J. (Stockton-on-Tees)
Shaw, Thomas (Hawick B.)
Souttar, Robinson
Stanhope, Hon. Philip J.
Sullivan, Donal (Westmeath)
Tanner, Charles Kearns
Warner, Thomas Courtenay T.
Whittaker, Thomas Palmer
Wills, Sir William Henry
Wilson, Frederick W. (Norfolk)
Wilson, John (Govan)
Woodhouse, Sir J. T. (Hud'rsfld)

TELLERS FOR THE NOES, Mr. Lough and Mr. Kearley

Main Question put, and agreed to.

Bill read a Second time, and committed for Monday next.

PUBLIC HEALTH (SCOTLAND) BILL.

Adjourned Debate on Second Reading (5th February) further adjourned till Monday next.

MILITARY LANDS ACT (1892) AMENDMENT BILL.

Committee deferred till To-morrow.

TRUSTS (SCOTLAND) BILL.

Considered in Committee.

Clause 1—

Committee report Progress; to sit again To-morrow.

LAW OF EVIDENCE (CRIMINAL CASES) BILL.

Second Reading deferred till To-morrow.

BERRIEW SCHOOL BILL.

Second Reading deferred till Monday next.

STEAM ENGINES AND BOILERS (PERSONS IN CHARGE) BILL.

Adjourned Debate on Motion for Committal to Standing Committee on Trade, &c. (17th February) further adjourned till Monday next.

SHOP ASSISTANTS (HALF-HOLIDAY) BILL.

Second Reading deferred till To-morrow.

LICENSING EXEMPTION (HOUSES OF PARLIAMENT) BILL.

Second Reading deferred till To-morrow.

House adjourned at Ten minutes after Twelve o'clock.

HOUSE OF LORDS.

Friday 19th February 1897.

LAND TRANSFER BILL [H.L.].

A Bill to establish a real representative, and to amend the Land Transfer Act, 1875, was presented by the Lord Chancellor; read 1ª; and to be printed.—[No. 16.]

House adjourned at Half past Four o'clock, to Monday next, a Quarter before Eleven o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

Friday, 19th February 1897.

QUESTIONS.

CENTRAL CRIMINAL COURT (REGINA *v.* GREATOREX-SMITH).

MR. E. H. PICKERSGILL (Bethnal Green, S.W.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department (1) whether his attention has been drawn to the case of Regina *v.* Greatorex-Smith, an indictment for performing an unlawful operation, tried at the Central Criminal Court on the 14th ultimo before Mr. Justice Hawkins, when the learned Judge expressed his strong disapproval of the course taken by Inspector Fox, first, in reading over to the prisoner on his arrest a portion of a statement which the young woman had made, and secondly, in taking the prisoner to the bedside of the dying woman and putting questions to her in his presence; (2) whether Inspector Fox has been reprimanded by his superior officers for his conduct in this case; (3) whether he is aware that it is a growing practice on the part of detective officers of the Metropolitan Police to attempt to get in as evidence statements which would otherwise be inadmissible by arranging that they shall be made in the prisoner's presence or read over to him; and (4) whether he will take steps to caution the Metropolitan Police on the subject?

*THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE HOME DEPARTMENT (Sir MATTHEW WHITE RIDLEY, Lancashire, Blackpool): Yes, Sir; I have seen the newspaper reports of the trial. It appears from these that the learned Judge decided that, under the circumstances, the statement made by the young woman was inadmissible in evidence. This being so, it becomes, of course, a matter of regret that she should have been troubled in this way on her deathbed. I am satisfied, however, after careful inquiry into all the facts of the case, that in very difficult and painful circumstances Inspector Fox did no more than was his duty in endeavouring to obtain the evidence of the young woman—the sole witness—by the only means in his power. I cannot think that his conduct deserves censure. The answer to the second, third and fourth paragraphs of the Question is in the negative.

MR. PICKERSGILL asked whether, having regard to the growing practice referred to in paragraph 3 of his Question, the right hon. Gentleman would caution those police officers?

*SIR MATTHEW WHITE RIDLEY said that if he had the slightest idea that there was any growing practice on the part of the police of endeavouring to obtain inadmissible evidence he would certainly take the action recommended by the hon. Gentleman; but in this case it was difficult for him to say more than that he thought the inspector, and those who advised him, had a reasonable idea that they were acting in accordance with the requirements of the law.

ROYAL NIGER COMPANY.

*SIR CHARLES DILKE (Gloucester, Forest of Dean): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies whether there are any figures showing how far the revenue of the Royal Niger Company from spirits has very recently increased?

*THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS (Mr. CURZON, Lancashire, Southport): The figures are as follows: In 1891 the revenue derived by the Royal Niger Company from the duties on spirits was £23,059; in 1892, £21,865; in 1893, £31,883; in 1894, nil; in 1895, £14,376; in 1896, £15,983.

The movement, therefore, has been, on the whole, in the direction, not of increase, but of decrease.

*Sir C. DILKE said he intended to refer to the last few months since the change of duty.

*Mr. CURZON: I have no information beyond what I have given.

WEIGHTS AND MEASURES.

Mr. W. R. BOUSFIELD (Hackney, N.): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade if he has considered the Report submitted tô him last year by the Conference of Inspectors and Manufacturers of Weights and Measures; and whether, having regard to the importance of the question to inspectors, manufacturers, and the trading public, he can state what steps he is taking or proposes to take with reference to this Report?

The PRESIDENT of the BOARD of TRADE (Mr. Ritchie, Croydon): I informed the deputation which waited on me in August last, and which was introduced by the hon. and learned Member, that before I could consider the suggestions contained in the Report it would be necessary for me to ascertain the views of the various local authorities throughout the country. A communication was addressed to some 300 authorities, asking for their observations; but up to the present time only 90 replies have been received, and I am, therefore, not yet in a position to come to any decision.

DISTRESS FROM WANT OF EMPLOYMENT COMMITTEE.

Mr. BOUSFIELD: I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board (1) whether he has considered the Report of the Committee on Distress from Want of Employment of last Session, and whether he is prepared to take any steps to carry out the recommendations of the Committee; and (2) whether he would facilitate the passing of a short Act to extend the powers of Boards of Guardians with reference to taking land to land "easily accessible from," as well as "in or near to," their districts?

The SECRETARY to the LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (Mr. T. W. Russell, Tyrone, S.): The Report of the Committee referred to has received the careful consideration of the President of the Local Government Board. A Bill has been prepared on the subject, but its introduction must depend on the progress which may be made with other Government Measures.

Mr. BOUSFIELD referred to the last paragraph of his Question, and asked whether a Bill embodying the recommendation that the powers of guardians with reference to taking land should be extended would not be likely to meet with general approval?

Mr. T. W. RUSSELL said he was aware of that recommendation, but it was thought that the recommendations should be dealt with as a whole and not piecemeal.

SLAVERY IN ZANZIBAR.

Mr. J. L. CAREW (Dublin, College Green): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether his attention has been called to a Resolution unanimously adopted at a meeting of the Friends' Foreign Missionary Guild, held in Dublin on the 3rd February 1897, deprecating the existence of slavery in the Islands of Zanzibar and Pemba, now under the Protectorate of the British Government, as inconsistent with the position taken up by Great Britain with regard to slavery; and whether Her Majesty's Government will take steps to bring about its total and immediate abolition?

*Mr. CURZON: A copy of the Resolution has been received, and Her Majesty's Government have already taken steps with reference to the abolition of the legal status of slavery in Zanzibar and Pemba, the nature of which they hope before long to be able to communicate to the House.

WEST BROMWICH GUARDIANS.

Sir WALTER FOSTER (Derbyshire, Ilkestone): I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board whether his attention has been called to the action of the West Bromwich Guardians in appointing a district medical officer at a fixed salary, which is to include payment for all those cases which the Consolidated Order of 24th July 1847 expressly provides shall be paid for as extras; and, whether Articles 177 to 183 of this Order have been suspended as regards the West Bromwich Union; if so, whether he will inquire if the reasons which justified the suspension still hold good, seeing that the Local Government Board last year called special attention to the articles of the Order which require that district medical officers shall have extra remuneration for operations and certain other cases?

MR. T. W. RUSSELL: The operation of the Articles in the Regulations relating to the payment of extra fees to Medical Officers in the West Bromwich Union was suspended in 1862 on the application of the Guardians. The Guardians stated that they proposed this arrangement in consequence of continual disputes in connection with claims by the Medical Officers to fees. All the Medical Officers of the Union who have been appointed since that time have been appointed at salaries inclusive of the extra fees. The Local Government Board have not received any suggestion from the Guardians or the Officers that the arrangement is not working satisfactorily.

SIR WALTER FOSTER asked whether the hon. Gentleman did not consider that the Order of 30 odd years ago was one of long date on which to take present action, especially when that action was contrary to the spirit of the recent regulations of the Local Government Board?

MR. T. W. RUSSELL said that if any application was made to the Local Government Board by either Guardians or Officers it would be considered.

LAND SUB-COMMISSION (COUNTY CAVAN).

MR. VESEY KNOX (Londonderry): I beg to ask the Attorney General for Ireland why no sitting of a Land Sub-Commission Court at Cootehill has yet been announced to deal with the large number of second-term applications in that part of County Cavan?

THE CHIEF SECRETARY FOR IRELAND (Mr. GERALD BALFOUR, Leeds, Central): The hearing of a list of cases arising in the Poor Law Union of Cootehill will be commenced at Cootehill on 11th prox.

IRISH MAILS.

MR. KNOX: I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury why, on some recent occasions, the mails for Derry, arriving in Dublin at about 8 a.m., have been sent by special train to Portadown, and not forwarded thence by special train, so that they arrived at 6 p.m., though the ordinary train to Derry, viâ Enniskillen, leaving Dublin at 9 a.m., arrives in Derry at 3.40 p.m.?

*THE SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY (Mr. R. W. HANBURY, Preston): The rule as to the use of special trains for the English mails for Belfast and Derry on those occasions when the Packet is late is that a special train is to be employed when by its use an interval can be given for reply by the return mail the same day. A departure from Dublin at 8 a.m. admits of a reply from Belfast but does not admit of a reply from Derry. When, therefore, the packet is so late in arriving that the special train cannot leave Dublin by 7.30 a.m. the special train is only run to Belfast and the mails for Derry have been put down at Portadown and forwarded by the next ordinary train. The Postmaster General finds, however, that by putting the Derry mail out at Dundalk, and sending it round by Enniskillen, it can reach Derry as the hon. Member indicates, by 3.40 p.m., and instructions shall be given accordingly.

CHRISTIAN BROTHERS' SCHOOLS.

MR. KNOX: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether he has, since his speech on the subject last year, been able to make any advance towards arranging a basis on which the Christian Brothers in Ireland may receive State aid; and, whether he will endeavour to arrange a settlement on the basis of granting to Irish Voluntary Schools (whether under the Christian Brothers or the Church Education Society) a special grant and a fee grant proportionate in total amount to the grant which is to be made to English Voluntary Schools?

MR. GERALD BALFOUR: As the hon. Member is doubtless aware, the Government proposed in last year's Bill to give a registration fee of 10s. for each child in average attendance in the schools referred to in the question. Objection was made to that proposal by the Irish Roman Catholic Bishops on the ground of the smallness of the grant and the absence of a conscience clause. As to the former, the Government did not see their way of increasing it, nor am I prepared to admit the correctness of the analogy drawn by the hon. Member in the question between the schools of the Christian Brothers or the Church Education Society in Ireland and the Voluntary Schools in England. As regards a conscience clause, it would have been inconsistent with the scheme of the Government to impose any conditions on the internal regulations of the schools which it was proposed to assist. I did, however, submit to the hon. Member for East Mayo a draft clause which, while leaving each school free to carry out its system of education in its own way, appeared to me adequately to meet the objection of the Bishops; but the hon. Member intimated to me that the clause would not, in his opinion, be accepted as sufficient. Since then no further steps have been taken.

Mr. W. JOHNSTON (Belfast, S.) asked whether the action of the Roman Catholic hierarchy was not the principal cause of the schools not receiving this grant?

Mr. KNOX asked whether they were to understand, that though there was an equivalent grant to be made in the case of Scotland none was to be made in the case of Ireland in respect to education this year?

Mr. GERALD BALFOUR: That is a question that must be addressed to the Chancellor of the Exchequer.

BRITISH SOUTH AFRICA (SELECT COMMITTEE).

Mr. F. A. CHANNING (Northampton, E.) had a question on the Paper addressed to the First Commissioner of Works, asking whether his attention has been drawn to the inadequate arrangements for the Press in connection with the proceedings of the South African Committee, and especially to the fact that on Tuesday a large number of Press representatives had to use a table in the icy atmosphere of Westminster Hall to deal with the matter reported; and, whether he can make better provision in future for the health and comfort of Press representatives, either by changing the sittings of that Committee to Standing Committee No. 10 upstairs, and giving the Press adjoining accommodation, or by setting apart some other room adjoining Westminster Hall for their use?

Mr. SPEAKER: I do not see the hon. Member for Northamptonshire in his place, but I am sure the hon. Member is the last person to wish to encourage a breach of the privileges of this House. His question really does tend to do that, because it invites the First Commissioner of Works to deal with matters which are entirely outside his cognisance. The hon. Member asks the First Commissioner of Works to make adequate arrangements for the Press, and to provide better accommodation. That is a matter entirely in the discretion of the Chairman of the Committee, and in connection with which the First Commissioner of Works has no duties whatever. The hon. Member also proceeds to ask whether the First Commissioner of Works would consider the advisability of changing the room in which the Committee is sitting to Committee-room No. 10. That is, of course, a matter entirely in the hands of the Serjeant-at-Arms and the officers of the House, and not within the cognisance of the First Commissioner of Works. Therefore, I would suggest that the question should not be put to the First Commissioner of Works. ["Hear, hear!"]

MUSGRAVE STREET POLICE BARRACKS, BELFAST.

Mr. G. W. WOLFF (Belfast, E.) I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether the recent examination into the sanitary condition of the police barracks in Belfast has shown that not only the Musgrave Street Barracks but also others are in a most unsatisfactory state; whether he is aware that many cases of typhoid fever, some of them fatal, have occurred amongst the police, the average number being far in excess of those amongst the rest of the population of Belfast; and, what steps he proposes to take to put the sanitary condition of the barracks in proper order at the earliest date?

Mr. GERALD BALFOUR: The Inspector General states that the result of the examination by the Public Health Department into the sanitary condition of the Musgrave Street Barracks has not yet been communicated to him. He has no information that the other police barracks in Belfast are in an unsatisfactory condition as alleged in the Question. I have already stated that eight cases of fever have occurred in the Musgrave Street Barracks since its occupation in 1893, and that four of these cases terminated fatally. There is no case of fever at present in this barrack. The further steps to be taken to remedy any defects that may be found to exist in the sanitary condition of Musgrave Street Barracks must depend upon the result of the investigations now being conducted.

SERVICE MONEY ORDERS (BENEVOLENT SOCIETIES).

Mr. C. E. SCHWANN (Manchester, N.): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury, as representing the Postmaster General, will be explain why the privilege enjoyed till recently by benevolent societies, in connection with the Post Office, of transmitting the amount collected, by means of service money orders, free of expense, was withdrawn on 1st April 1896; and, what amount has the Department saved by the withdrawal of this concession which had received the sanction of successive Postmasters General during the last 20 years, in view of the benefit it brought to the widows and orphans of Post Office employees?

Mr. HANBURY: It is not the fact that the privilege received the sanction of successive Postmasters General during the last 20 years. It appears to have been allowed originally under a misapprehension, but there is nothing to show that the attention of successive Postmasters General was directed to it. The present Postmaster General considered that he had not the right to make any concession in favour of benevolent societies connected with the Post Office which he had no power to extend to similar charities outside, and in consequence came to the reluctant conclusion that the privilege must be withdrawn. The amount which the Department has saved by its withdrawal, or, to speak more accurately, the amount which it lost by the irregular concession in the past cannot be stated without considerable investigation.

TEA INDUSTRY (INDIA).

Sir SEYMOUR KING (Hull, Central): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for India whether his attention has been called to the serious danger with which the India tea industry is threatened by the proposal of the Indian Government to allow pilgrims for Mecca to embark at Diamond Harbour; and what steps he proposes to take in the matter?

The SECRETARY of STATE for INDIA (Lord George Hamilton, Middlesex, Enfield): I have been in communication with the Government of India on the subject of my hon. Friend's Question. I expect to hear very shortly that pilgrimage from India has been suspended altogether for the present.

MANCHESTER POST OFFICE.

Mr. SCHWANN: I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury, as representing the Postmaster General, whether he is able to give a reply to the petition from the employees of the Manchester Post Office, dated 16th August 1896, with reference to their alleged local grievances, seeing that six months have nearly elapsed since its presentation?

Mr. HANBURY: A petition was received from the Town Postmen at Manchester in August last, complaining that the attendance on many of the duties was protracted beyond the regulation eight hours, that certain of the duties involved attendance at inconvenient times, and that the supervising force was inadequate. The petition was duly acknowledged at the time. A general revision of the postmen's duties at Manchester took place about a year ago, but, as it was found shortly after that further relief was required, owing to the rapid increase of business, 48 more postmen were then sanctioned by the Postmaster General. In January of this year he sanctioned the employment of 30 more postmen, making 78 in all since April last. A general revision of the duties is under consideration, and it is hoped that the revision will be completed shortly.

CRETE.

Sir ELLIS ASHMEAD-BARTLETT (Sheffield, Ecclesall): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether any further armed bands from Greece have been permitted by the Great Powers to land in Crete; whether the Great Powers have urged the Turkish Government not to send reinforcements to Crete; and what steps the Great

Powers are taking to protect the lives and property of the Mussulman inhabitants of Crete?

*Mr. CURZON: The latest information that we have received is that Greek troops were landed West-North-West of Canea Bay on the 16th instant. The Turkish Government have not announced any intention of sending troops to Crete. The general advice given by the representatives of the Great Powers has been that they should abstain from any precipitate action. Detachments from the ships of the Powers have occupied Canea and Sitia, and the occupation will probably be extended to Candia and Rethymo, where ships of war are already stationed. The British, Russian and Italian Consuls have proceeded to Selinos to endeavour to prevent further conflicts and outrages, and to relieve the Mussulman families besieged in the neighbourhood.

Mr. JAMES LOWTHER (Kent, Isle of Thanet): Does that contemplate any steps being taken with regard to the Mussulmans in the interior of the island?

*Mr. CURZON: I do not quite understand the right hon. Gentleman's Question.

Mr. JAMES LOWTHER: What I meant was this. The right hon. Gentleman mentioned that steps were being taken on the coast. I want to ask him whether any steps are being taken, or will be taken, to protect the lives and property of the Mussulmans in the interior?

*Mr. CURZON: I believe the representatives of the Great Powers are doing all they can in that respect. As I have had to state two or three times before in this House, the difficulties, under the present circumstances, of communicating with the interior of the island are almost insuperable.

Mr. T. W. LEGH (Lancashire, Newton): Can the right hon. Gentleman explain how it is that the Greek troops were able to land in the first instance?

*Mr. CURZON: I presume that they were able to land because they were not opposed. [*Laughter.*]

Mr LEGH: Were any instructions sent to the Naval commanders with reference to the matter?

Mr. SPEAKER: Order, order! That is a Question of which notice should be given.

Mr. GIBSON BOWLES (Lynn Regis): Will the right hon. Gentleman say whether it is proposed that the Great Powers should remain themselves in occupation of the coast towns and leave the Greek troops in possession of the towns in the interior?

*Mr. CURZON: That is a Question of which notice must undoubtedly be given.

Sir E. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT: I would like to ask the right hon. Gentleman whether he has received news of the massacre of a large number of Turkish women and children in Sarakina and what practical steps the Great Powers and their fleets are taking to relieve the Mussulman population.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order, order! That does not arise out of the Question on the Paper. It is a Question of which the hon. Member might give the Under Secretary of State private notice, but it does not arise out of the Question on the Paper.

Sir E. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT: On the point of Order, may I point out that the right hon. Gentleman in his reply to me stated what steps were being taken with regard to these besieged villages, and what I wish to ask with regard to his reply is whether any practical steps—

Mr. SPEAKER: Order, order!

Sir E. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT: Do you rule that out of order?

Mr. SPEAKER: Yes.

In answer to a further question from Sir E. Ashmead-Bartlett,

*Mr. CURZON said: This morning we heard from Her Majesty's Consul at Canea that news had been received from Selinos that besides massacres in other villages the Mussulman inhabitants of Sarakina had been murdered by Christians to the number of 20 men, 23 women, and 61 children—total 104, and that the Consul had seen some of the survivors. It was in consequence of this news that the British, Russian, and Italian Consuls have proceeded, as I stated in reply to a previous question, to Selinos. The Consuls went to Selinos in a man-of-war.

Mr. JOHN DILLON (Mayo, E.): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs when papers on the affairs of Crete, coming down to the present date, will be laid upon the Table?

*Mr. CURZON: Further correspondence respecting the affairs of Crete will eventually be presented, but it is impossible at present to fix a date. It is evident that papers coming down to the present time could not be laid on the Table at a moment when negotiations between the Powers are proceeding.

MR. JOHN ELLIS (Nottingham, Rushcliffe) remarked that papers had been promised again and again.

*MR. CURZON: The question on the Paper has reference to further correspondence. I have said, I think nearly every day, that I hope the Blue-book already promised will be laid on the Table in the course of a week.

MR. J. ELLIS: We have not got it.

*MR. CURZON: The week has not elapsed.

MR. DILLON: I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether he is in a position to confirm or deny the statement that several Christians were roasted alive in a baker's oven during the recent disturbances in Canea?

*MR. CURZON: In accordance with the promise given by me yesterday, telegraphic inquiry has been made of Her Majesty's Consul with regard to this report, but no reply has as yet been received.

PETROLEUM (SELECT COMMITTEE).

MR. JAMES McKILLOP (Stirlingshire): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether it is the intention of the Government to re-appoint the Select Committee on Petroleum?

SIR MATTHEW WHITE RIDLEY: Yes, I hope it will shortly be re-appointed.

AGRICULTURAL RATES ACT, 1896 (AMENDING ORDER).

MR. PICKERSGILL: I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board, why the Copy of his Amending Order making regulations under the Agricultural Rates Act, 1896, which was laid upon the Table on the 5th instant, was not issued to Members until the 18th instant, that is three days after the time limited by statute for objecting to the Order; and, who is responsible for this circumstance?

MR. T. W. RUSSELL: The Order in question was laid upon the Table in accordance with the statutory requirement, and the House ordered that it should be printed. Whilst it is to be regretted that copies of the Order were not in the hands of Members at an earlier date, the Local Government Board is in no way responsible for the carrying out of the order of the House as regards the printing of Parliamentary Papers.

MR. PICKERSGILL made an appeal to the Speaker. The Agricultural Rates Act of last Session gave to either House the right of objection within ten days. On this occasion the Order was laid on the Table on the 5th instant, but it was not available for Members until the 18th, or three days after the time limited by statute had run out. He had made inquiries and had found that the manuscript of the Order was forwarded to the Stationery Office on the 5th, but it was not marked urgent, nor was any intimation given that it was desirable that the Paper should forthwith be in the hands of Members; it appeared to have been left to take its chance, with the result he had stated. He respectfully asked the Speaker—as this was the second occasion upon which this had happened—whether some steps could be taken to secure that an Order of this kind should be in the hands of Members in reasonable time to prevent in future a provision deliberately inserted in an Act being rendered futile as in this case.

MR. SPEAKER: In the point raised by the hon. Member it is obvious there is an hardship upon Members, but I cannot say there is any question of Order for me to decide. It is a question whether in laying the Papers on the Table of the House the statute was complied with, and that is hardly a question I can deal with.

MILITARY MANŒUVRES (GRANT TO OFFICERS).

SIR ALBERT ROLLIT (Islington, S.): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for War whether it is intended to make any grant to officers who took part in the August-September manœuvres, 1896, in reimbursement of the great loss and expense caused to them by the damage to clothing, arms, and accoutrements, such as has already been made to other ranks upon a scale equal to about one-third of their daily pay during the whole time of the manœuvres; and whether it is intended to make any general regulations to provide for such reimbursement of officers when engaged on special service with troops in case of actual or apprehended riot or the like?

*THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR WAR (Mr. BRODRICK, Surrey, Guildford): Field allowance is granted to officers employed in manœuvres to cover any extra expenses to which they may be put. These officers had field allowance. No special regulations are desirable to meet the circumstances referred to in the latter part of the Question. Such cases can only be considered on their merits as they arise.

POST OFFICE ESTABLISHMENTS.

MR. GERALD LODER (Brighton): On behalf of the hon. Member for York (Mr. J. G. BUTCHER), I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury, as representing the Postmaster General, (1) whether the Report of the Committee appointed to inquire into the alleged grievances of the Post Offices employees has been presented to the Postmaster General; and (2) when it is proposed to lay such Report upon the Table of the House?

*MR. HANBURY: The answer to the first paragraph is, Yes. The Report has to be considered in the first instance of course by the Postmaster General, and his recommendations have then to be reviewed by the Treasury. The subject is one involving many details and considerable expenditure—and for that reason some recommendations of the Post Office have only reached the Treasury within the last few days. The Report will be laid upon the Table as soon as all the recommendations of the Post Office have been dealt with.

SUPPLY (SUPPLEMENTARY NAVY ESTIMATE).

MR. J. H. DALZIEL (Kirkcaldy Burghs) asked when the Navy Estimates would be in the hands of Members, and also whether there would be any Supplementary Navy Estimates?

THE FIRST LORD OF THE ADMIRALTY (Mr. G. J. GOSCHEN, St. George's, Hanover Square) said there would be a Supplementary Navy Estimate. He could not at the moment say when the Navy Estimates would be in the hands of Members.

Sir A. Rollit.

NEW MEMBER SWORN.

Sir Charles Cameron, baronet, for the Burgh of Glasgow (Bridgeton Division).

SELECTION (STANDING COMMITTEES) (CHAIRMEN'S PANEL).

Sir John Mowbray reported from the Committee of Selection, that they had selected the following six Members to be the Chairmen's Panel and to serve as Chairmen of the two Standing Committees to be appointed under Standing Order 47:—Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman, Mr. John Edward Ellis, Sir James Fergusson, Mr. Arthur O'Connor, Mr. Whitmore, and Mr. Stuart-Wortley.

Ordered, that the Report do lie upon the Table.

MOTION.

CHURCH PATRONAGE TRANSFER.

Bill to regulate the Transfer of Church Patronage, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Stanley Leighton, Mr. Herbert Gladstone, and Sir John Kennaway; presented accordingly, and Read the First time; to be Read a Second time upon Friday, 26th March, and to be printed.—[Bill 140.]

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

SUPPLY.

Considered in Committee.

[The CHAIRMAN of WAYS and MEANS, Mr. J. W. LOWTHER, in the Chair.]

ARMY ESTIMATES, 1897–8.

1. £553,000, Militia, Pay, Extra Pay, Bounty, &c.

MR. COURTENAY WARNER (Stafford, Lichfield) asked if any arrangements had been made to supply the Militia with caps as well as helmets of the same pattern as those supplied to the regular troops. Another question to which he should like an answer had relation to the spending of £30,000 on the Militia Reserve. They had the Reserve twice over. The Militia themselves were all Reserves, and whenever there had been a European war of any sort the Militia had been called upon to serve not only in England but in the Mediterranean. This £30,000 was given to certain men to join the regular Army in case of war. If the Militia were only enlisted for foreign service, instead of 117,000 men there would be 147,000, and an expenditure of £30,000 a year would probably be saved. The 30,000 men would be added to the ordinary strength of 117,000, and would not be counted twice over as they were now. Another point he wished to urge had reference to the training of the Militia. He quite recognised the advisability of the Militia being sent among the regular troops in large camps periodically, say once every five years, but the system of sending them out of their own county when the ordinary training took place was absurd, and seriously interfered with the recruiting for this branch of the service. The Militia ought to be trained as far as possible in their own county, and a considerable expense would be saved which was now incurred in moving the troops.

Mr. T. LOUGH (Islington, W.) observed that while the Estimate seemed to have increased by about £5,000, the actual number of men for whom provision was made was rather less than last year. He should like some explanation as to why this was the case. Again, although the men were not so numerous there was an increase of £10,000 in regimental pay. There was a decrease in regimental allowances of £1,100, and a decrease of £3,000 in bounty and enlistment expenses. There was also an item for money which had been paid by men who wanted to obtain their discharge. He should like to know why they were so anxious to leave the service. Then he saw the heading "Fines." Could not the system of fines, which was being abolished in so many other directions, also be abolished in the Militia? There was an increase of £2,500 under the heading of the Colonial Militia. Who were the Colonial Militia, and what was the cause of this increase?

Sir EDWARD GOURLEY (Sunderland) inquired what steps the Government intended to adopt to bring the Militia up to the required strength.

Mr. CHARLES COLSTON (Gloucester, Thornbury) thanked the Government for their action last year with regard to the Militia bounty. Owing to the unfortunate outbreak of smallpox in the city of Gloucester the two county Militia battalions were unable to train, though the men were anxious and willing to come out. He had ventured to represent to the Secretary for War the hardship and loss the men would be subjected to from this circumstance, and Lord Lansdowne, acting within his discretion, allowed them their usual bounty, which had been very thankfully received.

Colonel WYNDHAM MURRAY (Bath) remarked that the Under Secretary for War stated in introducing the Army Estimates that "it was under consideration to utilise the services of officers who had retired from the Army by joining the Militia." But, besides the officers of the Reserve forces, they had a very large number of men also of the Army Reserve who had no annual training whatever. They drew pay but did nothing for it. Many thousands of those men could never even have seen a magazine rifle, much less handled one, and they should have a training every year, as was done in the German army with the Landwehr, to keep up discipline and training. There might be difficulty at first regarding their employment, but the Militia also had their employments. Most of the men were engaged in agricultural or business pursuits, and yet their employers, from a sense of patriotism, or perhaps appreciation of the advantages gained to the men and to themselves from habits of discipline, gave them a certain period during which they could go through their training. He thought in the case of the Army Reserve men, seeing the national necessity for this training, employers would make the small necessary sacrifice and would arrange that their employees should have leave for the annual training. They should be called out with the Militia of their Territorial Districts, and would be under command of the officers under whom they served in the Army. It would bind together the territorial connection between Regulars and Militia, and would have a satisfactory result all round. He hoped the Secretary of State for War would seriously consider some system of this kind. At present there was no system of training for our Reserve forces, and an annual training of this kind would enable them to take their place in the Line in case of emergency without any delay.

SIR JAMES FERGUSSON (Manchester, N.E.) regarded the Militia as a valuable force which in conceivable circumstances might be of inestimable value to the country for national defence, amenable to military discipline, with continuous service, and having thorough territorial attachment. It was unsatisfactory it should be 700 officers and 19,000 men short of the establishment, and every effort should be made to keep the Militia up to its proper strength. The Government might well consider whether some means might not be devised to remove any small cause of unpopularity and render the service more attractive. It was not prudent to bring out battalions of Militia to take part in manœuvres in very wet weather when they were so insufficiently supplied with clothing and especially with boots. In the manœuvres of last autumn, in which the Militia took a distinguished part, real sufferings were endured by them by reason of the insufficiency of their clothing. Militiamen, unlike the regular soldier, had only one pair of boots, so that after many hours of service in rainy weather it was impossible for them to dry the boots before they were required for use again. The men should have means of changing their boots, and not endure hardships which might sow the seeds of disease. The fines imposed on the men were small considering the size of the Force. The Militia, as a body, had much improved since he himself first entered the Army, and now formed a considerable addition to the Army Reserve. Whilst the Volunteers were most valuable, it would be a great pity if the Militia, which had been found a valuable adjunct to our Regular Army, were neglected.

*COLONEL BLUNDELL (Lancashire, Ince) said he always found that Militia Lieutenant-colonels disliked the idea of drilling Militia Reserve men, who on an emergency might leave. He suggested that if Militia regiments could bring forward enough men to make a half battalion of Militia Reserve they should be allowed to do so, and that half battalion should be sent on active service with the Line battalion, receiving their supplies in an

Colonel Wyndham Murray.

offensive war from the quartermasters' stores of the Line battalion, and serving with the Line battalion as a sub-brigade under the commanding officer of the Line battalion.

*THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR WAR (Mr. BRODRICK, Surrey, Guildford) said the question of the Militia Reserve had frequently been discussed in the House. The War Office recognised its importance. But to extend it beyond 30,000 men would reduce the Militia battalions to skeletons, and it was desired to preserve them as an integral portion of our national defence. It had been asked why £10,000 more was wanted for regimental pay. The War Office was extending the system of training the Militia with the Regulars. It was most important military training. Certain brigades of artillery would have 41 days' training and others 34 instead of the 27 days previously. The extra efficiency obtained had far more than compensated the House for the amount voted. The work done by the Militia at Aldershot last year was highly satisfactory. It evoked the warm commendations of the Commander in Chief. The men marched extremely well and the regiments played their parts exceptionally well in the manœuvres, and cheerfully bore considerable hardships incidental to the bad weather. As regards boots, for the training of 34 days each man was provided with a pair of boots and a pair of canvas shoes, which became his own at the end of the time. So he did not think that the Militia did badly as regarded footwear compared with other forces. After the training a large number of recruits made up their minds to enter the Line, so that the Militia were a great feeder of the Regular Army. The desire to improve the condition of the Militia had been much in the minds of the Commander in Chief and the Secretary for War. The military authorities fully appreciated the value of the Force, and no consideration of the popularity of the Volunteers and the good service they were doing would operate with the War Office to prevent full consideration being given to the Militia. [" Hear, hear! "]

CAPTAIN BETHELL (York, E.R., Holderness) said there were about 700 officers wanted for the Militia, and he asked why sufficient officers for the Force could not be obtained. Were the inducements not sufficient or was it that Militia officers were regarded as not on the same footing as officers in the regular Army?

Dr. TANNER (Cork Co., Mid.) remarked that attention had been called to the dearth of Militia officers for the past eleven years. In Ireland, to serve as an officer in the Militia was regarded as a huge and gigantic joke. [*Laughter.*] During the 27 days' training—it used to be 21—the main thing was to play cards at night, get a cold douche in the morning, then, if possible, go on parade, and eke out the day's miserable existence until the cards began again. [*Laughter.*] He was not treating the matter as a joke, because it was past a joke. ["Hear, hear!"] He remembered a colonel of a distinguished regiment, upon making his third mistake in the manual exercises—which gallant Gentlemen opposite in distinguished commands would regard as the A B C of military education—and being called on the second time, striking the pommel of his saddle and exclaiming, "Euchred again!" [*Laughter.*] The fact that they were short of officers was due to the present anomalous position, the soldiers being only soldiers in name and not in earnest. As to the officers wearing silver lace, the result was that in a ball room you could hardly distinguish between officers of the Militia and of the Line, and more officers joined the Militia in consequence of the hallucination. He believed that until they dealt with the Militia on the German plan, and tried to get into the Militia officers who had passed through Her Majesty's service, they would always have the present difficulty. He would like to have some explanation of the county and enlistment expenses.

Mr. COURTENAY WARNER said his hon. Friend's experience of Irish regiments was very different from his own experience of English regiments, in which there was very little card playing. In comparison with the old Militia there were some regiments very short of officers, but the deficiency was not very large when the whole Militia was taken into consideration, and that deficiency moreover was being gradually lessened. He thought it was quite impossible to shoot properly with the black powder out of the new rifle, and he hoped they would have some assurance that it should be given in future to the officers to shoot matches with, instead of to the men to be taught with. As to the question of bounty, he thought it would be more popular to give 5s. all round rather than to give a pound to certain privileged men. With regard to the non-commissioned officers it sometimes happened that the Line drafted their non-commissioned officers that they wanted to get rid of into a Militia regiment. The result was that the non-commissioned officers in the Militia were not always quite up to the standard. There was one case he would like to refer to, where a gentleman had been made a colonel of a regiment—the Royal Anglesea Engineers Militia—by being promoted over the heads of 12 captains of very old standing. It seemed rather a strong order to promote an officer who had left his own regiment, as was the case in this instance, over men who had been in the regiment for years.

Viscount CRANBORNE (Rochester) thought the hon. Member had done good service in calling attention to the great disability under which a number of Militia battalions suffered last year by having to fire with black powder out of the new rifles. The new rifle was sighted for the cordite powder, and if the black powder was used a certain allowance had to be made in sighting in order to hit the target in the centre. This might be possible in the case of well-trained men, but it was extremely difficult to explain to the Militia the necessary allowance which had to be made, and it detracted from their proficiency in musketry. Of course he knew it was a temporary arrangement, and he was sure it would not occur again. It was sometimes suggested that, for ranges said to be not suitable to the Lee-Metford rifle, the charge of that rifle should be reduced. He earnestly hoped the War Office would set their face against any such expedient. Firing with a reduced charge meant firing with a sighting which was wrong according to the regulations, and it was a thousand pities that the short time spent by the Militia in training should be wasted in this way. He believed permission used to be given to advance bounty for the first year as a stimulus to recruiting, and by this means men could be recruited in the winter months. He was informed that in certain battalions the men so recruited took the bounty and never appeared again, but that was not by any means the case in all battalions, and he would ask his right hon. Friend to make a distinction between the bad and the good, and to allow that method, by which the recruiting was very much improved, to be pursued in the case of battalions which were careful to prevent any such fraud.

CAPTAIN BETHELL asked whether the War Office were satisfied with the effect of the method of transferring officers from the Militia to the Line, which had been considerably extended in recent years. He had heard that it had a bad effect on the officering of the Militia.

*MR. BRODRICK said he did not think the officering of the Militia had been badly affected by the transferring of men from the Militia to the Line. The real difficulty in regard to the officering of the Militia was that the landed proprietors were now less able than they had been to send their sons into the Militia. It was noticed that in districts where rents had fallen there was a difficulty in obtaining officers for the Militia; but in districts like the Home Counties, where new residents had come in and taken the places of the old landed proprietors, there was little trouble in filling up the vacancies for officers in the battalions. At the same time, the War Office recognised that the officering of the Militia was a serious matter. They hoped to improve the present condition of things by increasing the inducements to officers of the Line on half-pay or retired pay, to serve in the Militia. They also looked to a movement that had recently been begun in the public schools to improve the officering of both the Volunteers and the Militia. A committee had been appointed recently by the masters of the public schools. One of the objects aimed at was, in the case of boys at any of the public schools who took an interest in the Volunteers, to endeavour, when they left their respective schools, to find out whether they were prepared to serve in either the Volunteers or Militia; and then to communicate with the local battalions in order that these boys might at least have the offer of any vacancies. The War Office therefore hoped, with the assistance of the masters of public schools, to show progress during

Viscount Cranborne.

the next year in the matter of the officering of the Militia. With regard to the filling up of the vacancy in the Royal Anglesey Engineers, about which he had been asked, he had to say that the War Office had considerable difficulties in regard to that matter, and that the appointment had been made after full consideration of the interests of the regiment and on the recommendation of the general officer commanding. His hon. Friend the Member of Bath had asked him about training the Reservists and the Militia together. If the War Office had the power of training the Reservists compulsorily, and could do so without endangering the employment of the Reservists, they would be glad to take that course. But it was doubtful whether they would be able to get the Reservists to come up voluntarily. Complaints had also been made that only a few non-commissioned officers came into the Militia from the Line. The War Office would undoubtedly be glad to have more of the Line non-commissioned officers in the Militia; and they thought it probable that by keeping a register at the Depôt they would succeed in getting more. His noble Friend the Member for Rochester had said he would like to see bounties given in the case of certain Militia battalions, as an inducement for recruits to come in. The experience of the War Office was, that if bounties were a stimulus to recruiting they were also a great stimulus to deserting. [*Laughter.*] His noble Friend said that there were battalions and battalions, and suggested that a distinction should be drawn between moral battalions and immoral battalions. He was sure that if a battalion had a leader of the Church Party as its colonel it should be regarded as a model battalion—[*laughter*]—but even in that case, though bounties were given, he was afraid there would be the same difficulty in the matter of recruiting. On the whole, he thought it would be impossible to draw a distinction between battalions; and he was therefore afraid that he could hold out no hope to his noble Friend that he would be able to increase his battalion by means of bounties.

MR. COURTENAY WARNER asked, in regard to the proposed new system of inducing officers from the half-pay Line to serve as officers in the Militia, whether it was to be made compulsory?

*MR. BRODRICK: I was not speaking at the moment of compulsorily doing so. That would be a difficult operation.

MR. VESEY KNOX (Londonderry) said he had never known of a case of a man being raised from the ranks to be an officer in the Militia. It seemed strange to him that, while they complained of not having sufficient commissioned officers in the Militia, they never thought of promoting men from the ranks, while in the Line it was done frequently. He thought that by doing this they would get for the Militia a class of recruits which they did not get now. In the North of Ireland none of the Presbyterians who formed the middle class were in the Militia, and he supposed it was the same with the Nonconformists in England. It could not be said that this class did not afford good military material, for in the case of Cromwell's pupils they made the best of soldiers. The Under Secretary for War had implied that the natural officers of the Militia were landed proprietors or members of the Church Party—[*laughter*]—and he thought that class idea would have to be given up if they hoped to better the officering of the Militia.

*MR. BRODRICK: I beg the hon. Gentleman's pardon. The War Office do not restrict appointments in the Militia to any class. Appointments to the Militia are made by the War Office without distinction of class.

MR. KNOX said he would like to know, then, why it was that there was hardly a case of a non-commissioned officer being promoted to an officer in the Militia. He would also ask the War Office to consider whether better arrangements could not be made to attract the middle classes to the Militia. As to the question of powder, every economist must commend the action of the War Office. He understood that a rifle wore out more rapidly with cordite than with ordinary black powder. [*Cries of* "No!"] Then, as a large amount of black powder remained in stock, it was an interesting question how long the troops were to practice with the powder which they would not use in the case of war.

*MR. BRODRICK said that the reason why non-commissioned officers were not appointed to officers in the Militia was that the Militia service, being only for one month in the year, was expensive as compared with the Line. If non-commissioned officers in the Militia were appointed to be officers they would not be able to afford the attendant expenses, considering that the Militia was only called out for training one month in the year. With regard to black powder, there were 7,000,000 of rounds at the beginning of last year; and he believed that nearly the whole of the stock had been consumed by the practice of last year. After all the black powder in stock had been used up no more would be ordered.

DR. TANNER said there were a certain number of good men among the non-commissioned officers in the Militia, and he thought the inducement to promotion should be held out to them as it was held out to non-commissioned officers in the Line. He would suggest that the Militia should have medals for long service as well as the Volunteers. If the Government instituted a Militia long-service medal it might be that they would do a very good thing. It was sad that the number of Militia officers was diminishing owing to the landed gentry not being able to afford to take commissions. That might be so, or it might not be so; but why should not encouragement be given to non-commissioned officers in the same direct way as it was given in the Line and in the armies of other countries, by allowing them to pass from the position of non-commissioned officers, which was unfortunately not always looked upon as absolutely the position of a gentleman, into the position of an officer and a gentleman? They should be allowed to become commissioned officers and not merely quartermasters. He hoped this matter would be treated on its merits.

VISCOUNT CRANBORNE said that after the very kind but very unsatisfactory reply of his right hon. Friend, he hardly liked to press him on another point. He understood that the number of rounds of black powder cartridges in store was not very large, and he would suggest that it was absurd to issue them to the Militia. If black powder was used in the Lee Metford rifle, owing to the diminished velocity, the rifle had to be pointed quite a foot on one side of the bull's eye in order to hit it, and that caused immense additional difficulty in rifle shooting. He would like to impress on his right hon.

Friend that the amount of loss to the public that would be entailed in the suppression of these inadequately charged cartridges would not be very great, and he hoped he would consider the possibility of suppressing their issue.

MAJOR BOWLES (Middlesex, Enfield) asked a question as to the head-dress of the Rifle Brigade.

*MR. BRODRICK said that a Committee had been appointed to consider the question of the head-dress of the whole Army, and they had not yet come to a decision.

Vote agreed to.

2. Motion made, and Question proposed:—

"That a sum, not exceeding £76,000, be granted to Her Majesty, to defray the Charge for the Pay and Miscellaneous Charges of the Yeomanry Cavalry, which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1898."

MR. HERMON-HODGE (Oxfordshire, Henley) said that up till the other day any Yeomanry officer who desired to obtain a commission was obliged to qualify by going for a month's instruction at the school at Aldershot. Yeomanry officers were now required to join regular cavalry regiments for instruction, and the responsibility for their instruction would in future rest with the commanding officers of those regiments. He was told that it took something like two years to teach a subaltern in this way to command a squadron in the field, and he was sure that any subaltern, if he was a man of ordinary intelligence, who attended the school at Aldershot and stuck to his work, would be perfectly qualified to take the command of a squadron in the field. He would very much like to know why this change had been made. Up till now Yeomanry officers had been very popular with Cavalry officers, but he was very much afraid that if these extra duties were thrown upon commanding officers and their adjutants, they would not be so popular as they had been. Hitherto Yeomanry officers had been able to join Cavalry regiments at their own expense, but he was afraid if this Regulation were maintained, they would not get that welcome they were accustomed to. He knew that inspecting officers had found that a certain percentage of Yeomanry officers were not as well up in their duties as they ought to be, but he contended that that was not the fault of the system but the fault of the individual officer who had not made himself efficient. It was possible that his right hon. Friend had consulted Yeomanry Colonels as to this change, and some of them might have thought there was no objection to it; but a large number of Yeomanry commanding officers had never been at the Aldershot school, and were therefore, he thought he might say, ignorant of the immense value that school had been to the officers under their command. He would respectfully ask his right hon. Friend to give the Committee some information as to this change of system.

MR. W. F. D. SMITH (Strand, Westminster) was not sure that he could agree with his hon. Friend who had just spoken when he said that after a month's instruction at the Aldershot school the Yeomanry subaltern was ready to take the command of a squadron in the field; but he agreed that in that time he learned a great deal about the elements of drill, and if he was allowed to have a voluntary course with a regular regiment after his course at the school, he would reap great benefit thereby. He had asked some regular officers about this change, and the answers he had received had not been favourable to it. He was glad his hon. Friend had raised this question, and hoped that he would receive a satisfactory explanation.

MR. KNOX said that in Ireland there were practically no Yeomanry, and as to the Yeomanry in England he had never met anyone who contended seriously that it was a valuable military force. Other reasons were assigned for its maintenance; it was said that it was useful socially because it brought together the sons of the landlords and the sons of the farmers, and also that it encouraged the breeding of horses. If those were really the reasons of maintaining the Yeomanry, he thought he might contend that an equivalent grant ought to be made for the support of the Ward Union, the Galway Blazers, and other Irish hunts which served the same purposes. If the maintenance of Yeomanry was to be defended on military grounds he would be glad to hear something about the military qualifications of the force. One hon. Member had told them that it took two years to make an officer fit to command a squadron of Cavalry. He should like to know how many officers in the Yeomanry—excluding those who had come from the Regular Cavalry—had performed duty for 24 months. The number, he should fancy, was comparatively small. If that was the case, what justification was there for making the taxpayers pay a considerable sum every year for the support of a force which could not be even moderately efficient? The sum now asked for was £76,000, showing an increase of £3,000 this year. But that was not the whole Bill, because there was a further sum for equipment, etc., which brought the total sum up to £115,000. The number of men who turned out to train was small and about stationary. Speaking roughly, the number was 8,500, and the average cost to the country was £13 10s. per man. So the cost of the Yeomanry was very little less than the cost of the Militia per man, and the Militia was a much more efficient force. He admitted that Militiamen did not spend so much money out of their own pockets as the officers and men of the Yeomanry did; but he could not overlook the fact that the keeping of horses was largely a matter of amusement, and the Yeomanry probably got a good deal of pleasure out of the pastime of riding. Unless the force was of serious military value, the mere fact that the Yeomanry spent a considerable sum out of their own pockets could be no justification for keeping this vote upon the Estimates. If this force, which appeared to be a luxury, was to be maintained, it ought to be paid for by Englishmen. He concluded by moving the reduction of the Vote by £7,000, which he calculated to be the amount which Ireland contributed to this expenditure.

DR. TANNER said that this question was one of the "hardy annuals." If Ireland was tranquil and satisfied as right hon. and hon. Gentlemen opposite averred, why should there not be Volunteer cavalry in Ireland as well as in England? They had all of them seen hon. Members of that House, when moving or seconding the Address, in Yeomanry uniforms, and very gorgeous they were. [*Laughter.*] Some of them, however, would doubtless recollect John Leech's striking picture of a member of the Yeomanry who wore a large medal on parade, and who replied, upon its being suggested that he had been to the wars, "No, I got it (the medal) from the old hog." [*Laughter.*] Every man in that House knew that the Yeomanry as a body were absolutely useless. An efficient cavalry officer had told him, after he had performed a period of service with Yeomanry, that if he were to perform it ten times over he would be unable to get his men to wheel properly. The whole thing was a sham and a fraud. If, however, it was good for Great Britain it was good for Ireland. He appealed to hon. and gallant Members opposite whether it was just and honest that this money should be voted simply because the existence of Yeomanry suited certain gentlemen who happened to be landed proprietors. The argument that the force was of use in connection with the breeding of horses was a palpable sham, because most of the horses which the men rode were imported from the cavalry depôts. [*Cries of* "No!"] Yes, it was a fact that a great number of the Yeomanry were mounted upon cavalry dismounts. The Committee were asked to vote £76,000 for a useless purpose. This was a fraud, but why not share the fraud with Ireland? [*Laughter.*] Irishmen always declaimed against grabbers, and he said to hon. Gentlemen, "Do not be grabbers if you know that what you are doing is wrong." He hoped that before long serious attention would be paid to this question of Yeomanry, and that his hon. Friend would divide the Committee against this iniquitous and useless expenditure of public money.

*THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY TO THE WAR OFFICE (Mr. POWELL-WILLIAMS, Birmingham, S.) said that the reason for the increase was that one squadron had been added to each of the Yorkshire and East Kent Corps, raising their strength to four and two squadrons. It appeared that the hon. Members opposite desired to see re-established in Ireland a corps of Yeomanry. He should have thought, looking at the experience of Ireland in 1798, that it might not be a desirable state of affairs to return to. He submitted that this question should be dealt with as a whole, and when they looked at the number of troops of the Regular Army and Militia maintained in Ireland, judged with reference to the total forces of those branches of the service, he thought that Ireland was certainly in a position, so to speak, of very great indulgence, and it compared favourably with the rest of the United Kingdom. The amount of money annually expended in respect of the Regular Forces and the Militia in Ireland constituted very nearly one-seventh of the whole cost of those forces. [Dr. TANNER: "We do not thank you for it!"] He presumed that the hon. Gentleman would desire the amount spent in Ireland on those troops should be reduced to the true proportion according to their estimate of the relative taxable capacity of England and Ireland. [Mr. KNOX: "Certainly, if you reduce the taxation!"] It was the fact that a short time ago the number of Yeomanry cavalry was higher than it was now; and it diminished through the natural operation of bad times in agriculture. But this cause had to some extent passed away, and the force appeared likely to return to near its former strength. This was the reason why the estimate of this year was larger than that of last year, and it was possible that next year they might ask the House to grant a further sum. A question was asked as to the persons who were consulted by the War Office in respect of the training of Yeomanry officers. They had consulted first of all the commanding officers of the Yeomanry forces, and the majority of these officers were strongly in favour of the change that was proposed to be made. Before coming to any determination in the matter, however, the distinguished officers in the War Office had been consulted, and they were unanimously of opinion that the change proposed to be made was desirable in the interests of the force. The change was simply to abolish the tuition which the officers had formerly received at Aldershot, and to allow men to be trained with the Regular cavalry. By this means a great deal would be gained. This was essentially a military question, and when it was found that there was a strong consensus of military opinion upon it no other course was open, it seemed to him, but for the Secretary of State to adopt the suggestions.

MR. HENRY LABOUCHERE (Northampton) said it appeared to him that every year a greater demand was being made in every department of the Army for more expenditure. The hon. Gentleman had stated that the additional money for the Yeomanry this year was to be followed next year by a still greater demand. He asked military Members opposite whether, if we had not a Yeomanry force at present, they would think of establishing such a force? The Yeomanry were called out for 14 days' training, and to call this force cavalry was an absurdity. Was it not a fact also that as a rule the Yeomanry hired their horses for the time? ["No, no!"] Well, a great many of the Yeomanry did. It required a certain time even to teach a cavalry horse, and the task could not be accomplished in 14 days with a horse which was engaged the rest of the year doing other work. We kept up the Yeomanry simply because they happened to be established already; but they were useless as cavalry. The Committee must look at the question of military expenditure in a practical way; and Army expenditure ought not to increase year after year without an attempt being made to get rid of things which were not absolutely necessary.

GENERAL SIR FREDERICK FITZWYGRAM (Hants, Fareham) opposed the reduction. He asserted that what would be required of our cavalry in England in war time would be simply scout duty, to watch the whole coasts, and that duty he believed the Yeomanry regiments would be able to perform very fairly and efficiently. In this respect they were well worth the money the country paid.

LORD ALWYNE COMPTON (Beds, Biggleswade), as one who had been a Cavalry officer, bore testimony to the usefulness of the Yeomanry as a part of the military forces of the country. If anyone would spend a fortnight in observing some of these Yeomanry regiments he would be astonished to see how exceedingly well they formed. Personally he had often been surprised as a Cavalry officer at the efficient way in which they performed their drills when called upon to do so. He paid a tribute to the value of the work done by the Yeomanry School at Aldershot, so far as it went, and expressed his deep regret that it should be abolished.

GENERAL LAURIE (Pembroke and Haverfordwest) claimed that for a considerable amount of the work that would be required, if the country were invaded, the Yeomanry would be more useful than the Regular Cavalry. (AN HON. MEMBER: "Why?"] Why? Because they knew the localities, the habits of the people they would be brought in contact with, and for escort duty, patrol duty, for obtaining supplies, they would be more valuable than the soldier, however highly trained, who had never seen the particular country before, and did not know the people. They had been told that the Yeomanry should not receive long-service medals—that in fact they should not be encouraged to serve 20 years, like Volunteers. That was exactly what the Yeomanry should be encouraged to do. He had had the pleasure of serving with men exactly like our own in Canada, both during the Fenian invasion and half-breed rebellion. There they had Canadian Cavalry exactly like the British Yeomanry, and for escort duty and patrol work, for all the duties required of Cavalry other than that of working in mass, they did their work thoroughly well. He should have been recreant in his duty as a soldier and to his old comrades if he had not risen to repudiate the charge which had been made against the Yeomanry.

MR. T. P. WHITTAKER (York, W. R., Spen Valley) was opposed to the Yeomanry, believing it would be practically a useless force. Got up in gorgeous garb, they might be very interesting figures at social functions, but he had a strong opinion that for genuine work they were not of much use. He noticed that only two-thirds of the total number enrolled turned up for training. And how many appearances at training counted? He thought this was one of the directions in which the money devoted to the Army was not wisely expended.

COLONEL WELBY (Taunton) declared that if the Yeomanry were blotted out it would be a matter for serious consideration what force should be put in its place. The Yeomanry might not be fit to meet a strong force of Regular Cavalry, but they were none the less the eyes and the ears of the Army. No doubt many of the chargers were hired; but the men themselves were trained riders, who understood horses, and in their fourteen days' training they would learn cohesion. Perhaps it would be better to devote more time to outpost and other detached duties; but it could not be doubted that the experience of the men as riders, and their knowledge of the locality and the people, made them a very valuable force. We had a large Volunteer force for the defence of the country. Was it to take the field blindly? Where would it get its intelligence from if not for the Yeomanry? No bicycle corps could do the work of the Yeomanry in this way. He should like to see the Yeomanry in Ireland, because Irishmen were born horsemen. He deprecated any proposal to abolish the Yeomanry, and he regretted that it was proposed to abolish the Yeomanry Training School at Aldershot. The young officer attached for a time to a Regular cavalry regiment did not learn what he could learn at this school, and he did not get the same technical training.

MR. PRYCE-JONES (Montgomery Boroughs) said that he had had 15 years' experience of the Yeomanry, and, though he did not pretend that they were perfect, he was sure that with proper encouragement and some privileges they would be of great value. A few years ago, when the Denbighshire Yeomanry were training at Wrexham, the colonel of the Montgomeryshire Yeomanry determined, on very short notice, to call out his men and parade them with the Denbighshire Yeomanry. No fewer than 60 per cent. of the men on the roll responded to the call and marched to Brecon. This showed that the Yeomanry were ready when called on. It was said that the bulk of the Yeomanry chargers were hired; but, at any rate, they were all hired in the county to which the Yeomanry belonged.

DR. TANNER said that an hon. Gentleman had said that the Yeomanry were the eyes and ears of the Army, and that the Volunteers would be nothing without them. Let that go to the country. Everyone knew that while the Volunteers were a reality, the Yeomanry were a sham. Their local knowledge was insisted on. Yes, but imagine a Uhlan whose usefulness was limited to a parish! This Vote was a fraud, a delusion, and a sham, and if that night's Vote did not end the Yeomanry, their end would come before many years. If they were to exist at all, why not mount the men on motor cars?

MR. COURTENAY WARNER regretted that the Motion was going to be pressed to a division. He thought the Yeomanry were of use, and would be absolutely necessary to a large Volunteer force.

Enormous losses were suffered by the French in the Franco-German war from the want of cavalry. Much of the animus of the Debate would be removed if the Government would undertake that a Yeomanry force should be raised in Ireland.

MR. VESEY KNOX said that he was glad to see the Chancellor of the Exchequer in his place. The Financial Secretary to the War Office had made an offer to the Irish Members that the expenditure on military purposes in Ireland should be reduced to the taxable capacity of the country, and that taxation should be reduced in the same proportion.

*MR. POWELL-WILLIAMS: I must really correct the hon. Gentleman. I said that in Ireland the question of the expenditure upon the Army ought to be looked at from the point of view that one-seventh of the whole expenditure was made in Ireland. I added that I supposed the hon. Gentleman would not be willing to accept that as the proportion of the contribution of Ireland.

MR. KNOX was sorry if he misunderstood the hon. Gentleman, because personally he should be very glad to see the taxation of Ireland reduced, and the military expenditure reduced also; the sooner that was done the better. He protested against the theory that the whole of the military expenditure in Ireland was a solely Irish benefit. The Yeomanry was a local force. The regular Army and even the Militia were not local forces in the same sense as the Yeomanry were. No one would ever suggest the using of the Yeomanry far outside their own county. He understood that even enthusiasts on behalf of the Yeomanry did not contend they were useful as ordinary Cavalry, but only that they might be useful for scouting duties owing to their knowledge of the locality. That advantage they would lose, of course, if they went outside their county. He could not see why an expenditure of this kind should be confined to one portion of the United Kingdom, and for that reason he must persist in going to a division.

Question put, "That a sum, not exceeding £69,000, be granted for the said Service."

The Committee divided:—Ayes, 46; Noes, 182.—(Division List, No. 35.)

Mr. Courtenay Warner.

SIR WILFRID LAWSON (Cumberland, Cockermouth) sad he had intended to rise to oppose the Vote as a whole when his hon. Friend moved his Amendment. He had always been of opinion that the Yeomanry were of very little use, and he could not say that the statement he had heard to-night had gone far to alter that opinion. It appeared to him that this Vote really was very little more than a Vote for an annual picnic for the squire. Especially in view of the facts that last year Parliament agreed to pay half the squire's rates, and were this year spending an enormous sum upon the Army, he thought this little sum of £76,000 might be paid by the squirearchy.

Original Question put. The Committee divided:—Ayes, 180; Noes, 38.—(Division List, No. 36.)

3. Motion made, and Question proposed:—

"That a sum, not exceeding £627,200, be granted to Her Majesty, to defray the Charge for Capitation Grants and Miscellaneous Charges of Volunteer Corps, including Pay, &c., of the Permanent Staff, which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1898."

*SIR CHARLES DILKE (Gloucester, Forest of Dean) said he wished to ask the Under Secretary for War for further information in regard especially to one portion of the Vote—that portion which the right hon. Gentleman had called the Volunteer Field Artillery. The right hon. Gentleman had stated on two occasions this Session that, in addition to the 204 guns of position in connection with the Volunteer Artillery, the Volunteer force were in possession of 188 guns of field artillery. Now the criticisms of those who had for many years past sought to draw attention to the great importance of not diminishing—as we had been doing—the field artillery of the country, would be greatly affected if they could be assured that the Volunteer Field Artillery was an efficient force. ["Hear, hear!"] He hoped, therefore, the Government would give the Committee all the information they could with regard to the nature and condition of those volunteer field batteries. An impression was entertained that a certain number of the batteries were merely show batteries, and were maintained by the subscriptions and the efforts of the officers. He had no doubt that some of the batteries were efficient, but he very much doubted whether any very large proportion of the force could be regarded as efficient in the ordinary sense of the word, and constituted an effective field artillery force. The whole question of what the Volunteers were for in their scheme of defence was raised and was affected by this question of Volunteer field artillery. If they counted the very large and increasing force of Volunteers as efficient troops, they had in this country an enormous number of men who, unless the Volunteer artillery were efficient, were unprovided with that field artillery which was necessary to make an Army at all. They were told that a great portion of these Volunteers were to be mobilised in time of war on positions around London, and were to be utilised, in the first place, for the defence of those positions. General Hamley, whose authority had been quoted for this use of the Volunteers, always proposed that they should be trained in the positions in which they were to be mobilised in time of war. That was an essential part of General Hamley's scheme; but, except in very rare instances, that had never been done. As to the guns of position in the hands of the Volunteers, he did not himself believe that they would be of serious use, though he knew there was a weighty opinion the other way. As to the 188 guns of field artillery which were said to be in the hands of the Volunteers, he should like to know to what type they belonged, and what was, generally speaking, the nature of the force. He had always thought it would be better for the Government to face and to regularise the position which had been attained to in practice by some of those corps. He did not believe that they could rely upon Volunteers in the ordinary sense of the word maintaining an effective field artillery. If the Government held a different view, as by their language about the 188 guns they seemed to do, he thought they ought to tell them what was the nature of the experiment being tried, how far they had been successful up to the present time, and to what extent the House of Commons could rely on the Volunteers being in possession of guns of field artillery which could really be counted upon for service.

SIR HOWARD VINCENT (Sheffield, Central) expressed a hope that the point raised by the right hon. Baronet would receive a satisfactory answer from the Under Secretary. There were one or two other points to which he wished to call attention. The first one was the often mooted one of the deficiency of officers. He was glad to think that this deficiency was a little less than it was, but still it was very serious indeed, and he thought it wanted grappling with in a rather more serious manner than had yet been attempted. He was glad to hear from the Under Secretary that some effort would be made to utilise the services of public school boys who passed from the Cadet Corps, but he did not think that was sufficient. He should be very glad to see some inducement offered to young men to join the commissioned ranks of the Volunteers by giving them a chance, and by that means, of entering the regular Army. The real difficulty was not as regarded senior officers, but as regarded subalterns. He recognised that the equipment grant of £20 by the Government was some little inducement to officers to join, but he was sorry to say that that grant had not been allowed in the case of quartermasters and of medical officers. He thought the War Office ought to be generous in this matter, and allow the grant to those two classes of officers. He also wanted, in this connection, to call attention to the recent Order promulgated for the compulsory retirement of officers at 67 years of age. He did not say for a single moment that 67 was not an extreme limit of age, but at the same time he thought the Regulation should be enforced gradually and carefully. An officer should not be told suddenly that he must retire forthwith, because they sent him into the country amongst the public discontented. A case had recently occurred within his own knowledge of an officer who had served for 38 years, and who had contributed four sons to the same regiment, being suddenly, and without a moment's warning, informed that he must retire instantly. A little bit of consideration should be given, more especially as in the case he had mentioned, the officer had previously received permission to serve until the end of the Volunteer year of 1897. That was not the way to obtain officers for the force.

He recognised the courtesy of the Secretary and Under Secretary of State, and also of the Commander-in-Chief in these matters, but he did urge them to be very careful in the way in which they enforced Regulations of that kind. As regarded sergeant-majors, he understood that the Under Secretary thought there was some pecuniary difficulty in the way, but he thought that it might be easily arranged, without any additional expense, that sergeant-majors in Volunteer corps, who had a most responsible and difficult position to fill, requiring great judgment, experience, and tact, should be real and not merely acting rank. He did not think they ought to be inferior to their brethren in the Militia. One word as to the training of the Volunteers. Everybody must recognise that the training had improved enormously in recent years. The brigade system had been thoroughly carried out, but one great difficulty that brigades found was where to go to. He thought many Volunteer brigades were too large. If they were not quite so large, he thought they might find it more easy to obtain manœuvring grounds. He believed there was nothing more advantageous than for a Volunteer corps to go to Aldershot and manœuvre with the regular forces whenever it was possible to do so. In recent years it had been more and more difficult to obtain accommodation, and the question whether the Volunteers would be allowed to go to Aldershot in August or not had not been settled until late in the summer. That made it extremely difficult for Volunteers in the metropolis to make their arrangements. It was very important indeed that they should know as early as possible. He would impress upon the Secretary of State and the Under Secretary the desirableness of seeing that steps were taken to see that accommodation was avilable at Aldershot—they only wanted tents—for any number of Volunteers who went down there. The cost to the country would be merely nominal, and it would be amply repaid by the experience gained. One other matter he desired to mention was in reference to the Reserve men and the Volunteers. He quite recognised that payment must not be made twice over, that men drawing sixpence a day for the Reserve should not be allowed to draw the Capitation Grant, but Reserve men were called out very seldom, and it would be well if they were encouraged to do drill with the Volunteers. At present they could not do so; such drills did not count, and the men could not wear the uniform. But surely the authorities might recoup a regiment for the cost of uniforms supplied to these men? Of course, without uniform they could not attend the drills, and the grant could not be drawn upon for the purpose. The presence of the Reserve men would be good as an example for the Volunteers, they could show the Volunteers how things were done in the Army, and in camp their experience would be most useful. Another point was the enforcement of agreements, and the recovery of the Capitation Grant if a man failed to make himself efficient. Several very contrary decisions had been given by Courts of summary jurisdiction on this matter, some magistrates would convict and others would not. It was uncertain whether the Volunteer Act of 1863 gave power to recover the cost to the corps of uniforms supplied and for the enforcement of the civil agreement. In some Courts in London, judgments could always be obtained, but in other Courts it was not so, so that it was mere accident according to the sitting magistrate, and his reading of the Act. There was a case rejected a few days ago, and application was made to the War Office for pecuniary assistance in order that a case might be stated for a higher court, but the authorities were not willing to do that, as they intended to bring in an amending Bill to make the point clear. He hoped the right hon. Gentleman would give the Committee some assurance on this point, which was vital to the efficiency of many Volunteer corps, for they calculated all their arrangements on the understanding that every Volunteer would either entitle the corps to draw the capitation for him or, failing that, to return the grant and indemnify the corps for his laches during the year. As regarded ranges, he was glad to find that Volunteers were to be put in a better position. In the great towns, and now they had the new rifle, this was a matter of vital importance to Volunteers. Ranges were condemned on the slightest excuse, they were open one week and closed the next, and the uncertainty entailed the greatest inconvenience on the corps. He urged the right hon. Gentleman to grapple with this difficulty while there was time, for the longer it was postponed the more the cost to the country would be.

*Mr. BROOKFIELD (Sussex, Rye) agreed with most of the observations of his hon. and gallant Friend, but he must dissociate himself from the attempt to enlist the sympathies of the Committee with the meritorious old officer of 67, for he thought that was an age when it was quite time an officer should retire. Doubtless it would be a great wrench to him to be suddenly removed, but he should take the hints that were conveyed to him. Nothing would be more likely to attract a better class of officers to Volunteer regiments than an occasional offer of a commission in the Regular Army. It was not necessary that it should be a general system running through all ranks as in the Militia, but an occasional offer of the kind would do much to stimulate a better class of men. The grant of £20 for outfit had, so far as his experience went, had an important effect in increasing the number of officers already, and incidentally it had had another effect, that in order to qualify for the grant, young officers had taken to getting attached to Line regiments, especially to the territorial Line regiment to which they belonged, and with the best results. With regard to quartermasters, he confessed he was not aware that they did not receive the grant in question. This should be remedied, for in every well-regulated battalion there was very much for the quartermaster to do; he should, in fact, be the busiest man in the battalion, and no encouragement in reason should be refused him. It was not generally realised that Volunteer battalions did not possess sergeant-majors, and that it was only a colour sergeant who acted as sergeant-major, but was not treated as a warrant officer as regards pay and retirement, and if he went back to his battalion became a sergeant again. This was not the way to encourage these non-commissioned officers. He trusted that due attention would be paid to what had fallen from his right hon. Friend (Sir C. Dilke) on the subject of guns. He had often heard of these 188 field artillery guns, but did not really know what guns were referred to. Some of them did, it was true, make their appearance on special occasions, and it was to be hoped would appear on the most critical occasion of all, but they were horsed and manned on an artificial system which was absurd. It was within his knowledge that there were two or three batteries of Volunteer artillery which did take the field, went into camp, and picketed their horses after a day's march, but generally the horses were hired for the day, and were clumsy cart horses, frightened at the sound of firing, or livery stable horses, not heavy enough for the work, and often with four, instead of six, horses in the team, moving at a dangerously slow pace, and they would break down with the strain of prolonged exercise. Of course a smart Volunteer battery elicited the cheers of the multitude, but the people who cheered did not know that the smart gunners were often Regular soldiers or Reserve men dressed up for the occasion. In connection with this question of artillery for Volunteers, a satisfactory step would be taken if the Volunteers were encouraged to exercise themselves in the use of lighter field guns. What had been spoken of by the right hon. Gentleman were, he presumed, the sixteen pounders, which might be said to be obsolete. He would like to see them provided with a light field gun, which they might be taught to drag about with ropes as the blue-jackets did when they had field guns on shore. That would be better than giving them guns that could not be depended upon in warfare. The least Government could do now that the Volunteers had so important a share in the defence of the country would be to equip them with the proper proportion of machine guns, all the more necessary when they were so short of field guns. At present the price was prohibitive, but he should have thought, with all the wars going on all over the world, in which machine guns played an important part, the Government might provide the Volunteers with a cheap but useful weapon of that kind. This was not the time to trouble the Committee with an essay on all the weak points of the Volunteers, but the chief defect, of course, continued to be the absence of compulsion, and of any declaration of their status on critical occasions. Absolute ignorance prevailed throughout the force as to their position in connection with the Mutiny Act and the Army Act when they were brigaded with the Regular troops, and as these occasions increased year by year serious anomalies and complications might arise.

*MR. BRODRICK, replying to the various points which had been raised, observed that the right hon. Member for the Forest of Dean was anxious for an assurance with regard to the artillery. It was well known that there were three classes of artillery now in the possession of the Volunteers—namely, 156 40-pounders, 12 20-pounders, and 188 16-pounder guns, which were formerly field artillery guns. He could not accept the statement of his hon. and gallant Friend that these latter were to be regarded as obsolete. On the contrary, the 16-pounder was an admirable gun of its type, and in placing it in the hands of the Volunteers the Government hoped they were greatly increasing the efficiency of that force. ["Hear, hear!"] Varied opinions had been given as to what the value of this artillery was. Although he did not pretend that these batteries bore comparison with the Royal Artillery, he could only say that the information supplied to the War Office was that the Artillery was not merely useful and capable of being enormously improved with a very little practice, but that the batteries were capable of manœuvring. They were all thoroughly mobile and horsed in such a way as to be able to take up any position they might be called upon to assume. These guns which had been placed in the hands of the Volunteers were a really valuable and useful addition to their defences. ["Hear, hear!"] The hon. and gallant Member for Sheffield suggested that they should send as many Volunteers to Aldershot as possible, and that they should give them timely notice. Last year there were difficulties about giving this notice, due not to the War Office, but to the House of Commons. It had been hoped that there would be manœuvres on a large scale, but that hope was frustrated by a series of afternoons, which would otherwise have been devoted to the Military Manœuvres Bill, being taken by other measures which stood before it. In those circumstances the Government were forced to give up the contemplated manœuvres and to mass a considerable number of Militia battalions at Aldershot who would not have gone there if the plan conceived could have been carried out. That, no doubt, created the difficulty which was responsible for the shortness of the notice they were able to give to Volunteers, and which he hoped would be avoided in the present year, timely notification being conveyed to all. The Government fully recognised the great desirability of brigading the Volunteers with the Regulars wherever possible, and especially at Aldershot. As to the suggestion that they should include the Reservists in the Volunteer force, the Government were not favourable to it. If they were to so include the Reservists and provide them with uniforms they would be paying them twice over. If they were to be members of the Volunteers and they were to rely upon them for the drill of battalions they would take them from their own battalions the moment they most needed them—namely, on the outbreak of war, when they should go to their right battalions. As to the position of sergeant-major, the War Office fully recognised the importance of this question. But when the hon. and gallant Gentleman urged them to give a sergeant-major or honorary sergeant-major in a Volunteer regiment the rank of a sergeant-major, he would point out that that would involve increased pay and pensions. For instance, they were urged to give a man honorary rank and position higher than he held. That was conceded. Then a year or two afterwards, with equal force it was said it was hard to give a man merely honorary rank, but that if actual rank was conceded, no point of pay would ever be raised. Then, later on, it was again urged that a man who had the rank should have the pay which accompanied it. [*Laughter.*] This question involved, not only the Volunteers, but the Militia, who had not got sergeant-majors, and also some non-commissioned officers at the depôts as well, so that the increase to pay and pensions that would be entailed by such a change would add very considerably to the Estimates. He confessed that the military authorities were right in being jealous of adding to the expenses of the staff when it could be avoided. The complaint now very often was that, compared with foreign armies, the expenses of our staff were enormous, and additions of this kind, unless proved to be necessary by the real interests of efficiency, could not be made. [" Hear, hear ! "] With regard to legal decisions with respect to the recovery of fines from Volunteers, the Government would be very glad to deal with that subject, and if time permitted—to use a well-known phrase—they hoped to introduce a short Bill during the present Session. On the question of ranges his noble Friend had made a statement in the House of Lords, and the Committee would see that this matter had been grappled with. If the House would pass the Military Works Bill, they should then be in a position to set up central ranges in various parts of London where they were most needed. They had got a Military Lands Bill in operation, which enabled the council of a borough or a Volunteer corps to borrow money from the Public Works Loan Commissioners with which to buy ranges; but that Bill would not enable them to equip a range when bought. Without equipping it it was perfectly useless to buy it; but it was perfectly impossible for the same Volunteer force to go to the Public Works Loan Commissioners and borrow money for the range and then go to another authority and borrow money for the equipment of the range. The great city of Manchester was waiting for all its ranges for the passing of this amending Bill; and he thought it was highly desirable that those who had an interest in Volunteers being able to shoot should use their influence with two or three hon. Members of that House who desired to stop the Bill from passing. [" Hear, hear ! "] The Government were doing their utmost in this matter of ranges, and they hoped that before the close of this year they should succeed in putting themselves in a better position, not merely in regard to the Regulars, but also the Volunteers in this respect. [" Hear, hear ! "]

MR. HARRY SAMUEL (Tower Hamlets, Limehouse) urged the desirability of affording increased facilities to the Volunteer Engineers to acquire a full knowledge of their work. They were most anxious to make themselves efficient, but they could not obtain lands which would be available for them to practise on. This was a matter to which the Government might well direct their attention. [" Hear, hear ! "]

MR. W. E. M. TOMLINSON (Preston) alluded to the question of adjutants' uniforms, and pointed out the hardship which some of those belonging to the Rifle battalions felt in being required to provide themselves with silver lace uniforms, whereas in the Artillery they were allowed to keep their gold lace uniforms. There might be some difficulty where the Volunteer battalions wore a different coloured uniform from that of the Line battalion to which they were attached, but in many cases the colour was the same, and the only difference was in the lace. The hon. Member then referred to the question of honorary rank, and suggested that when a captain got the honorary rank of a field officer he might fairly be asked to pass the qualifying examination for field rank. He supported the suggestion that quartermasters and medical officers should be allowed the £20 towards their uniform, saying that his experience was that quartermasters were socially the equal of the combatant officers. He wished that camps could be arranged in which artillery and rifles could act together, and with regard to ranges he urged that more use might be made of existing safe ranges if short lines of communication were made between them and centres of population.

MR. KNOX moved to reduce the Vote by the sum of £57,000 as a protest against the non-establishment of a Volunteer force in Ireland. He complained that the Vote was misleading, as it did not include the whole cost of the Volunteer force for the year. It was not the first time this had occurred. It had become an established practice. There was no financial reason why the whole year's expenditure on the Volunteers should not be included in the Estimates for the year. The figures in the Vote were misleading, unless read with a footnote, which showed that the annual cost of the Volunteer force included, in addition to £627,000 and £400,000 for equipment, a sum of £250,000, which would have to be paid during the financial year, making the total not far short of £1,200,000. The Volunteer movement afforded valuable physical education to the young men of Great Britain, and he would say nothing against the expenditure on the Volunteers. But why was there not a similar expenditure on the young men of Ireland? The area of the expenditure should be equal to the area of charge. In 1877, when a Conservative Government was in office, a Bill passed the House to establish a Volunteer force in Ireland, and was only rejected in the House of Lords by a small majority. "Twenty years of resolute government," he contended, had fitted young men in Ireland for the enjoyment of this valuable means of physical training. If Ireland had a Volunteer force the question of the financial relations between Great Britain and Ireland would be settled much quicker than it was now likely to be. A hundred years ago or rather more a Volunteer force in Ireland was found to be a most valuable means of securing justice from Great Britain, and he was not sure it might not be again. He protested against this large portion of the military expenditure of the country being confined to Great Britain alone, and he therefore moved his Amendment.

Question put, "That a sum, not exceeding £570,200, be granted for the said Service."

The Committee divided:—Ayes, 9; Noes, 131.—(Division List, No. 37.)

Dr. TANNER complained that Irish horses were allowed to be bought up by foreign agents who came over from Austria. England at present had enemies all over the world.

***The CHAIRMAN of WAYS and MEANS** requested the hon. Member to address himself to the Vote.

Dr. TANNER spoke of the neglect of such horse breeding counties as Tipperary, Meath, and Cork, and, while he should not care one jot whether they were beaten or not, they should take care to have good horses.

Colonel MURRAY asked whether the Admiralty and War Office had come to any decision as to the trooping to India. He thought it would be a mistake to give up troopers altogether and rely on hired transport.

Mr. LOUGH said he should like to know how much it cost to send troops to Ireland, and if there was any intention of sending a larger portion of troops abroad, and, if so, to what part. He would ask also whether the additional horses for the Guards were included in these Estimates.

Colonel WELBY asked why it was that the Inspector General of Remounts appeared on the War Office Vote, while the Inspector General of Cavalry, who was a much more important man, appeared only on the General Staff. He would also ask whether there was any intention of having a genuine reserve of horses. At the present time he did not believe we had got anything at all for reserve of horses. Moreover, in these Estimates the young horses were always shown as efficient horses, and he would like to know whether it would not be possible to show how many effective and how many young horses there were, so that they might know exactly what the state of the Army was. The ten per cent. rule in regard to wear and tear of horseflesh was, he thought, too rigid. No difference was made whether a regiment was in Ireland, or was at Aldershot, or taking part in drill and autumn manœuvres where the wear and tear of horseflesh was enormous. It would be far more just to give regiments which took part in such manœuvres 15 per cent., and if necessary to reduce the percentage of the others. Would the right hon. Gentleman clearly make evident how the horses were going to be provided for this new cavalry scheme. He understood the right hon. Gentleman the other night to say that each regiment of the three squadrons was to have one squadron in reserve, and that those three squadrons were to be kept up to their real strength of efficient horse. He did not know whether the young horses were going to be kept really in the depôts, or whether it was intended to keep the old horses in the depôts. His experience was that horses of 16 years old were fit for plenty of work in the riding school for training recruits, and could not some scheme be devised by which such horses could be drafted into the depôt squadron so as to keep the three squadrons really up to their proper strength. He would press these questions on the right hon. Gentleman because he thought it was very necessary at the present time, in view of this great scheme of cavalry re-organisation, that they should see how it was going to affect the horsing of the Army. Would it not be better, instead of having these 14,000 horses nominally, to increase the capitation grant?

Mr. J. C. FLYNN (Cork, N.) said there could be no question that in the past some of the very best cavalry horses were bought in the various fairs and markets of Ireland. It was now, however, the practice of the military authorities, as far as possible, to boycott the Irish fairs, and to go to other parts of the world for the supply of horses. The Army buyers no longer went to Ireland as in former years, with the result that there was very great loss to Irish farmers and horse breeders, and to the country at large. If he might venture on a paradox, economy might be purchased at too great cost. With apparent economy there might be a very serious loss of efficiency in the cavalry troops. With regard to the messing of the troops, the question had time after time been brought forward of the large extent to which foreign meat was being purchased for the troops in Ireland.

*The CHAIRMAN of WAYS and MEANS said that question arose properly on the next Vote.

Mr. FLYNN said he desired to direct the attention of the Committee to the messing of the troops sent abroad, under a sub-head of this Vote.

*The CHAIRMAN of WAYS and MEANS said it would be obviously undesirable to raise the same question in two Votes. The natural place to raise the question would be on the next Vote.

Mr. FLYNN said that at any rate the grievance remained. With regard to the question of remounts, he complained that the War Department purchased the horses abroad and in the colonies instead of in Ireland, where the most suitable animals were to be found. This was very hard upon a struggling agricultural industry. ["Hear!"]

*Mr. POWELL-WILLIAMS said that he had to say, in answer to the complaint of the hon. Gentleman who had just sat down, that the War Department purchased their horses in the best and cheapest market. Some years ago, before he was in office, the experiment was tried of buying horses for the cavalry in Canada, but that course did not turn out satisfactory, and had been discontinued. In certain special cases where horses were required to stand an exceptional climate, like that of Egypt, they were compelled to buy their horses abroad, because neither English nor Irish horses were fitted for working in that country. Large numbers of horses, however, were obtained from Ireland. In answer to the observations that had fallen from an hon. and gallant Member he had to say that one result of the reorganisation of our cavalry would be, that a larger number of young horses would be required than had hitherto been the case. The sum asked for in the Estimates under the head of Land Transport was required in connection with the annual manœuvres. A sum of £13,000 had been saved under this head, owing to the Quartermaster General having made satisfactory arrangements with various railway companies. ["Hear, hear!"] A perfectly satisfactory agreement had been arrived at between the War Department and the Admiralty in connection with hired transports.

Mr. KNOX asked whether the hired transports were cargo boats which, in consequence of their having no cargo on board, rolled to a fearful extent. He had heard of the case of a lady whose leg was broken in consequence of the rolling of the vessel in which she was being conveyed, and it was impossible to set it, owing to the violent motion of the ship, until she was put ashore at Malta.

Mr. LOUGH wished to know what was the cost of transporting troops to Ireland.

Mr. FLYNN said that the hon. Gentleman speaking on behalf of the Government had given himself away by admitting that one of the greatest of our public spending Departments went to the cheapest markets for the purpose of purchasing horses for the cavalry.

*Mr. POWELL-WILLIAMS said that he had said that they went to the best and cheapest market, not that they bought inferior animals because they were low in price.

Mr. FLYNN said that it was well known that many of the cavalry horses were of a very weedy character. If we starved out the Irish industry of horse breeding in time of peace, from whence should we get our horses in time of war, when it would be impossible to procure them from abroad or from Canada? He thought that the Department were being led away by a spirit of false economy.

*Mr. POWELL-WILLIAMS said that as he had already explained, the War Office bought no horses abroad except those that were required for special service, such as in Egypt, and could not be obtained at home. When speaking of buying horses in the cheapest market, he had in his mind the cheapest home market. It was impossible to give to

Ireland, in the matter of buying horses, a preference over any other part of the United Kingdom when the horses to be obtained elsewhere were equally good.

Mr. J. LOWLES (Shoreditch, Haggerston) said the hon. Member for Londonderry was quite wrong in suggesting that cargo boats were used for transport service. He recently made a voyage to Australia in a fine passenger steamship which, he was told, was employed in the transport service. He warmly approved of the policy of the War Office in employing those hired transports rather than building vessels specially for that service. The effect of that policy was that a large number of steamships were kept in commission and were available for service when required. ["Hear, hear!"]

On the return of the Chairman of Ways and Means after the usual interval,

Mr. FLYNN asked whether the War Office would prepare a Return showing the number of cavalry horses bought in Great Britain, Ireland, and in foreign countries respectively? The Financial Secretary to the War Office had told them that horses required for service in hot climates—in the Soudan, for example—must be purchased in foreign countries. The Committee had not been told, however, in what qualities these foreign horses were superior to British horses. He had been informed that at one of the greatest fairs in Ireland military buyers had practically discontinued their attendance. It was but right to say, however, that the prices for horses at that fair ranged rather high. But there were other and smaller fairs, and what he would like to know was that if Ireland was not to get a preference, at any rate she should get fair play.

*Mr. POWELL-WILLIAMS said he would consider whether the Return asked for could be given or not. He reminded the hon. Member that his claim on behalf of Ireland was that she should have a preference in this matter. But there was such a country as England, and England bred horses. The country, therefore, had claims which the War Department was not disposed to ignore. He gave a contradiction to the statement that in this matter Ireland was boycotted. The War Office must always go to Ireland for horses, and she would have fair treatment and every consideration. Ireland had always enjoyed this consideration, and she would always continue to receive it.

Vote agreed to.

5. Motion made, and Question proposed:—

"That a sum, not exceeding £2,553,400, be granted to Her Majesty, to defray the Charge for Provisions, Forage, and other Supplies, which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1898."

Mr. J. H. DALZIEL (Kirkcaldy Burghs) asked to what extent any change had taken place in the purchase of provisions and forage so far as foreign countries were concerned, since the present Administration came into power. At the last General Election he had seen huge posters in constituencies asking the electors to vote for the Conservative candidate and British goods in our Army and our Navy. As the Government had enjoyed the opportunity of carrying out some of the election pledges which got them support at the General Election, they should now give a statement of the changes as to the purchase of provisions and forage.

Sir R. PENROSE FITZGERALD (Cambridge) called attention to the supply of forage and meat to the training camp near Fermoy, in Ireland. A large tract of country near Fermoy was occupied for military purposes, and yet the wants and the necessities of the people in the district had been ignored by the War Department. A great amount of discontent had been caused owing to the Government importing beef, hay and oats from abroad, instead of buying the beef and forage, which can be so readily procured, in the locality.

Mr. FLYNN said this question had been pressed over and over again by the Irish Members on the attention of the Government, but the War Office had always said that the matter was under consideration. They had always been put off with the same vague and unsatisfactory reply. Fully twelve months ago, when this question was raised, a vague hope was held out that everything would be right. More recently questions were put to the Financial Secretary, and they were told that somewhere about June next new contracts would be given out, and the matter attended to. He did not trust those answers, and he was driven to the unpalatable conclusion that until Irishmen filled the Benches in serried battalions, the change he demanded would be relegated to the Greek Kalends. He understood that 60 per cent. of the beef supplied to the soldiers was foreign, and 40 per cent. home grown. That was a monstrous state of things; and it came very badly from hon. Gentlemen representing a Conservative Government, who used it as an electioneering cry that home produce should get a preference. He suspected there was a system of distributing palm-oil at work under which contractors could get any quantity of inferior stuff into the barracks. It was a strange anomaly that in a country where they kept 28,000 or 30,000 soldiers, and in places which were essentially beef and mutton growing districts, 60 per cent. of the beef should be foreign, which, though infinitesimally cheaper, was not really so cheap from the point of view of real value. He protested against this cheeseparing and pettifogging policy on the part of the War Office.

MR. ARTHUR JEFFREYS (Hants, Basingstoke) said he had not often the pleasure of agreeing with hon. Gentlemen opposite, but he agreed with them in this matter. Only a few years ago he raised this question and divided the House against it. He hoped the percentage of frozen mutton and beef had been reduced, and he thought it ought to be reduced considering the low price of home-grown meat at the present time. He believed there was a limit to the amount of foreign meat which was allowed to be given to the troops, and the officers on duty did go down and examine the meat before it was served out, but were they trained in any way to discriminate between home-grown and foreign beef and mutton? With regard to the forage served out to the cavalry troops at Aldershot he was glad to acknowledge that a great deal of it was bought from the neighbouring farmers, and he thanked his right hon. Friend for having brought that about. Home grown hay was a great deal better than the coarse foreign stuff, but an enormous quantity of foreign oats were still consumed. He hoped that by continually pressing the Government the quanities of foreign meat and forage supplied to the Army would become less and less.

*MR. POWELL-WILLIAMS pointed out that the statement that of the meat supplied to the troops 60 per cent. was foreign and 40 per cent. home-grown rather conveyed a misapprehension. The 60 per cent. was the utmost limit of refrigerated beef or frozen mutton which the contractor was allowed to deliver. In point of fact, the proportions which he actually delivered were quite different and far more favourable to the home producer. As to the question whether the officers were able to discriminate between the classes of beef supplied, he was able to give an answer in the affirmative. But there was an insuperable difficulty in ascertaining whether fresh meat in good condition was of home production. With respect to the supplies of the canteens, the Secretary of State did not interfere. The canteen was to all intents a club for the benefit of private soldiers, and those who managed it were absolutely unfettered in the choice of markets for their supplies.

MR. FLYNN said he was referring to a system under which all the canteens in the south of Ireland district were supplied from one source to the exclusion of the local dealers.

*MR. POWELL-WILLIAMS said that that was perfectly within the right of the persons who gave the orders. He supposed the supplies were bought from a central association existing for the purpose of supplying canteens. But what had been accomplished in this matter? Since he had been at the War Office he had acted upon the principle of giving the home producer the preference. [*Cheers.*] Such a course was justified by the fact that otherwise there was no power to carry out the fair wages Resolution of the House of Commons. The conditions under which the contract was performed could not be followed if the contract was in the hands of a foreign producer. To all military centres instructions had been issued that, where possible, supplies should be obtained within the district from the local producers. ["Hear, hear!"] At the present time the whole supplies of meat at the Curragh were obtained from the neighbourhood. [AN HON. MEMBER: "Since when?"] For the last twelve months at least. The Government would be very glad to see similar conditions established all over the country; but there were very great difficulties in the way, as the hon. Member for the St. Patrick's Division of Dublin, who had been referred to in the matter, very well knew. During the latter part of last year he himself had made a very complete inquiry into the question, and found it so surrounded with technical and departmental difficulties that he was not sure whether anything could be done. But the authority of the Secretary of State had been obtained for appointing one of the senior clerks of the War Office and one of the principal officers of the Quartermaster General's department to make special inquiries in every detail at every centre throughout the kingdom. He could not say what the result would be; but it appeared that in some cases the importance of the question had been overstated. For example, the city of Dublin exported 5,000 live pigs per week, and the number that would be required for the troops in Dublin would only be 50; so that the change would be unimportant in effect. As to Aldershot, instructions to purchase in the neighbourhood everything required for feeding the troops and horses had been in operation for some time. But there was a financial side to this question. The War Office had been asked to reverse the present proportions of frozen and fresh meat served to the troops, those proportions being as 60 to 40. Inquiry showed that, at present prices, that step would have added no less than £40,000 to the Estimates. [A NATIONALIST MEMBER: "Put it on."] Yes, but would Ireland pay its proportion? [*Laughter.*] But he believed that there was much force in what had been said as to the relative quality of frozen and home-grown meat; and the subject was being investigated by one of the first agricultural authorities and chemists in the country. If it were true that 1¼lb. of frozen meat was no better than 1lb. of fresh meat, then nothing was gained by buying the cheaper food, and there would be no objection to paying the extra £40,000 for the home-grown meat. ["Hear, hear!"] To the ordinary soldier meat was meat as long as it was fresh and good, and it was doubtful whether if they supplied a higher-class article they would be able to diminish the weight of the ration. The subject was receiving the most careful inquiry, and before long some decision must be arrived at. He and his right hon. Friend sincerely trusted that the decision would be in the direction desired by hon. Members.

MR. J. GILHOOLY (Cork Co., W.) said the hon. Gentleman told them, in the first place, that this matter was hedged round with technicalities and difficulties, and then he let the cat out of the bag by stating that it was a question of economy, that it was a matter of £40,000 a year. The hon. Gentleman asked if Ireland was willing to pay her proportionate share. At present Ireland paid more than her proportionate share of the taxation of the United Kingdom. The question remained that although good beef was to be obtained in Ireland, the Department refused to purchase it. He trusted that the Department would be coerced to recognise the principle of giving home industries a fair chance in these matters.

MR. LOWLES could not let the challenge of the hon. Member for Kirkcaldy go without response. He agreed with the hon. Member that the money raised from the British taxpayer should be spent as far as possible in the United Kingdom, but he could not follow the hon. Gentleman into the Lobby, because he regarded it as illogical to advocate an increased expenditure and then move a reduction of the Vote.

MR. DENIS KILBRIDE (Galway, N.) said he was glad there was going to be an inquiry as to the relative nutritive properties of home-grown and foreign or refrigerated beef. He was also glad that the hon. Gentleman had given a pledge that if it should turn out that 1lb. of home-grown beef contained 25 per cent. more nutriment than 1lb. of foreign meat the former class of meat should be purchased. He feared that the real question was not so much the relative quality of foreign and home-grown meat but the cost per year. Why were contractors not at liberty to supply foreign meat if, in the opinion of the Department, it was as nutritive as home-grown? It struck him that the reason the Department had introduced the question of the relative value of home and foreign meat was that they themselves knew that the foreign article was not as nutritive as the home-grown article. The hon. Gentleman said that for quite 12 months home-grown forage had been supplied at Newbridge.

*MR. POWELL-WILLIAMS said that he did not intend to refer to forage; if he did it was a slip.

MR. KILBRIDE was glad to know that at the Curragh and Newbridge, home-grown meat was supplied to the troops. Why were they so supplied? Was it not plain that in the opinion of the hon. Gentleman and the Department the Irish meat was infinitely superior to the foreign stuff?

*MR. POWELL-WILLIAMS said the reason was that there were means of killing cattle at the Curragh.

MR. KILBRIDE said there could be no doubt that an opportunity given for the inspection of live animals prevented the contractor from supplying inferior meat to the troops, and he asked why the practice could not be carried out at all the large centres. Hon. Gentlemen on the other side of the House who represented rural constituencies, had been urging the Government to do something for the regimental interest. It was well known that agriculture was in a depressed condition in England and Ireland, and he put it to the right hon. Gentleman whether he—as a member of the Ministry, who were mainly supported by agricultural Members—[*cries of* "Oh!" *and laughter*]—was going to allow the paltry sum of £40,000 to stand in the way of doing justice to that interest. The question at stake was not so much one of money as of principle—the principle involved being that as much as possible of the money spent for the support of the Army and Navy should be spent among those who were taxed to provide the forces. [*Cheers.*] The right hon. Gentleman had said that instructions had been given to several contractors to the effect that they should as far as possible supply home-grown produce to the troops. Were those instructions anything more than pious opinions? Because if a contractor found that by the terms of his contract he could make more money by sending in 60 per cent. of foreign meat, he would do so. ["Hear, hear!"]

*MR. POWELL-WILLIAMS said he referred to commanding officers.

MR. KILBRIDE said he accepted the correction of the hon. Gentleman, but he understood that all the large centres in both England and Ireland were supplied by contractors.

*MR. POWELL-WILLIAMS said that what he stated was that instructions had been given to commanding officers of districts to obtain, as far as possible, their supplies from the locality. ["Hear, hear!"]

MR. KILBRIDE could not see that any benefit was to be derived from that. ["Hear, hear!"] Were those instructions outside the contracts or not? If the condition was not laid down in express terms, the contractor would not be affected by any number of instructions given to the commanding officer. He would include a proportion of foreign meat in his supply if he could gain by doing so, perhaps, as he had said, to the extent of 60 per cent. ["Hear, hear!"] No doubt if the supplies for the district were obtained direct through the commanding officer of the district, the case would be different, and the instructions of the War Office would have some effect. The hon. Member for Cambridge had referred to the fact that last year a good deal of the forage, especially hay, obtained in Fermoy and in other parts of Cork, was of foreign production, although the troops were in a forage-producing district. Moreover, the hon. Member for Cavan and himself drew the attention of the Government last year to the fact that a great deal of the hay supplied to the troops in Newbridge and elsewhere was not only foreign hay, but heated hay, and they pointed out the injurious effects of this to the Service. He hoped this point would not be overlooked. ["Hear, hear!"] He would press upon the Government, moreover, to extend their Inquiry into the relative nutritive qualities of home and foreign meat, and to the oats supplied to the Service. He reminded the right hon. Gentleman that several of his colleagues had been declaring for two or three years past that they intended to kill Home Rule by kindness. Well, here was an opportunity for the Government to make a practical effort to do so at a cost of only £40,000 a year. [*Laughter.*] It might be a small way for the Government to begin the experiment, but there must always be a beginning to every work, and no one could tell how an experiment might turn out until it was tried. [*Laughter.*] At any rate, here was a chance of beginning the work of killing by kindness. [*Laughter.*] He appealed seriously to the Government on this matter. The question was simply whether for the comparatively small sum of £40,000 a year the troops should be supplied wholly with home-grown produce or not, and under the circumstances he claimed that the national purse-strings should be so far extended.

*MR. WHITTAKER said he did not wonder that this matter of buying Irish meat and Irish oats had been brought up against the present Government, after the posters which were to be seen about the country during the last election—"Support Home Industries," and "Buy English Goods." He was not in favour of a Protective policy. He believed it was a mistake, and that the policy which would keep out of this country an article not because it was inferior but because it was cheap, was an unsound policy, and one they ought not to follow. He hoped the Government would continue to buy where they could get what they wanted the cheapest; and by the cheapest he meant the best article for the money, and get it wherever they could and wherever it was produced. It had been practically admitted in that Debate that the foreign meat frequently was quite as good as English. One hon. Member put it very pointedly to the Government when he asked did the officers examine this meat, and were they trained to do it, and if they did examine it and were trained to do it, could they tell the difference? The putting of that question implied that it was recognised that it was very difficult indeed to tell the difference. [HON. MEMBERS: "No!"] Then if it was not difficult, how was it hon. Members opposite wanted the foreign meat marking? And then, if the beasts were killed at the port of entry, how could they tell whether it was foreign or English, because it would not have been frozen at all, and they would have no means of telling. If this foreign meat was not good why did they have any of it? Why did they have 60 per cent. of it if it was not good and economical, and if it was good and economical why did they forbid the contractor sending it all in foreign meat. Reference was made to the purchase of beer. He did not pose as an authority on beer—["hear, hear!" *and laughter*]—but when they were told that it was English beer that was bad and Irish beer that was good, he could not help remembering that a contractor who was beaten in his price always alleged that he had been beaten by an inferior article. Reference had been made to the "fair wages" Resolution. They could not carry out that Resolution. It was an impracticable Resolution. How were they going to carry it out with regard to sugar? Were they going to insist that the War Office should only buy English sugar? Then, again, were they going to insist that the War Office should buy only English hams; that they should buy only Scotch oils and not American? The policy could not be followed out. It had not been followed out, and it would not be followed out. If the policy was sound, they should always buy in their own locality. If it was sound between this country and foreign nations it was sound between this country and other parts of the Kingdom, and if it was sound as between nations it was sound as between towns. He ventured to hope that the War Office would continue to conduct its purchases on sound business principles, the same as any private individual or any private trader might do, for directly they got led off into these protectionists they made a great mistake, and would add seriously to the cost of the Army. The next idea might be to have all soldiers' clothing made from English wool, and quite as good an argument could be made for that as for English meat. Hon. Members did not, however, attempt to carry out that policy with their own tailors for their own clothes, and the country was not prepared for any such policy of protection.

GENERAL GOLDSWORTHY (Hammersmith) said he was anxious that the food supplies should, as far as possible, be purchased in the United Kingdom, and where it could be done in the localities where the troops were quartered, not, of course, at an extravagant price, nor should it be an invariable rule, because that would be to send up prices. He hoped the Government would, as far as possible, give preference to home produce. From the soldiers' point of view he thought it would be well if the men were instructed in killing beasts and preparing the carcasses as they would have to do if they were on active service. The more an Army was put under such conditions as would obtain in active service, the better for the men when the time came for active operations.

MR. W. ABRAHAM (Cork Co., N.E.) said he did not complain of the tone of the Financial Secretary, but when last this subject was brought forward the same statement was made. An inquiry was going on of a difficult and technical character, but he would like to know when that inquiry was likely to terminate? So long as they went on in this way the position was not improved, and they did not advance the question they had at heart. He was glad to hear that at the Curragh Camp home-grown meat was supplied. He represented a constituency which included the large military district of Fermoy, and he did not see why the same system should not apply there as at the Curragh. There was a large station at Kilworth, near Mitchelstown, and the same facilities for killing cattle for the troops as at the Curragh. It was far better that the living animals should be inspected. The investigation into the merits of foreign and home meat was no doubt most scientific and technical, but whatever chemists and others might report on the comparative merits of the food, it was certain that pound for pound there was no comparison between the foreign and home grown meat, and even if it were found necessary on the question of cost to provide less of the home grown meat it certainly was more nutritious than the foreign meat. He had received from his constituents a most extraordinary statement as to the conduct of the Board of Officers who inspected the meat supplied by contractors; he was informed that these officers had frequently rejected meat because it was home grown. ["No, no!"] He had been told so on evidence he could not refuse to believe, that the Board of Officers had rejected meat because it was home grown, and preferred the foreign supplies. That was intolerable. The whole policy of the War Office had been changed from what it formerly was. In former times there was an endeavour to make the troops popular in Ireland, and supplies were drawn from the neighbourhood of the barracks, but now the principle acted upon was to get food supplies from extraneous sources, precisely as if the troops were occupying a foreign country, in every garrison town in Ireland. Again, in supplying canteens there was a similar system. In the town of Fermoy there were traders who would like to tender for the supply of the canteen there, but they could not because the contract was made to include the whole of the Cork military district, including the whole of Munster and a great part of Leinster. Such a large contract as this the traders of Fermoy, which was a small town, could not undertake. This was hard upon traders in small Irish towns, where trade was bad enough, Heaven knows, with decreasing populations, and the greatest difficulty in making ends meet. With 2,000 or 3,000 troops quartered in the district it would not be unreasonable to expect that they would help the trade. But no, the new regulations of the War Office, made some eighteen months ago, diverted all the trade on this account into the hands of large outside contractors. He hoped the favourable reply of the Financial Secretary would be translated into action, and that the inquiry spoken of would soon be brought to a conclusion.

*MR. BRODRICK gave an emphatic denial to the statement of the hon. Member. There never had been a case where a Board of Officers on behalf of the War Office had rejected meat because it was home grown. There was no foundation for such a statement, and no evidence had been put forward in support of it. The whole policy of the War Office had been, for years past, to take home grown meat in preference to foreign wherever it could be obtained. As had already been explained by his hon. Friend, the canteens were not controlled by the War Office, but were carried on for the benefit of the private soldier and so as to enable him to get his provisions as cheaply as possible. The War Office were anxious to give every encouragement to local traders for the supply of home as opposed to foreign articles; they had done what they could with that object in view, and no amount of pressure from the Committee could drive them further in the direction in which they had already gone some way. The supplies for the Curragh were now obtained locally, and the desire of the Government was identical with that of most hon. Members who had taken part in that discussion. ["Hear, hear!"] They should get supplies locally, as far as it was possible, and just now they were endeavouring, by means of expert advice, to ascertain whether there was in the case of home grown meat, as compared with frozen meat, anything which, without involving a great expense, would justify them in increasing the process already set on foot by his hon. Friend. He hoped that the Vote would now be allowed to pass, he giving the Committee the strongest assurance that this action on the part of the War Office which had been going on consecutively should be continued with the object of supplying the largest number of stations they could with home-grown meat. ["Hear, hear!"]

Mr. DALZIEL, while recognising the courtesy of the reply which the hon. Gentleman opposite had given with regard to the Amendment, desired to point out that its object was not to raise a general Debate on the merits, so much as to give the Government an opportunity of stating how much had been done in the direction of taking home as opposed to foreign articles. He was greatly surprised from that point of view at the statement of the Government. Could anyone who had listened to the Debate help contrasting the change of attitude of the Government that night with that of two years ago when they sat on the Opposition side of the House? Two years ago the cry of hon. Gentlemen opposite was all for home produce. That was one of their great cries at the General Election, and that was the prominent feature of nearly every placard with which they posted all the constituencies. It was only reasonable to demand, now that the Government had been in office two years, to know how far those pledges had been redeemed. Their reply was that they had done nothing, but were pursuing an inquiry by experts. They did not require an inquiry by experts to tell them two years ago that there were difficulties in the way. He would specially ask those hon. Members who made this home produce question the principal cry at their elections, how were they going to vote? The Financial Secretary had given no information whatever as to how much less was the amount of forage which had been obtained from abroad by the present Government, as compared with the period when the late Government were in office. There was practically no reply, because there had been no change. In regard to meat the whole matter came to this, that nothing had been done, and the Government asked for time to pursue an Inquiry by experts. The Division on this Vote was a protest against the attitude of the Government in first making this one of their great Party cries at the General Election, and then after two years in office, being unable to supply any evidence that, when the two things were equal, they had shown any preference or given any advantage to home productions. For these reasons he should press the Amendment to a division.

Dr. FARQUHARSON (Aberdeenshire, W.), in supporting the Amendment, denied that there was anything whatever about it savouring of protection, and pointed out that the question involved here was one of importance to agriculture. As to how far home produce was superior to foreign, anyone knew that home meat was far more palatable and digestible than foreign, and, therefore, had naturally a higher dietetic and nutritive value. The Committee which considered the subject of the dieting of the soldier, laid it down that frozen meat lost a large proportion of its strength in the process of cooking, and that was a strong argument against its use in soldiers' rations in preference to the native meat.

Question put, "That item A (Cost of Provisions), be reduced by £1,000."

The Committee divided:—Ayes, 18; Noes, 131.—(Division List, No. 38.)

Mr. FLYNN asked for a further explanation of the cost of the canteen system. What they had heard, he submitted was not sufficient; perhaps Ireland could not brew such good ale as England, but in what is known as black porter, Ireland is quite equal to England. Under the present system the contract is not for one canteen but for a whole military district.

*The CHAIRMAN of WAYS and MEANS said that question was fully discussed on the last Vote.

Mr. FLYNN said he thought that it had been very insufficiently discussed, but he should take another opportunity of dealing with a matter which had caused considerable dissatisfaction in Ireland.

Dr. TANNER urged that there should be further discussion, as a little extra light would do good in all these matters.

Original Question put, and agreed to.

Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That a sum not exceeding £894,000, be granted to Her Majesty, to defray the Charge for Clothing Establishments and Services, which will come in the course of payment during the year ending on 31st day of March 1898."

*Sir C. DILKE said there were 99 men in the Store Department under this Vote and 17 men in the Factory Department under the Vote getting less than 20s. a week, or 116 in all, but he believed there was an inquiry going on.

*MR. BRODRICK said perhaps it would be more convenient if this Vote was taken on a subsequent day when the Ordnance Factories Vote might perhaps be taken at the same time, and the whole question might then be discussed.

Motion, by leave, withdrawn.

Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That a sum, not exceeding £2,069,200, be granted to Her Majesty, to defray the Charge for the Supply and Repair of Warlike and other Stores, which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1898."

Motion, by leave, withdrawn.

6. £1,016,400, Works, Buildings, and Repairs: Cost, including Superintending Staff.

MAJOR WYNDHAM-QUIN (Glamorgan, S.) said he thought proper steps should be taken to render the coal ports of the Bristol Channel safe against the attack of an enemy in case of war. He did not think this Question had been brought before the House of Commons before, although deputations had waited on different Secretaries of State for War on the subject, including the right hon. Member for the Stirling Burghs when he was in office. No satisfactory reply however, had been given them. The principal ports on the Bristol Channel were Cardiff, Barry, Penarth, Swansea, and Newport, and no less than 15 million tons of coal were last year exported from these ports. The best coal for naval purposes was alone obtained in the county of Monmouth, and the valleys of the county of Glamorgan, and nearly the whole of our coal supply for the Navy was sent from that district. It was not likely in time of war that battle ships would go up the Bristol Channel for the purpose of stopping our coal supply, but a fast cruiser might try to do so. He was quite aware that, in the opinion of our naval men, we ought to trust entirely to our Navy for our defence, and that, therefore, they deemed every other sort of defence superfluous. Still, he thought that the Government were right in the course they had taken in providing other means of defence, instead of trusting solely to the Navy. Those general officers who were in command of particular districts which included our coaling ports were of opinion that raids upon those ports in time of war by enemies' cruisers were not only possible, but probable; and that therefore such ports ought to be protected from surprise by means of land defences of a sufficient strength to render it impossible that a cruiser or two would have them at their mercy. What were the existing defences in the Bristol Channel? Some 40 or 50 years ago certain forts were erected at various points, and they were armed with guns which were now altogether of an obsolete character, and would be quite ineffective if opposed to modern artillery, and would be unable to stop enemies' ships from coming up the Channel. Moreover, since those forts were built, the trade of Cardiff and other of the coaling ports along the coast had advanced by leaps and bounds, and they were now the largest coaling ports in the world. He had no desire that the right hon. Gentleman should pledge himself to any special scheme, but merely that he should undertake to give this subject his best consideration. ["Hear, hear!"]

MR. T. R. BUCHANAN (Aberdeenshire, E.) said that it was evident that some of the items in this Vote overlapped the provisions of the Bill which they had been discussing last night. They were now debating whether certain sums should be applied for the purposes of barracks, which were proposed to be dealt with under the Bill. It had been suggested, and the suggestion had been accepted by the right hon. Gentleman the Under Secretary for War, that where money was expended on permanent works, which took several years to execute, it should be regarded as an expenditure on capital account, and should be provided for by Bill, but that mere annual expenditure should be provided for in the Votes from year to year. Looking through the various items included in this Vote, he found that the great majority of them were in respect of small works, and therefore were properly included in the Vote; but that one or two of them were in respect of works that were anything but small, and therefore he should like to ask the right hon. Gentleman the Under Secretary for War whether he intended to abide by the opinion he had expressed last night in reference to this question. For instance, he saw that the Vote included £10,000 as a first instalment of a total sum of £155,000 for the erection of new infantry barracks at Aldershot. He thought that the right hon. Gentleman should make some definite statement to the Committee in regard to the line which the War Office intended to adopt in connection with this subject. ["Hear, hear!"]

MR. WARNER asked whether it was possible to get repairs to barracks done more expeditiously and more satisfactorily than was the case at present. He knew of an instance of a defective drain pipe at the barracks at Windsor which, after great difficulty, was patched up every six months, because a new pipe could not be obtained.

COLONEL WELBY called attention to the fact that nearly all the money for works was intended to be spent on Infantry barracks. His experience was that Cavalry barracks were much more in need of improvements and enlargements. He welcomed with all his heart the new scheme of Cavalry reorganisation. It was, undoubtedly, a step in the right direction. But he would impress upon the right hon. Gentleman that it was absolutely necessary to the success of the scheme that the Cavalry barracks should be enlarged. Anybody who knew anything of the inner working of a Cavalry regiment, knew the great responsibility that was thrown on the Quartermaster-Sergeant, and if the right hon. Gentleman meant to make this proposed scheme a genuine reorganisation of the Cavalry, he must provide proper accommodation for those who had to manage a squadron. If the House would not vote sufficient money to carry out all the works, he would suggest that instead of building so many new barracks in different parts of the country, it would be a far better plan to improve the existing Cavalry barracks.

MR. PHILIP STANHOPE (Burnley) said that the Commander-in-Chief had recently made a tour of the recruiting depôts, with a view to transferring and even suppressing some of them. He trusted that the depôt at Burnley, which was one of the best recruiting centres in the country, was not going, especially as the Commander-in-Chief, who had expressed great satisfaction with the condition of things he saw there, was altogether against that course.

*SIR JOHN COLOMB (Great Yarmouth) said he desired to call attention to an incident which showed the absence of business principles in the carrying out of the painting of barracks. He happened to be passing the Cavalry barracks at Cahir, in the County of Tipperary, during very wet weather last autumn. He was surprised to see the men under canvas in a slop of wet. He inquired what had happened, and as the account he received was very confusing, he went into the barracks to make inquiries. 1896 was the year, according to routine, for painting the barracks. In the middle of June a letter reached the regiment requesting the Colonel to make arrangements to vacate the barracks in order that the work might be carried out. The Colonel informed the authorities that the regiment was going to the Curragh in July, and would not be back till the middle of August, and that it would be a great convenience to everybody concerned if the barracks were painted during that time. At the beginning of July the regiment went to the Curragh, and cleared everything out of the barracks to facilitate the painting. About the middle of July a contractor arrived with his materials and mixed his paints, when down came an official and said he must send samples to be analysed, and that the contractor must not go on with the work meanwhile. The regiment came back about the middle of August and found affairs in that condition. A few days after, the contractor got an official intimation that the samples of paint were all right, and then, in the desperate weather of last September, the regiment had to turn out in batches of 60 and go under canvas in the barrack yard. He asked the right hon. Gentleman to give his attention to that particular matter and to look into it. It was a state of affairs that ought not to be tolerated. ["Hear, hear!"]

*MR. BRODRICK said he would certainly look into the matter his hon. Friend had called attention to, as well as the other matters which had been mentioned by the hon. Member for Burnley and others. As to the question raised by the hon. Member for East Aberdeenshire, the reason for the state of things to which he referred was that the barracks at Portsmouth, which were required by the Admiralty for the Marines, were given up to them by the War Office, and the sum taken would enable the War Office to build barracks elsewhere. Therefore it was simply a case of exchange. The hon. Member for Glamorganshire had asked him a question with reference to the Bristol Channel. That question had been carefully considered. The Bristol Channel was one of those harbours which had been considered by past and present Governments, and it was proposed to make considerable expenditure in its defences. His hon. and gallant Friend the Member for Pembroke had spoken about lockers for individual soldiers. That was no doubt an admirable suggestion. The late Mr. Stanhope, when at the War Office, arranged for putting up cupboards in barrack rooms in which the soldiers could store whatever was carried on by them from one meal to another. It was very desirable that the soldiers should have lockers, and he would look into the question to see whether the accommodation could be given.

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN (Stirling Burghs) said the hon. Member for Glamorganshire mentioned that he was a member of the last deputation that came to him some years ago on the subject of the defences of the Severn

MAJOR WYNDHAM-QUIN said that what he stated was that a deputation had waited on the right hon. Gentleman from the Cardiff Chamber of Commerce. He did not say that he was a member of it or connected with it.

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN said that he remembered receiving an influential deputation upon the subject of the defence of the Severn, and he had had other comunications with hon. Members interested in the subject. It was from no want of respect for the views of that deputation on the part of the War Office that any delay that had occurred could be ascribed. On these questions of the fortification of commercial ports the Secretary of State for the time being must obviously rely upon the advice he obtained from the Joint Naval and Military Defence Committee as to the particular places where defences were most urgently required. That Committee decided that other parts of the island were more exposed to danger, and therefore had a prior claim to attention from the Government. The money that could be expended was limited in amount, and the War Office therefore could not undertake to complete the defences of the whole coast of the country all at the same time. Whilst not in the least depreciating the importance of the defence of the Severn, he had acted when at the War Office—and he presumed his successor had done the same—upon the advice of the Naval and Military Defence Committee, who were supreme in these matters. He hoped, however, that the delay that had occurred would not now be very much prolonged.

MR. KNOX said that the Vote included an item of £38,000 for work at the torpedo factory at Chatham. He understood that the work was to be done under the Naval Works Act, and it was difficult to understand why the item should appear in the Army Estimates if the work was to be paid for out of the Naval Works Fund. He also called attention to the item for work at Carrickfergus Castle, one of the finest Norman castles in the kingdom. The military authorities had already disfigured it horribly by what had been done to it, and he trusted that there was no intention of disfiguring it further.

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN asked under whom the work at the Brennan Torpedo Factory was being continued?

*MR. BRODRICK said that it was under the management of the Inspector-General of Fortifications.

DR. TANNER complained that military works in Ireland were neglected.

Vote agreed to.

7. £118,600, Establishments for Military Education—Agreed to.

8. Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That a sum, not exceeding £54,800, be granted to Her Majesty, to defray the Charge for Sundry Miscellaneous Effective Services, which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1898."

MR. WARNER asked as to the distribution of the Chitral medals.

*MR. POWELL-WILLIAMS said they would be distributed as soon as they could be made.

DR. TANNER: Where are they made? ["Order, order!"] The hon. Member proceeded to make some discursive remarks, and was frequently called to order by the CHAIRMAN of WAYS and MEANS, who finally called the attention of the Committee to his conduct in persisting in irrelevance and tedious repetition, and directed him to discontinue his speech.

Question put.

The Committee divided:—Ayes, 120; Noes, 8.—(Division List, No. 39.)

And, it being after Midnight, the Chairman left the Chair to make his Report to the House.

Resolutions to be reported upon Monday next; Committee to sit again upon Monday next.

MILITARY LANDS ACT (1892) AMENDMENT BILL.

Committee deferred till Monday next.

LAW OF EVIDENCE (CRIMINAL CASES) BILL.

Second Reading deferred till Monday next.

TRUSTS (SCOTLAND) BILL.

Committee deferred till Monday next.

WAYS AND MEANS.

Committee deferred till Monday next.

LEASEHOLDERS (PURCHASE OF FEE SIMPLE) (No. 2) BILL.

Second Reading deferred till Thursday 11th March.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT (1894) AMENDMENT BILL.

Second Reading deferred till Friday next.

SHOP ASSISTANTS (HALF-HOLIDAY) BILL.

Second Reading deferred till Monday next.

LICENSING EXEMPTION (HOUSES OF PARLIAMENT) BILL.

LORD STANLEY (Lancashire, Westhoughton) moved the Second Reading of this Bill?

SIR WILFRID LAWSON hoped the Government would not take a Bill like this at this hour of the night. [The ATTORNEY GENERAL: "Why not?"] Because they wanted proper discussion upon it at a proper hour. The Bill introduced quite a new principle into our legislation, and he objected to its being taken now.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir RICHARD WEBSTER, Isle of Wight) said he had an appeal to make to the hon. Baronet, and he hoped it would meet with some success. The hon. Baronet was preventing the House from bringing itself into accordance with the law. As he said the other night, if the hon. Baronet would bring in a Bill to limit the supply of refreshments to Members of the House, that would be a proper subject of discussion, but it was astonishing that a man who posed as the champion of temperance and law and order should really wish the House to go on breaking the law. [*Laughter and cheers.*] He reminded the hon. Baronet that they had to consider others besides themselves. The Press Gallery, for instance, desired to get reasonable refreshment, and he must say it was very extraordinary that they should be asked not to pass this simple Measure, which would simply legalise the practice of the last 50 years. ["Hear, hear!"]

MR. PATRICK M'HUGH (Leitrim, N.) said that, though he was not a teetotaler, he joined the hon. Baronet in expressing the opinion that it was desirable that the Government should give time for the proper discussion of the Bill.

MR. SPEAKER: Do I understand that the hon. Member objects?

MR. PATRICK M'HUGH: Oh, yes, Sir.

Second Reading deferred till Monday next.

House adjourned at Five minutes
after Twelve o'clock till
Monday next

HOUSE OF LORDS.

Monday, 22nd February 1897.

SINCLAIR'S DIVORCE.

Petition of Alfred Law Sinclair, of Holyhill, Strabane, County Tyrone, a Lieutenant-Colonel in the Indian Staff Corps, for leave to present a Bill to dissolve his marriage with Isabella Sinclair, his wife, and to enable him to marry again, and for other purposes, was presented and read: Ordered that the said petition be taken into consideration on Friday next, and that notice thereof be given to the said Isabella Sinclair: Leave given to the Petitioner and to the said Isabella Sinclair to be heard by Counsel at the Bar upon the said petition: Copies of the proceedings in the Probate, Divorce, and Admiralty Division of the High Court of Justice in England, the Probate and Matrimonial Division of the High Court of Justice in Ireland, and the Court of Appeal in Ireland, delivered (on oath).

MARINE INSURANCE BILL [H.L.].

House in Committee (according to Order): Bill reported without amendment; and re-committed to the Standing Committee.

House adjourned at Twenty-five minutes before Five o'clock, till To-morrow, a Quarter past Ten o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

Monday, 22nd February 1897.

PRIVATE BUSINESS.

GREAT EASTERN RAILWAY (GENERAL POWERS) BILL.

On the Order for the Second Reading of this Bill—

*SIR CHARLES DILKE (Gloucester, Forest of Dean)—who had an Amendment on the Paper to reject the Bill —said he rose on that occasion, at the request of the Amalgamated Society of Railway Servants, to put before the House the strong objections which they entertained against this Bill and several other railway Bills in progress. There were five railway Bills before the House this Session in which powers were taken with regard to societies which were more or less compulsory either on all classes or on some classes, in the employ of the companies. As to this particular Bill, the society was at present compulsory only on the clerks or salaried officers; but under the Act of which this was an amending Bill, it was possible for the company to make their society compulsory on all their servants. He was informed however, that the Great Eastern Company were prepared to confine the operation of the present Bill to their salaried officers, and in those circumstances it would not be necessary for him to divide the House on this Bill at least. The different Bills had been referred to the Chief Registrar of Friendly Societies, and he understood that that official had already reported on three of them in very strong terms, and those reports would be placed before the committees on the Bills. That being the case and as, necessarily, therefore, the reports of the Chief Registrar would come before the House on the report stage of the Bills and receive full consideration, his objections to the Second Readings would fall to the ground. The Chief Registrar had officially raised against the clause objected to the very points he had been prepared himself to bring forward. In 1889 there were some clauses in a private Bill similar to the clause objected to in the present Bill, and it was then found that there was a difficulty as to the men being heard. The railway servants took the view that they ought not to be prejudicially affected by compulsory clauses of this kind without being heard, and the clauses referred to should be struck out or the servants be given a hearing before the Committee. He was aware of certain facts which had raised a doubt both in 1889 and in 1890, as to whether they could show that they were affected in a way which would give them a *locus* before the Committee. Even supposing individual servants were able to appear, it was a very invidious thing to throw it upon individual servants of a railway company. It would be far better that some of the societies which represented the railway servants should be allowed to appear on their behalf. In some societies the management was of a very despotic kind, and the fund was really in the hands of the railway company. He understood that as regarded the Bill now before them the Great Eastern had undertaken to insert words making it clear that this particular Bill only referred to salaried clerks and officers, and although it would still be the case that under their former powers they might include in their compulsory societies all the servants of the company, yet he felt he could not press, on the present Bill, an objection going to the original legislation already sanctioned by the House. Therefore, he should accept the proposal of the company. Perhaps it might be convenient if the Chairman of Committees would tell the House what was the usual course in regard to these Bills, as the Amalgamated Society of Railway Servants were very anxious both that the reports of the Registrar General of Friendly Societies should be fully brought before the Committee, and that, if possible, they should be given some representation before the Select Committee.

*THE CHAIRMAN OF WAYS AND MEANS (Mr. J. W. LOWTHER, Cumberland, Penrith) said that, as regarded the Bill now before the House, he was prepared to undertake that the reports to which the right hon. Baronet had referred should come before the Committee before whom the Bill went. If by any chance the Bill was unopposed then it would come before him, and he should most thoroughly go into the report from the Registrar General. He should also have to inform the House how that report had been dealt with, and therefore the House would be seized of whatever was done, whether by himself or by the Select Committee. The right hon. Baronet might therefore rest assured that the matter would come clearly before the Committee. He was informed by the Great Eastern Railway Company that in this Bill they never intended for a moment to go beyond the class of servants who were dealt with in the Act of 1878.

*SIR C. DILKE said that was so, but he was informed that the provisions of that Act, although they had been used only for salaried servants, might be extended so as to include all classes of servants.

*THE CHAIRMAN OF WAYS AND MEANS said the company did not intend, in this Bill, to apply its provisions to any other class of servants but those to which the provisions of the Act of 1878 had been made applicable. They had undertaken, in the enacting part of clause 34, to insert words which would make it perfectly clear that the clause was only for salaried officers and salaried servants. The other question as regarded the *locus standi* of particular bodies did not arise on this matter.

Bill read a Second time, and committed.

NORTH BRITISH RAILWAY BILL.

On the Order for the Second Reading of this Bill—

*SIR C. DILKE—who had given notice of a Motion for its rejection—said that this case was a little different, but he had an undertaking from the company which appeared to meet the matter. The objection of the Amalgamated Society was that it further extended the operation of the company's provident fund to persons who, as they said, had no desire to contribute, having already made provision for benefits outside the company. As he understood, the railway company were prepared to meet their point. The servants also objected on the ground that, if obliged to leave the company's service, they forfeited, in some cases the whole, and in others a great portion of the money which had been deducted from their wages. The company had informed him that they were willing to limit the clause by the insertion of the words "subject to their consent," and it would be for the Committee to consider whether these words would meet the case. In this case, however, he would ask the Chairman of Committees whether he did not think it would be wise to give some such *locus* as he asked for in the last case. It certainly would be a great satisfaction to the Amalgamated Society to feel that in a case of this sort they might be heard before the Committee, and although he did not press his objection to the Second Reading he would ask the Chairman of

Committees whether he did not think this was a case where a *locus* should be given to the society.

*The CHAIRMAN of WAYS and MEANS said that, as the right hon. Gentleman did not intend to press his Motion, he did not know whether he ought to give an opinion. At all events he would give a very guarded one. The Instruction which stood in the name of the right hon. Baronet seemed to be a very wide one indeed, and rather a dangerous one for the House to accept without very full consideration. The House had drawn up in one of its Standing Orders a list of societies and associations to whom it was prepared to grant a *locus standi* in certain cases, and he thought it would require a very strong case indeed on the part of any society or association not included in that list if it wanted to obtain a *locus*. The right hon. Gentleman's Instruction might open the door to a great number of people who were not in any way interested in the company to appear on the company's Bill. He thought the Instruction was one which should be very jealously watched and carefully guarded before it was assented to by the House.

Mr. G. C. T. BARTLEY (Islington, N.) said he thought that House ought to be very careful in doing anything which would discourage such arrangements as these between employers and employed. There was no doubt that immense benefits had accrued where there had been arrangements of this kind for providing schemes of thrift for old age and sickness and so on, and he thought it was a pity that for fear of doing anything to offend, or to appear to offend, some of the extreme views of trade unionists, they would not be able in future to say distinctly that it certainly was beneficial that in these large corporations like railway companies there should be every facility given for enabling the workpeople and the employers to come together and make arrangements of this sort. He could conceive no better way of promoting harmony between the employers and employed than this. They must not let it go out of that House that, for political reasons, the House was afraid to let the companies do for their workpeople what they might do for their salaried officers. The plain political language of that was that the clerks were a small and insignificant political body, and that the workpeople were a large one, but he held that what was good for one was good for the other.

Mr. LLOYD-GEORGE (Carnarvon Boroughs) said the hon. Gentleman who had just spoken seemed to have missed the whole point of those who had raised the question on that side of the House. There was no objection to these benefit societies, but the whole point was whether they were going to give the directors of the company power to make rules and regulations, and to manipulate these funds as they thought proper, without consulting the workpeople who contributed probably two-thirds of the money. That was a proceeding which, he said, should not be encouraged by that House. All that was asked was that the men should have the same voice in the control and administration of the funds as was proposed to be given to the directors.

Bill read a Second time, and committed.

COVENTRY ELECTRIC TRAMWAYS BILL.

Ordered, That, in the case of the Coventry Electric Tramways Bill, Standing Orders 204 and 235 be suspended, and that the Bill be now Read a Second time.—(*Dr. Farquharson.*)

*Sir C. DILKE had given notice of the following Motion:—

> "That all Petitions praying to be heard against Clauses 48 and 49 of the Bill, and so much of the preamble as relates thereto, presented five clear days before the meeting of the Committee be referred to the Committee; and that the Petitioners may be heard by themselves, their Counsel and Agents on their Petition against the Bill."

He said: As our case is stronger against the other two Bills than is our case against this Bill, and as we have from the company an offer of compromise, which is meant to be sufficient, though we are not quite satisfied that it is, I think I had better reserve my Motion until the other Bills come on.

Bill read a Second time.

QUESTIONS

FOREIGN PRISON-MADE GOODS.

SIR HOWARD VINCENT (Sheffield, Central): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade when he proposes to introduce the Bill for the exclusion of the goods made in the prisons of other countries promised in Her Majesty's Most Gracious Speech, and if he will take care to press it forward sufficiently early in the Session to avoid its being shelved for want of time, having regard to the refusal of Foreign Governments to enter into an agreement for the non-exportation of such goods?

THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF TRADE (Mr. C. T. RITCHIE, Croydon): I am afraid I cannot add anything to the answer I have already given. We shall be very glad to introduce the Bill as soon as the condition of public business offers a prospect of our being able to proceed with it.

SIR HOWARD VINCENT: I beg to give notice that, to make sure, I will to-morrow ask leave to introduce a Bill myself.

MAIL PACKET SERVICE (SCOTLAND).

MR. D. NICOL (Argyll): I beg to ask the Lord Advocate whether he has come to any decision on the subject of the Report of the Departmental Committee appointed to consider the mail packet service to the Highlands and Islands of Scotland; and if he could conveniently communicate same at an early date to the House?

*THE LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. GRAHAM MURRAY, Buteshire): Upon consideration of the recommendations made by the Departmental Committee referred to by the hon. Member, it has been decided to place a sum of £5,450 on the West Highlands and Islands (Public Works) Vote for the purpose of subsidising mail steamers on the West Coast of Scotland, and £3,225 for the Orkney and Shetland services. The arrangements consequent on the reduction of this Vote will not come into operation until the 1st of October next, and, as they still form the subject of consideration, I am not in a position to state them in detail.

HARBOUR ACCOMMODATION (DEVON AND CORNWALL).

SIR CAMERON GULL (Devon, Barnstaple): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade whether, having regard to the urgent need, as disclosed by the Report of the Select Committee on Harbour Accommodation of 1884, of harbour accommodation available at all tides on the North Cornish and North Devon coasts for fishing and local trading purposes, and to the impossibility of providing such accommodation entirely from local sources, if he is not prepared to undertake the larger schemes recommended by the Committee, he will favourably consider this special case?

MR. RITCHIE: It has been the policy of successive Governments not to undertake to construct or to assist by grants commercial and fishing harbour works in England. As the hon. Member is aware, loans can be obtained from the Public Works Loan Commissioners under certain conditions. However, if any special circumstances are brought under my notice they will receive my careful consideration.

WELSH LAND COMMISSION (REPORT).

MR. HERBERT ROBERTS (Denbighshire, W.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether his attention has been drawn to the unanimous recommendation of the Welsh Land Commissioners that portions of their Report should be translated into Welsh and published officially in that language; whether he has considered the suggestion of the Commissioners that the determination of the parts of the Report which it is most desirable to translate into Welsh should be left to a Committee of the Commission acting in conjunction with the Lords Commissioners of the Treasury; and whether, in view of the fact that without such a translation the Report cannot reach a large proportion of the Welsh population specially interested in it, he will take the necessary steps to provide the Welsh translation recommended?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE HOME DEPARTMENT (Sir MATTHEW WHITE RIDLEY, Lancashire, Blackpool): I am aware of the recommendation referred to by the hon. Member, and have had it under consideration. The cost of this Commission has already been extremely heavy, and any proposals involving additional expenditure will have to be very carefully weighed. I am in communication, however, with the chairman of the Commission as to the nature and bulk of the extracts which the Commission thought might with advantage be translated; and when I have obtained this information from him, I will communicate again with the Treasury.

HALF-SOVEREIGNS AND FARTHINGS.

Mr. C. E. SCHWANN (Manchester, N.): I beg to ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer whether his attention has been drawn to the frequent loss inflicted on shopkeepers and others by the similarity betwixt half-sovereigns and farthings, especially in gas light; and whether he would take into consideration some alteration in the design of the farthing in future coining, so as to make error and consequent loss avoidable?

The CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER (Sir Michael Hicks Beach, Bristol, W.): No recent case has been brought to the knowledge of the Mint such as that described in the Question. As I pointed out in my reply to a Question put to me on February 25th last on this subject, there is an obvious difference between the farthing and the half-sovereign—[*a laugh*]—the former having a smooth, plain edge, and the latter a milled one. The reverse has an entirely different design—St. George and the Dragon in the case of the half-sovereign, Britannia in the case of the farthing. In addition the latter coin has the word "Farthing" engraved in conspicuous letters upon it. It appears, therefore, that error and consequent loss can be easily avoided by the use of ordinary care. I have considered some suggestions for a change, but have not been satisfied with any of them.

Mr. SCHWANN said that it was within his knowledge that the mistake had been made three times in the course of business by one person. Did not the right hon. Gentleman think that by treating the metal with sulphur before issue the colour might be changed and the error prevented?

The CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER: I went into that matter some little time ago.

INFECTIOUS DISEASES (METROPOLIS).

Dr. FARQUHARSON, (Aberdeenshire, W.): I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board if he could state to the House how many children suffering from scarlet fever, small-pox, and diphtheria have been removed from the Metropolitan pauper schools to the care of the Metropolitan Asylums Board during the year 1896, and what has been the cost of each of these patients per week, including interest on and repayment of capital charges. And can he also give the names of the schools which have respectively furnished the patients suffering from these diseases?

The SECRETARY to the LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (Mr. T. W. Russell, Tyrone, S.): The Local Government Board has been informed by the Managers of the Metropolitan Asylum District that during the year 1896, 275 children suffering from scarlet fever and 15 from diphtheria, were removed from Poor Law Schools in the Metropolis (including two certified schools) to asylums of the Managers. There were no cases of small-pox. The schools from which children were removed were the separate schools of Islington, Hackney, Strand, Holborn, Shoreditch, Bethnal Green, St. George's-in-the-East, Lambeth, and Westminster, and the schools of the Kensington and Chelsea, Central London, Forest Gate, and North Surrey School Districts. Children were also removed from the Exmouth Training Ship and from the North Hyde and St. Agnes' Orphanage certified schools. The Managers further inform the Board that it is not possible to state with precision what has been the cost of each patient per week, but that the average cost may be put at about 21s. per week per patient—this sum including maintenance and common charges.

EMPLOYMENT OF DEAF MUTE (BELFAST).

Colonel McCALMONT, (Antrim, N.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether his attention has been drawn to the case of Thomas Stephens, a deaf mute, who has been compelled to leave his employment in the foundry works of Messrs. Combe, Barbour, and Combe, in Belfast, through the action of the Inspector of Factories, the reason assigned being that the work was dangerous on account of the boy's deafness. And whether there is anything in the Factory and Workshops Act prohibiting the employment of a deaf and dumb boy, over 14 years of age, in a place where there is machinery; if not, whether he will acquaint the firm in question that they are at liberty to afford the boy an opportunity of earning his livelihood?

Sir MATTHEW WHITE RIDLEY: My attention has been called to this case. No child or young person under the age of 16 can be employed in a factory, either among machinery or elsewhere, unless he be certified as fit for employment in that factory by the certifying surgeon. In the present case, the certificate has been refused so far as work near machinery is concerned, but granted as regards file cutting. I cannot undertake the responsibility of interfering with the discretion of the surgeon in such a matter. It is obvious that in certain circumstances the employment of a deaf mute near machinery might be attended with serious danger.

HORSE-BREEDING COMMISSION (DUBLIN).

Colonel McCALMONT: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether, in view of the evidence that has been given before the Horse-breeding Commission in Dublin, and made public, as to the harm that is being done to the horse-breeding industry in Ireland, their hackney stallions are to serve again during the coming season, or whether the Government intend to recommend the Board to discontinue its operations in connection with horse-breeding and to apply the money to purposes more generally useful to the congested population for whom it was intended?

*The CHIEF SECRETARY for IRELAND (Mr. Gerald Balfour, Leeds, Central): I understand that different opinions have been expressed by witnesses already examined before the Horse-breeding Commission in Dublin, some having been in favour of the introduction of the hackney strain and others against. Under these circumstances, and in view of the fact that the Commission has not yet completed its labours or made its report, I cannot but think that my hon. and gallant Friend, on further consideration, will agree with me that it would be in any case premature at the present stage to take any action such as he suggests. I may add that this is a matter entirely for the Congested Districts Board to decide, and that the Government could not usefully take up the position of official adviser to the Board?

Colonel McCALMONT: May I ask the right hon. Gentleman if his attention has been called to the evidence of probably the best witness before the Commission, in which he stated that if the Government wished to destroy the horse-breeding industry in Ireland they could not set about it in a better way than this?

Mr. J. C. FLYNN (Cork, N.): Will the right hon. Gentleman say, was there not a large amount of evidence in favour of the hackney strain?

*Mr. GERALD BALFOUR: Yes, but I think it is not desirable to anticipate the report of the Commission.

Mr. PATRICK O'BRIEN (Kilkenny): May I ask the right hon. Gentleman if the Commission reports against the continued use of the hackney strain will the Government appoint a second Commission to revise the decision of the first, as was done in case of the Financial Relations Committee?

Captain DONELAN (Cork, E.): May I ask, is it a fact that the evidence from County Cork was almost unanimous against the introduction of the hackney strain?

*Mr. SPEAKER: These questions are, after the answer given, altogether irregular.

LOAN FUND SOCIETIES (IRELAND).

Mr. ARTHUR O'CONNOR (Donegal, E.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that a second clerk to a loan fund society is now in Sligo Gaol on a charge of embezzling £600 of the society's capital; if he can explain how a second clerk could obtain control over so large a sum without the collusion of other officers; and whether the Loan Fund Board will hold a searching inquiry into the matter?

MR. J. SWIFT MACNEILL (Donegal, S.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland (1) whether he is aware that the second clerk of the Belcoo Loan Fund Society is at present confined in Sligo Gaol on a charge of embezzling £600 of the loan fund; (2) whether there is any explanatian of the circumstances under which a sum, amounting to one-fourth of the entire capital of the loan fund society, has disappeared without the knowledge of the first clerk, the committee, and the trustees; and (3) whether the Loan Fund Board have held, or propose to hold, an inquiry into the working of this society?

*MR. GERALD BALFOUR: The fact is as stated in the first paragraph of the Question of the right hon. Member for East Donegal, and of the similar Question standing in the name of the hon. and learned Member for South Donegal. The Loan Fund Board are not in possession of any evidence showing that there was collusion between the accused and any other official connected with the society; but I have no doubt the whole of the facts will be fully investigated on behalf of the Board at the trial of the accused, and pending such investigation it is undesirable to discuss the case further from this aspect. The Board inform me that they will continue their inquiry as to these frauds and into the circumstances leading to them.

MR. JOHN DILLON (Mayo, E.): On behalf of the hon. Member for South Donegal (Mr. MACNEILL), I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether the Report of the Commission appointed to inquire into the working of the loan fund system in Ireland has yet been laid before the Irish Government; and, if not, when it is likely to be ready; and whether, having regard to the abuses, malversation, and oppression connected with the system, which have been repeatedly admitted by the Chief Secretary in his replies to Questions addressed to him in the House of Commons, this Report will be laid upon the Table of the House?

*MR. GERALD BALFOUR: The Report in question has been submitted to the Government. It is still under the consideration of the Loan Fund Board, who are in consultation with their legal adviser on the subject. A reasonable time must be allowed to enable the Board to come to a decision as to the course they propose to adopt in connection with the presentation of the Report. In the meantime I will ask the hon. Member not to press the Question put in the second paragraph.

CAPTAIN DONELAN: On behalf of the hon. Member for South Down (Mr. M. MCCARTHY), I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that, owing to serious defalcations and frauds on the part of the late senior clerk of the Edgwarthstown Loan Fund Society, the Loan Fund Board in Dublin dissolved that society about a year ago; whether the books of the society were regularly inspected by the loan fund inspector, who failed to perceive irregularities in the accounts, and expressed no disapproval of the system of management; and whether, having regard to the fact that, owing to the dissolution of the society and the difficulty of collecting outstanding debts by a receiver who now desires to be relieved of his duties, the debenture holders are likely to be heavy losers, any relief or compensation will be given to them for the loss of securities through defalcations and frauds which the inspector of the Loan Fund Board, a body constituted by statute, and whose officers are Government officials, failed, from negligence or other cause, to detect for a long period of time?

*MR. GERALD BALFOUR: I have referred this Question to the Loan Fund Board for a Report as to the facts, but not having yet received the Report, I regret to be obliged to ask the hon. Gentleman to postpone the Question till To-morrow. As regards, however, the concluding words of the Question, I must point out that neither the officers of the Loan Fund Board nor of the local societies working in connection with that Board are, in any sense of the word, Civil Servants of the Crown, and that Government exercises no control whatever over the proceedings of the Board or of the local bodies.

CIVIL SERVICE (TEMPORARY EMPLOYMENT).

MR. H. KIMBER (Wandsworth): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury whether the personal clerks employed in the offices of the Official Receivers in

Bankruptcy and Companies (Winding-up), the temporary architect, assistant surveyors, draughtsmen, and accountant clerks in the Director of Works and Works Loan Departments of the Admiralty, the legal assistants now employed in the several solicitors' departments of the Civil Service in lieu of permanent clerks formerly employed, and referred to by the right hon. Gentleman in his Reply to a Question addressed to him on 12th May last, are respectively employed temporarily in respect of possessing technical or professional qualifications; and, if so, why they are not included in the Return, No. 359, presented on 11th August last; and whether the said Return includes all persons employed temporarily in the Civil Service in respect of possessing technical or professional qualifications whose salaries are payable out of an annual lump sum allowance made to the head of the department; and, if not, whether he will agree to furnish a Supplementary Return which shall include all such persons?

THE SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY (Mr. R. W. HANBURY, Preston): The persons mentioned as being employed in the Admiralty are employed by the day, and were therefore expressly excluded from the Return. The others are employed and paid by heads of departments out of lump sums granted to them, and are not employed, temporarily or otherwise, in the Civil Service. They are, therefore, also properly excluded from the Return.

HYDE PARK (CYCLISTS).

MR. CHARLES McLAREN (Leicester, Bosworth): I beg to ask the First Commissioner of Works whether, after having observed the results of opening Hyde Park to cyclists up to twelve o'clock, he is now prepared to extend the period for cycling to one o'clock; and, whether he can hold out any hope of reserving the Serpentine Drive, or some other little-used roadway, for the exclusive use of cyclists within certain hours?

THE FIRST COMMISSIONER OF WORKS (Mr. AKERS-DOUGLAS, Kent, St. Augustine's): No, Sir; I cannot accede to the suggestions contained in the hon. Member's Question.

WESTMINSTER HALL.

MR. McLAREN: I beg to ask the First Commissioner of Works when he will be able to restore to the public the privilege of approaching the Houses of Parliament through Westminster Hall?

MR. AKERS-DOUGLAS: The existing arrangements for the admission of the public into Westminster Hall have been made after consultation with the authorities who have charge of the approaches to the Houses of Parliament, and it is not intended to make any change at present. The restrictions preventing the public from entering Westminster Hall were last year modified, and the public are now admitted by the south end at such times of the day as the House is not sitting.

IRISH MAILS.

MR. JOHN ROCHE (Kerry, E.): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury, as representing the Postmaster General, whether, if it is brought to his knowledge that the Great Southern and Western Railway officials are willing that the fast mail from Dublin should be stopped at Mallow Junction, and that they are prepared to forward at once the mails and passengers to Killarney and Tralee as well as to Fermoy and Lismore, he will, on the part of the Post Office, consent to such an arrangement being carried out as soon as possible?

MR. HANBURY: The Postmaster General would, of course, be prepared to give careful consideration to any proposals received from the railway company as regards the mails for Killarney and Tralee, but until he is acquainted with the full details of such proposals he is not in a position to say whether he will be able to assent to them.

CAPTAIN DONELAN: I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury, as representing the Postmaster General, whether he is aware that the only station in the South of Ireland at which the mail trains of the Great Southern and Western Company now stop is Limerick Junction; and whether, in view of the importance of Mallow Junction as a centre of railway communication with the large districts of Cork and Kerry, arrangements will be made in the new time table for a stoppage at this station instead of at Maryborough or Kildare?

MR. HANBURY: The mail trains between Dublin and Cork stop at Kildare, Maryborough, and Limerick Junction. The discontinuance of the stop at either Kildare or Maryborough would give rise to serious public inconvenience and complaint, but the question of arranging for a stop at Mallow in addition to the present stops is being carefully considered in connection with the revision of the time table consequent on the acceleration of the mail service between England and Ireland. The decision, however, will partly depend on the Company being able to increase the speed of the train so as to insure that the arrival at Cork shall not be retarded by the stop, and by the Company's readiness to put on trains to and from Tralee in connection with the mail, as without such trains the stop would be useless, and the Post Office would not be justified in paying for special trains for the service.

CAPTAIN DONELAN: May I ask the right hon. Gentleman whether it is not the fact that the chief object of the accelerated mail service between Dublin and Cork was not to benefit the South of Ireland?

*MR. SPEAKER: Order, order! The Question on the Paper is a precise one about a very small local detail. It is not a general question.

CAPTAIN DONELAN: May I point out, with great respect, that although this matter appears to be one of mere local interest, it forms part of a very important national question.

*MR. SPEAKER: Order, order! That is exactly what I said did not arise out of the Question on the Paper.

MR. T. B. CURRAN (Donegal, N.): On behalf of the hon. Member for Cork County, S. (Mr. E. BARRY), I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury, as representing the Postmaster General, whether any steps will be taken for the dispatch of the night mails on their arrival in Dublin, instead of allowing them to remain there for hours according to the present system; and whether any arrangement will be made for the delivery in London and other English business centres of the morning mails from Dublin at such an hour as to enable correspondents to reply by the evening mail, thereby considerably accelerating the transit of letters to and from England?

MR. HANBURY: No, Sir. As I stated on the 15th instant, very strong pressure has been brought to bear upon the Postmaster General by Irish representatives to fix, not an earlier, but a later hour for the departure from Dublin of the day mail to England, which of course carries the night mails from the Irish provinces, and it is to meet this desire that the Department, with some reluctance, fixed 7.10 a.m. instead of 6.40 a.m. as the hour of departure of the English day mail from Dublin. As the time of arrival in London and all other places in England will, under the acceleration, be the same as at present, the existing arrangements for delivery will remain unaltered.

DERRY CORPORATION STOCK.

MR. VESEY KNOX (Londonderry): I beg to ask the Attorney General for Ireland whether the attention of the Local Government Board has been called to the resolutions passed by the Derry Corporation on Tuesday last relating to the issue of stock, which depart in several material respects from the forms prescribed by the Order in Council; whether these resolutions in particular do not say when the stock is to be issued or at what time or in what manner it is to be paid for, and provide for the payment of a half-year's dividend on 1st July even if there should be some months' delay in the issue; whether the resolution purporting to fix the price only fixes a minimum price, and does not direct how the actual price of issue is to be ascertained; and whether, under the circumstances, the resolutions are effectual for their purpose?

The HON. MEMBER further asked the right hon. Gentleman whether his attention has been called to a statement by the Chairman of the Finance Committee of the Derry Corporation that the Corporation could not issue stock on as favourable terms as English Corporations, owing to the nature of the regulations made by the Irish Local Government Board; and whether the Local Government Board will consider the advisability of altering any regulations which may have had this effect?

*THE ATTORNEY GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. J. ATKINSON, Londonderry, N.): The Town Clerk reports that the statement ascribed to the Chairman of the Finance Committee is substantially correct, but that its meaning and purport are not quite accurately represented in the first paragraph of the Question, and further that the Corporation are advised by counsel that they have acted within their powers in passing the resolution which they have passed. The regulations of the Irish Local Government Board are practically identical with those framed by the Local Government Board in England. No change in their form is desirable. The proceedings of the Municipal Authorities are not under the supervision of the Local Government Board, or any other department of the Executive. The creation and issues by the Corporation of their stock in conformity with the law is a matter of their own concern, and I therefore beg to decline to express any opinion on the legal point mentioned in the third paragraph, on which they have apparently received advice.

AUSTRALIAN MAIL CONTRACT.

Mr. J. F. HOGAN (Tipperary, Mid): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury, as representing the Postmaster General, whether, concurrently with the acceleration of the sea carriage of the Australian mails by four days under the new contract, any steps are in contemplation to improve the overland transit of these mails from Naples and Brindisi to London, with a view to the avoidance of the delays that occur from time to time on this section, and occasion considerable inconvenience to business men?

Mr. HANBURY: Although the question of acceleration of Australian mails across the continent of Europe has no connection whatever with that of increasing the speed at sea, the hon. Member may rest assured that the train service through France and Italy is most carefully watched by the Post Office, and that no opportunity of obtaining an improvement has been lost or will be lost in the future. The outward mails, for the land conveyance of which the Postmaster General pays, are invariably carried by special train whether to Brindisi or to Naples; but the homeward mails, for the land conveyance of which the Colonies pay, though carried by special train from Brindisi in one week, are carried by ordinary train from Naples in the other week. This cheaper means of transport is, of course, somewhat slower, and occasionally there have been delays from causes that do not arise in the special service. It is believed that the Colonies would be unwilling to face the expense of a special service from Naples to Calais; but when, occasionally, delay occurs in the ordinary service, representations are made to the French or Italian Post Office, as the case may be; and the service is considered to work well on the whole.

ROYAL MARINE ARTILLERY OFFICERS.

Sir JOHN COLOMB (Great Yarmouth): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Admiralty whether, before taking Supply on Navy Estimates, he will furnish for the information of Members, a memorandum respecting the Officers of Royal Marine Artillery, stating the nature of examinations for candidates for commissions; the subsequent courses of study, instruction, training, and examination of these officers from the date of passing the entrance examination to the completion of their training at headquarters, Eastney; the time occupied in each such course of education and training, and the subjects in which they have to qualify at the examinations during and at the end of each such course of education and training; and further stating the nature of artillery, or gunnery, and torpedo duties assigned by Admiralty regulations, or by custom, to each rank of Officer of Royal Marine Artillery when serving afloat and with Naval forces on shore respectively?

The FIRST LORD of the ADMIRALTY (Mr. Goschen, St. George's, Hanover Square): I cannot undertake to complete the elaborate Memorandum suggested by my hon. and gallant Friend before taking the Estimates. Much of the information he asks for is quite accessible to him and to the public, but I will examine to what extent I can meet his wishes.

TREATMENT OF PRISONERS AT BARCELONA.

Mr. PATRICK O'BRIEN: I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether he has received any confirmation of the report that torture was applied to several prisoners in the fortress of Montjuich, Barcelona, during December 1896; and whether any of the sufferers are British subjects; and, if so, whether he proposes to make any representations to the Spanish Government on the matter?

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS (MR. G. CURZON, Lancashire, Southport): Beyond a newspaper report which was sent to me by the hon. Member, we have heard nothing of the matter alluded to. If any evidence reaches us indicating that British subjects have been injured, of course, we should inquire.

AMERICAN PASSENGER TRAFFIC. (POLICE AT QUEENSTOWN.)

MR. PATRICK O'BRIEN: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that steerage passengers landing from British bound American liners at Queenstown are cross-examined by the Royal Irish Constabulary as to their names, occupations, American addresses, destinations in Ireland, length of their proposed stay, the names of those they are going to visit, address, etc., and that passengers embarking at Queenstown are obliged to show their tickets to detective officers going on board; whether he is aware that this practice is generally complained of by tourists, and is seriously injuring the Irish tourist traffic because, in consequence of it, tourists prefer to land in and embark from British ports; and whether he will confine this action of the police to persons whom they may reasonably suspect of the commission of crime or intention to commit crime?

*MR. GERALD BALFOUR: It is the practice of the police to invite passengers at Queenstown to give their names and places of destination, and passengers have cordially co-operated with the police in giving this information. It is not the fact, however, that passengers are interrogated as to the other particulars mentioned in the Question, nor is it true that passengers embarking at Queenstown are required to show their tickets to detective officers. When, however, the police have reason to believe that a particular passenger is an absconding criminal or a fugitive from justice, such person would no doubt be asked to exhibit his ticket. No complaints have been made to the police on the subject, nor is there any ground whatever for the suggestion that the tourist traffic has been injured in consequence of the police inquiries which I have indicated.

FISHERY PIER (BALTIMORE).

MR. JAMES GILHOOLY (Cork Co., W.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland (1) whether he has received a memorial from the Skibbereen and Baltimore Harbour Board relative to the construction of a fishery pier at Baltimore; and (2) whether, in view of the fact that the line of railway from Skibbereen to Baltimore, made for the purpose of promoting the fishing industry at a cost of £56,000, is practically useless for that purpose owing to the want of a suitable pier, he will grant the prayer of the memorial, and request the Treasury to advance the money necessary for its construction?

*MR. GERALD BALFOUR: The memorial referred to in the first part of the Question has been received. The memorial does not allege that the line of railway from Skibbereen to Baltimore, constructed at a cost of £56,000 under the Act of 1889, is practically useless to promote the fishing industry. The memorialists, on the contrary, took the opportunity of expressing their acknowledgments of the boon conferred upon the district by the Government, whilst at the same time expressing their desire that a deep water pier should be constructed, and the existing line of railway extended to the pier. The Congested Districts Board some few years ago were prepared to contribute towards the cost of the construction of a pier at Baltimore on terms which were communicated to the Baltimore Railway Company. It does not appear, however, that the latter company agreed to the terms of this offer; and, although the Congested Districts Board do not now consider themselves bound by the offer formerly made by them, yet, if the Railway Company and the Harbour Board could come to an understanding with the Board in the matter, the question of a contribution would be again considered.

MASSEREENE ESTATE (POLICE PROTECTION).

MR. DILLON: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland (1) will he explain why a district inspector, a head constable, a mounted constable, and two protection huts are still maintained in connection with the Massereene estate; (2) what is the annual cost of this establishment; and (3) whether any outrage has been committed in connection with the Massereene evicted farms?

*MR. GERALD BALFOUR: The police arrangements referred to in the first paragraph are necessary for the efficient protection of new tenants on the Massereene estate. It has been found practicable to make a substantial reduction in the number of police employed on this duty on the estate since the adoption of special protective measures some years ago. Overt acts of outrage, as well as acts of boycotting and intimidation, have been committed from time to time in connection with the occupation of evicted farms on the estate, and many more would doubtless have been committed were it not for the supervision exercised by the police and the protection given to the persons and property of the new tenants. The annual cost of the police referred to in the Question amounts to about £1,436, no portion of which is charged to the district.

UNIVERSITY COLLEGES (GOVERNMENT GRANT).

SIR WILLIAM HOULDSWORTH (Manchester, N.W.): I beg to ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer (1) whether any Report has yet been received from the Commissioners appointed by him to visit the University Colleges which receive a Government grant; and (2), if so, whether there is any prospect of these colleges, or any of them, receiving an augmented grant in the next financial year?

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER: The answer to the first Question is, Yes. My hon. Friend will find an additional Grant of £9,500 in the Civil Service Estimates.

PARCELS POST (INLAND).

COLONEL MILWARD (Warwick, Stratford-upon-Avon): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury, as representing the Postmaster General, what is the average distance or the approximate average distance that parcels are conveyed by the Inland Parcels Post of Great Britain and Ireland?

MR. HANBURY: The Postmaster General has no precise information as to the average distance over which inland parcels are conveyed. It has never been considered necessary to obtain this information, and it would involve much trouble and expense to do so.

PLEURO-PNEUMONIA (S.E. ESSEX).

MAJOR RASCH (Essex, S.E.): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Agriculture whether his attention has been called to the serious outbreak of pleuro-pneumonia at Purleigh, in South-east Essex; and whether he will consider the possibility of isolation instead of slaughter when there has only been a case of contact and not disease?

*THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF AGRICULTURE (Mr. WALTER LONG, Liverpool, West Derby): I am, of course, aware of the unfortunate outbreak of pleuro-pneumonia to which my hon. and gallant Friend refers, but I regret that it is not possible for me to adopt the suggestion which he is good enough to make. Experience has amply shown that unless animals which have been exposed to infection are forthwith slaughtered there is no probability of the extirpation of the disease, and as a matter of fact one of the animals slaughtered at Purleigh was found to be affected with pleuro-pneumonia of long standing.

SIR JOHN LENG (Dundee): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Agriculture whether the cases of pleuro-pneumonia which have occurred in Essex originated in that county; if not, to what locality their origin has been traced; and whether similar measures will be taken to prevent the importation of disease from one part of the kingdom to another, as have been applied to Canadian cattle?

*MR. WALTER LONG: Inquiries are still proceeding as to the origin of the cases of pleuro-pneumonia to which the hon. Member refers. There is some ground for believing that the affected animals may have been brought over from Ireland, but although a considerable number of cattle have been slaughtered by the Irish authorities at the places from which they are said to have come, no case of disease has been discovered. The Board have full power to prevent the importation of disease from one part of the kingdom to another, but there is practically uniformity of administration in these matters throughout the United Kingdom, and there is no necessity for our taking any measures in this direction under existing conditions.

DEATH OF A POST OFFICE SERVANT.

MR. F. A. CHANNING (Northampton, E.): : I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury, as representing the Postmaster General, whether the attention of the Post Office authorities has been called to the case of Miss Annie Jane Maxted, appointed six months ago as an assistant or clerk to the department, then pronounced healthy and strong, compelled as a condition to appointment to be re-vaccinated, suffered in consequence it is stated for six months, terminating in death on the 2nd instant; whether there is any authority by statute to enforce the above condition; whether it is ordered by the department assuming the power; and whether, while the recommendations of the Royal Commission are unconsidered by Parliament, the order will be continued?

MR. HANBURY: The attention of the Postmaster General has been called to the case of Miss Maxted, but the facts are not as represented by the hon. Member. Miss Maxted was not pronounced healthy and strong six months ago; on the contrary, the Medical Officer who examined her reported that she was not strong, and was suffering from an enlargement of the superficial cervical glands of the neck. The cause of her death is certified to have been Lymphadenoma (Hodgkin's disease), and as a secondary cause Dermato Melasma suprarenale (Addison's disease), and neither of these resulted from the re-vaccination. Re-vaccination as a condition of appointment in the Post Office is enforced, not by statute, but by Post Office Regulation. The Regulation has been in force since 1863, and, in view of the remarkable immunity from small pox enjoyed by Post Office servants under this Regulation, it is not proposed to alter it.

MR. CHANNING: I beg to give notice that in consequence of the reply of the Secretary to the Treasury I shall draw attention to this Question on the Estimates.

NAVAL PENSIONER (JOHN DEVINE).

MR. FLYNN: On behalf of the hon. Member for North Leitrim (Mr. PATRICK M'HUGH), I beg to ask the First Lord of the Admiralty if he is aware that Naval Pensioner John Devine, of County Leitrim, is now an inmate in Sligo District Lunatic Asylum; is he aware that Devine, though discharged a physical and mental wreck, held the highest testimonials from his superior officers for honourable and efficient service; that he had been accustomed before his discharge to send his mother, Anne Devine, of Clonagh, County Leitrim, £2 per month out of his pay; and that the Governors of Sligo Asylum waived their claim against the pension of Devine, charging the amount so remitted on the local rates, and appealed to the Admiralty to pay the grant in aid without deducting it from the pension in order that the whole pension should go to Devine's mother, who has no other means of subsistence; is he aware that but for the generosity of the Asylum Governors, Mrs. Devine would now be an inmate of the local workhouse; and will he see that the pension of this man, who lost his mental and bodily health in Her Majesty's Service, is paid in full to his mother?

THE SECRETARY TO THE ADMIRALTY (Mr. W. E. MACARTNEY, Antrim, S.): John Devine was discharged for general paralysis of the insane, constitutional, and not in any way due to his service in the Marines. The amount for which the Governors of the Sligo Asylum have waived their claim is £8 per annum. A deduction of £10 8s. a year from the man's pension is required to be made under the provisions of the Superannuation Act of 1887, on account of the Government contribution in aid of his maintenance. The full amount of the pension could, however, be paid to the mother on a certificate being furnished by the Governors of the Asylum that no claim for the Government grant will be made in this case.

NAVAL COLLEGE, DARTMOUTH.

SIR BARRINGTON SIMEON (Southampton): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Admiralty whether the land which was intended for the site of the Naval College at Dartmouth forms part of an estate in Chancery; whether the legal conditions render the exercise of their compulsory powers of purchase by the Admiralty undesirable; and, whether reconsideration will be given to the desirable sites which exist on the Southampton Water?

THE CIVIL LORD OF THE ADMIRALTY (Mr. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN, Worcestershire, East): The answer to the first paragraph is in the affirmative, and the answer to the second in the negative. My hon. Friend will see, therefore, that there is no occasion for the Admiralty to reconsider their decision on the question of site.

JAMESON RAID
(PRESIDENT KRUGER'S CLAIM).

SIR ELLIS ASHMEAD-BARTLETT (Sheffield, Ecclesall): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies whether President Kruger's claim for the raid is £1,000,000 in all, or £1,677,000?

MR. JAMES ROCHE: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies if he has yet received from the High Commissioner's representative at Cape Town the full details of the claim of the South African Republic in regard to the late raid; and, if so, will he communicate them to the House; and, whether the claim is specifically made against Her Majesty's Government, or against certain corporations and companies holding property in the Transvaal or elsewhere in South Africa?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES (Mr. CHAMBERLAIN, Birmingham, W.): I have no information beyond the telegram which I read to the House on Thursday last, but I shall be happy to lay the claim on the Table when the documents reach me.

MARYBOROUGH GAOL
(JAMES FITZHARRIS).

MR. J. L. CAREW (Dublin, College Green): On behalf of the hon. Member for Dublin, St. Patrick (Mr. W. FIELD), I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that James Fitzharris, a prisoner in Maryborough Gaol, is lying dangerously ill, and that the doctor has stated his condition to be critical; and, whether, seeing that the prisoner has been in penal servitude for 14 years and would be entitled under the prison rules to a revision of his sentence in 12 months more, and as the prisoner is over 70 years of age, will he advise the Lord Lieutenant to order his liberation?

*MR. GERALD BALFOUR: This convict is not dangerously ill, nor is it the fact that the doctor has at any time stated his condition to be critical. The convict's age, according to the prison records, is 57, not 70 years. It does not come within my province to advise the Lord Lieutenant to order the discharge of a convict, but, of course, it is open to the prisoner to memoralise the Lord Lieutenant on the subject in the usual way.

MR. CAREW: On behalf of the hon. Member for Dublin, St. Patrick (Mr. FIELD), I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that Joseph Mullet, a prisoner in Maryborough Gaol, who was convicted in April 1883, has been suffering four years from weakness of lungs and chest; and, whether he will advise the Lord Lieutenant to order his liberation?

*MR. GERALD BALFOUR: It is the fact that convict Mullet has been suffering for several years from weakness of the lungs and chest, but his affection is not of an acute nature, and his health, on the whole, is better now than it was some years before his removal to Maryborough Prison. The observations I have made in reply to the latter part of the preceding Question apply equally to the suggestion at the end of this Question.

MR. WILLIAM JOHNSTON (Belfast, S.): May I ask whether these are not two of the Phœnix Park murderers?

*MR. GERALD BALFOUR: One is, I believe.

MR. PATRICK O'BRIEN: Will the right hon. Gentleman, following the example of the Home Office, allow an independent doctor to see these men and report upon their condition?

*MR. GERALD BALFOUR: If a memorial is sent by the prisoners their cases will be considered.

RAILWAY LEVEL CROSSING (TOTTENHAM).

*MR. J. HOWARD (Middlesex, Tottenham): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade whether he has seen the report of the inquest on Walter Calvert, who was killed on 3rd February last when passing over the level crossing at Park Station, Tottenham, and also the finding of the jury that the footbridge should be altered so that it could be reached from the platforms instead of from outside the station; whether he has received a Petition, numerously signed by residents in the neighbourhood, asking the assistance of the Board of Trade to insure the safety of the public; and what steps he proposes to take in the matter?

MR. RITCHIE: Yes, Sir; I have seen the report of the inquest, and also received the Petition referred to. I propose to communicate with the Company, and ask them whether they can alter the footbridge, so that it can be reached from the platforms; but the Board cannot make any order to that effect. I gather from the report of the inquest that the unfortunate man crossed the line, although there are notices in the station cautioning people not to do so.

BALLYSHANNON UNION (CLERK'S SALARY).

MR. KNOX: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether the Local Government Board have considered a proposed increase of £30 a year in the salary of the clerk to the Ballyshannon Union for keeping the keys of the waterworks; and whether, before sanctioning this increase, they will take into consideration the fact that there was no public notice before the clerk was appointed caretaker of the waterworks, the clerk undertaking the work without payment?

*MR. GERALD BALFOUR: A proposal has been made to allow a gratuity of £30 to the Clerk of the Union for his services in connection with the Waterworks since the year 1892, and this proposal is now receiving the consideration of the Local Government Board. There is no proposal before the Board to increase the Clerk's salary.

SCHOOLS OF SCIENCE AND ART (IRELAND).

MR. KNOX: I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury (1) what was the actual expenditure in Ireland out of the Votes for the Department of Science and Art in 1893-4, 1894-5, and 1895-6, respectively; and (2) what was the actual expenditure in Ireland in the same years out of Sub-head D of that Vote (Schools of Science and Art)?

MR. HANBURY: This Question should properly have been addressed to my right hon. Friend the Vice President of the Council. In his absence, I may say that the answer to the first paragraph is £43,505, £45,837, and £46,109, and the answer to the second paragraph £8,194, £8,408, and £7,390.

EDUCATION FEE GRANT (IRELAND).

MR. KNOX: I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury, with reference to the correspondence at pages 386 to 389 of the Appropriation Accounts, what course the Treasury propose to take to settle the point of law raised by the Commissioners of National Education in Ireland as to the unexpended balance of the fee grant; and whether, to avoid such difficulties in future, the Irish fee grant will be voted for 1897-8, and subsequent years, as a grant in aid, in accordance with Section 18 of the Irish Education Act, 1892?

MR. HANBURY: If the hon. Member will read the Treasury letter which closed the correspondence, he will see that there is no point of law which requires to be settled. There is no need and no intention to change the present system.

MR. KNOX was understood to ask whether the Treasury received money from the National Education Department.

MR. HANBURY was understood to assent.

CABLE (CANADA TO AUSTRALIA).

MR. HOGAN: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies whether he is aware that it is stated, on the alleged authority of a member of the Pacific Cable Commission, that the cable from Canada to Australia would touch only at Fanning Island, Fiji, and Norfolk Island; whether he is in a position to state that this is the route recommended by the Commission; and whether he can approximately indicate the date on which he hopes to be able to lay the Report of the Commission upon the Table of the House?

Mr. J. CHAMBERLAIN: I am unable to give any information as to the recommendations of the Committee, or to state when their Report will be published, for the reason which I gave in reply to a previous Question on the subject on the 28th of last month.

NATIONAL SCHOOLS (IRELAND).

Captain DONELAN: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, whether he is aware that the present National School system in Ireland requires an average attendance of seventy pupils in order to secure the services of an assistant teacher; and whether, in view of the fact that this rule injures the efficiency of many schools, consideration will be given to the desirability of reducing the average number to sixty?

*Mr. GERALD BALFOUR: I fear I cannot at present add anything to the replies which I gave to the Questions put to me on the 2nd and 4th inst. on this subject by the hon. Member for North Cork (Mr. J. C. Flynn).

MURDER ON LONDON AND SOUTH-WESTERN RAILWAY.

Mr. JAMES BAILEY (Newington, Walworth): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether he has yet considered the advisability, or otherwise, of offering a reward for any information that may lead to the arrest of the murderer of Miss Camp?

Sir MATTHEW WHITE RIDLEY: It has been the rule at the Home Office for many years not to offer rewards in these cases, and I have no reason to suppose that there is any ground for departing from this rule on the present occasion.

MILITARY WORKS BILL.

Mr. T. R. BUCHANAN (Aberdeenshire, E.): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for War what amount of the money to be raised under the Military Works Bill is wanted for defraying costs of works already incurred since the 31st March 1896?

Mr. J. F. Hogan.

*The UNDER SECRETARY of STATE for WAR (Mr. Brodrick, Surrey, Guildford): As far as can at present be estimated, about £86,000 will be required for work executed during this financial year.

POST OFFICE (KIRKCALDY).

Mr. J. H. DALZIEL (Kirkcaldy Burghs): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury, as representing the Postmaster General, whether he is aware that the Town Council of Kirkcaldy have unanimously passed a resolution declaring that it is desirable that the site of the proposed new post office should be in High Street; and whether before any definite decision is made in the matter, due attention will be paid to this expression of local opinion?

Mr. HANBURY: The Postmaster General is aware that the Town Council of Kirkcaldy have passed a resolution declaring that it is desirable that the new Post Office for that town should be in the High Street, and he would be glad if their desire could be gratified. Full inquiry, however, has been made, and I regret to say that no suitable site in that street can be obtained at anything like the cost which the amount of the business would justify.

Mr. DALZIEL: I beg to give notice that I shall call attention to that matter on the Estimates.

SUPPLY (NAVY ESTIMATES).

Mr. DALZIEL: I beg to ask the First Lord of the Admiralty what is the cause of the delay in the issue of the Navy Estimates; and can he state when they will be in the hands of Members?

Mr. MACARTNEY: There has been no unusual delay in issuing the Navy Estimates. During the last ten years they have only been issued on two occasions in the month of February—on the 25th and 27th of that month. It is hoped that they will be in the hands of Members on Monday, March 1st.

Mr. DALZIEL: May I ask the hon. Gentleman whether it is not the established custom, if not absolutely the rule of the House, that Navy Estimates should be issued within ten days of the setting up of Supply?

Mr. MACARTNEY: No, Sir.

MR. DALZIEL: It is.

MR. MACARTNEY: Perhaps the hon. Gentleman refers to the circulation of the Navy Estimates.

POST OFFICE SORTERS.

SIR ALBERT ROLLIT (Islington, S.): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury, as representing the Postmaster General, will he explain why some 50 youths, who in February and October of last year passed for sorterships in the Chief Post Office, have not yet received appointments; when such appointments are likely to be made; and whether they will bear date from the time of the entries of the candidates into the service?

MR. HANBURY: The 50 youths referred to have been employed temporarily since last autumn to meet the pressure of work in the General Post Office. Proposals will be submitted to the Treasury in a few days for making a permanent addition to the force employed in the General Post Office, and if those proposals are approved by the Treasury, the 50 persons referred to will, subject to the usual conditions, receive appointments dating from the time of their first employment on full duties.

BARRACKS ACT, 1890.

MR. BUCHANAN: I beg to ask the Financial Secretary to the War Office how much has been expended during the current financial year under the Barracks Act 1890, and what balance, if any, remains of the money authorised under that Act?

*THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY TO THE WAR OFFICE (Mr. POWELL-WILLIAMS, Birmingham, S.): The approximate expenditure to date in the current year under the Barracks Act 1890, is £345,000, and the unexpended balance on the loan £798,000, but the whole of this balance has been allocated to definite services which have either been actually commenced or for which contracts have been authorised.

VOLUNTARY SCHOOL RATES (PUBLIC COMPANIES).

SIR JAMES FERGUSSON (Manchester, N.E.): I beg to ask the Attorney General whether Her Majesty's Government will bring in a Bill authorising the directors of public companies liable to be assessed for rates in any parish or district to pay Voluntary School rates levied therein, if it shall appear that the levy of a compulsory rate will be obviated thereby?

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir RICHARD WEBSTER, Isle of Wight): In reply to the Question of my right hon. Friend, upon the information at present at my disposal, I do not think there is any necessity to bring in a Bill. Unless an express prohibition is contained in the Act of Parliament or other document constituting the company, the question of contribution to a voluntary rate is purely a matter for the discretion of the directors acting in the interests of the company, and if, as stated in the Question, it appeared that the levying of a compulsory rate which might create a heavier burden would be avoided by contribution to a voluntary rate, I see no reason why the directors should not, in the *bonâ fide* exercise of their discretion, contribute to a voluntary rate.

AGRICULTURAL RATES ACT, 1896.

MR. PICKERSGILL: I beg to ask the Attorney General whether, inasmuch as the copy of an amending Order making regulations under the Agricultural Rates Act 1896, which was laid upon the Table on the 5th instant, was not issued until the 18th instant, that is, three days after the time limited by section 6, sub-section 3, for objecting to the Order, there has been a substantial compliance with the provisions of the statute; and whether the Order is now binding in law?

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL: I am of opinion that the statute has been complied with, and the Order referred to by the hon. and learned Member is now in force and binding. The condition of the statute is, that the Order shall be laid before both Houses of Parliament. This was done on February 5th, and the Votes and proceedings of both Houses record the fact. If, as I gather from the Question, there was some delay in the printing and distribution to the Members of the House, this does not invalidate the Order.

MR. PICKERSGILL said it appeared that, in the opinion of the learned Attorney General, there was no legal remedy. It was obvious, therefore, that it was necessary—[*Ministerial cries of* "Order!"]

*Mr. SPEAKER: Is the hon. and learned Member rising to a point of Order?

Mr. PICKERSGILL said that, to secure the rights of Members of the House, he wished to know, when Papers were presented pursuant to statute and ordered to be printed, who was responsible for seeing that the Papers were printed and circulated without delay?

*Mr. SPEAKER replied that the hon. and learned Member had the same means as himself of finding out what Department was responsible. It was a little difficult to say.

Mr. PICKERSGILL said the Local Government Board had repudiated responsibility.

*Sir C. DILKE said that as this had happened two years in succession would the Parliamentary Secretary to the Local Government Board undertake that in future if the important Order referred to in the Question was interfered with by verbal or other amending Orders, he would call the attention of the House to the matter?

Mr. T. W. RUSSELL replied that he would consult the President of the Local Government Board on the point, but the Board had complied with the statute and were in no way responsible.

Sir W. HARCOURT (Monmouthshire, W.): I think everyone has suffered very much through the delay in printing Papers after they are laid on the Table of the House. Papers are laid on the Table and ordered to be printed, and then days, sometimes weeks, expire before they are in the hands of Members. May I ask whether in this House there is any authority to cause Papers which have been laid on the Table to be printed and circulated without delay?

*Mr. SPEAKER: Certainly papers which have been laid on the Table and ordered to be printed ought to be printed and circulated at the earliest possible moment. I will inquire into the matter, and if I find I have any authority I shall be ready to exercise it. ["Hear, hear!"]

Mr. GIBSON BOWLES (Lynn Regis) asked whether there was not an Order of the House binding not only on the department concerned but on the officers of the House, to insure the speedy delivery of Papers that had been printed among Members of the House?

*Mr. SPEAKER: If any such Order of the kind is brought to my notice, I will consider its application.

FINANCIAL RELATIONS (GREAT BRITAIN AND IRELAND).

Mr. JOHN REDMOND (Waterford): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether he is now in a position to fix the date for the Debate on the Financial Relations between Great Britain and Ireland; and, whether he can say how many days the Government are prepared to give for the Debate?

Mr. DILLON: I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether he is now in a position to fix a date for the Debate on the Report of the Commission on the Financial Relations between Great Britain and Ireland?

The FIRST LORD of the TREASURY (Mr. A. J. Balfour, Manchester, E.): In answer to the hon. Gentleman, and also to the hon. Member for East Mayo, I have to say that, as the House is aware, the discussion on this important question of the financial relations between Great Britain and Ireland was deferred in deference to the general wish of hon. Members from Ireland. We shall begin the discussion, in Committee, of the Education Bill on Thursday next. I think it would be inconvenient that the Committee stage of the Bill should be interrupted by other business. As soon, however, as that stage is concluded, I shall be prepared to find time for the discussion of the financial relations.

Mr. J. REDMOND: Is the right hon. Gentleman not able to say anything more definite in regard to the first portion of the Question? I may point out in regard to the second portion of my Question that the right hon. Gentleman has given no answer at all.

The FIRST LORD of the TREASURY: As regards the first part of the Question, the hon. Gentleman will see that it is impossible for me to forecast, I will not say with certainty, but with anything like confidence, the precise length of time which will be occupied in Committee on the Education Bill. I hope it will not be long, but that does not depend on the Government or on the supporters of the Government. As to the second paragraph of the Question, there is no desire on the part of the Government to unduly stint the discussion on the financial relations. We are prepared to give ample time, and I hope that pledge will not be abused by those hon. Gentlemen who desire to take part in the Debate.

MR. DILLON asked if the discussion would be taken the first week in March, when the Irish Land Bill would be introduced—the Wednesday to be free for the Irish Land Bill?

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY: It will be taken the second week in March, and I hope the Committee stage of the Education Bill will be finished by then.

MR. DILLON asked whether he correctly understood that, if the Committee stage of the Education Bill was not finished before March 10, the right hon. Gentleman proposed to take the Wednesday for the Irish Land Bill?

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY: I shall have no choice in the matter.

MR. ARTHUR O'CONNOR asked whether the Government intended to proceed with the Committee Stage of the Education Bill *de die in diem* until it was finished?

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY: Yes, Sir, with the exception of Friday.

MR. J. MORLEY (Montrose Burghs): May I ask whether the right hon. Gentleman would place on the Table as a Return the terms of the reference to the Commission on the financial relations? It would be convenient to have it before us in print.

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY: I do not know whether it is usual to lay on the Table as a Return the terms of the reference to a Royal Commission, but I will see what I can do to comply with the wish of the right hon. Gentleman.

MR. J. REDMOND asked whether, in view of the strong opinion entertained against the appointment of the Commission on this subject, the right hon. Gentleman would not suspend any step in the direction of its appointment until after the Debate?

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY: I think I gave a pledge in that direction before, but if I am wrong I am quite willing to state again that the Commission will not be appointed until after the Debate on the financial relations.

SUPPLY (SUPPLEMENTARY CIVIL SERVICE ESTIMATES).

MR. CHANNING: I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury when the Supplementary Civil Service Estimates will be presented and issued to Members; whether they can be issued early in the week; and whether he will arrange to take them, as was done last year, before the Civil Service Estimates for the ensuing year 1897-8?

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY: The Estimates will be printed, or at all events all the Supplementary Estimates that will be taken next Friday will be printed on Wednesday. As the hon. Gentleman is aware, it does not depend on me but upon the Department that prepares the Supplementary Estimates as to what date they are laid before the House, but I trust that will be convenient.

MR. CHANNING; Which of the Supplementary Estimates will be taken on Friday? Will Class 4 be taken?

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY: I believe that the only Supplementary Estimate—so my right hon. Friend the Secretary to the Treasury informs me—in regard to which there is any doubt about its being printed is one which has come in very late from the Irish Land Committee.

DISTRESS (BELMULLET UNION).

MR. D. CRILLY (Mayo, N.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland if he has seen in the Irish daily papers of Friday last, the report of the meeting held in Belmullet on the previous day, under the Chairmanship of the Right Rev. Monsignor Hewson, V.F., P.P., when that right rev. gentleman speaking with the authority of his high position affirmed that distress bordering on famine existed in the Belmullet Union; if he had noted that amongst other assertions made on the occasion by Monsignor Hewson, the following are in record in the report of his speech: (1) That the distress now existing threatened to be the most serious that the people had been in since 1860, and that it would probably not be exceeded by that of the winter of 1879, and the spring of 1880; (2) that the official sent down recently from the Local Government Board to inquire into the distress in the Belmullet Union never visited a single homestead or a single farm in the parish of Belmullet; (3) that from the end of November up to the present time the consumption of meal in the districts supplied by the traders of Belmullet had increased eighteen fold beyond the normal consumption in other years, proving as Monsignor Hewson held, that the potato crop had failed; (4) that the rates taken all round in the Belmullet Union amounted to nearly 10s. in the pound between poor rates and baroney cess; and whether in view of such assertions made by an ecclesiastic of Monsignor Hewson's position and authority, the Government will not now take immediate and exceptional measures to meet this distress in the Belmullet Union?

*Mr. GERALD BALFOUR: The hon. Member who puts this Question was good enough to hand in at the Irish Office today a private notice of it; but time, of course, has not admitted of my obtaining a detailed report. I may, however, say that I have before me official reports made from sources other than the Local Government Board, which confirm the reports already made by that Board. From these reports it appears that there is no reason to anticipate general distress of a nature requiring the exceptional expedient of relief works, and it is expected that any cases of distress which may arise can be dealt with under the Poor Law system.

CRETE.

Sir ELLIS ASHMEAD-BARTLETT: I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether Her Majesty's Government will propose a Commission to inquire into the massacres recently perpetrated in Crete, and especially as to the fate of the Mussulman inhabitants of the interior of the island?

Mr. CURZON: Her Majesty's Government do not think that there would be any advantage in making such a proposal.

Mr. F. S. STEVENSON (Suffolk, Eye): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether he is aware that Colonel Vassos, who is in command of the Greek troops in Crete, states among other things, in the course of his proclamation, that he has orders to keep the peace between Christian and Moslem inhabitants; and, whether, in view of the fact that the Powers are unable to keep up communication with or to keep order in the interior of the island, and that the Greek forces are in a position to do so, the Powers will consider the desirability of delegating to them that duty?

Mr. CURZON: The proclamation issued by Colonel Vassos promised among other things, peace to the inhabitants of Crete. So far, however, the presence of the Greek troops would seem to have had an opposite effect. Under these circumstances Her Majesty's Government consider it unlikely that the Powers would consider the desirability of delegating to the Greek forces any such duty as is spoken of in the Question.

Mr. STEVENSON: Does the right hon. Gentleman accept the statement in the second part of the Question that the Powers are unable to keep up communication with or keep order in the interior of the island?

Mr. CURZON: I think I have answered that Question every day during the last week. [" Hear, hear! "]

Sir JOHN COLOMB: I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs to what branch of the British Service does Major Bor belong; by whom was he appointed to organise the gendarmerie at Canea; and under whose directions does he act?

Mr. CURZON: Major Bor belongs to the Royal Marine Artillery. His appointment as Commander of the Cretan Gendarmerie was proposed with the approval of all parties in the Island, by the International Commissioners, but did not meet with the unanimous assent of the Powers. Pending the appointment of another officer, who should not be chosen from the subjects of any of the Great Powers, Major Bor was asked to undertake the duties of the post provisionally. He accepted and arrived on the 6th instant at Canea, where he acts under the direction of the Turkish authorities.

Sir E. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT: Can the right hon. Gentleman tell us what Power opposed Major Bor's appointment.

Mr. CURZON: I do not think there is any secret about it; in fact, I have stated it to the House. Major Bor's appointment was opposed by Russia.

MR. DILLON: I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether he is in a position to confirm or deny the statement that several Christians were roasted alive in a baker's oven during the recent disturbances in Canea?

MR. CURZON: Her Majesty's Consul reports, by telegraph, that on first hearing of the story that Christians had been roasted alive at Canea, he went with Mr. Alvarez, the British Delegate on the Judicial Commission, to the bakery where this outrage was alleged to have taken place. They carefully examined the ruins, but could find no trace of dead bodies inside or outside the oven. Four bakers' apprentices, who were said to have perished in another bakery, were subsequently found alive.

MR. JAMES BRYCE (Aberdeen, S.): I desire to ask the Under Secretary for Foreign Affairs a question of which I have given him private notice. It is whether there is any truth in the statements in to-day's papers that the Cretan forces have been fired upon by the united fleets of the Powers, and whether a Turkish transport carrying troops has been escorted by a British torpedo boat from one part of the island to another?

MR. CURZON: Since I came into the House I have received private notice of quite a number of questions from hon. Members, nearly all of which relate to the same topic. Perhaps other hon. Members will allow me to reply to them at the same time. Our information is not to the effect that there has been any attack upon, or bombardment of, the Greek forces in Crete. The insurgents outside Canea, in spite of the injunctions of the Admirals who, under orders from their Governments, had made themselves responsible for the protection of Canea, renewed their attack upon the town from the south-east yesterday. Under these circumstances the international squadron had no choice but to prevent by force the advance from being continued—[*Opposition cries of* "Oh!" *and Ministerial cheers*]—which they accordingly did. [*Opposition groans, several cries of* "Shame," *and renewed Ministerial cheers.*] The firing lasted but a few minutes. As regards the Turkish transport, about which the right hon. Gentleman asked me, we have no information.

MR. HENRY LABOUCHERE (Northampton): I beg to ask leave to move the adjournment of the House.

*MR. SPEAKER: There is an hon. Member waiting to take his seat.

NEW MEMBER SWORN.

Henry Currie Leigh-Bennett, Esquire, for the County of Surrey (North Western of Chertsey Division).

NEW WRIT.

For the Borough of Halifax, *v.* William Rawson Shaw, Esquire, Manor of Northstead.

CRETE (ACTION OF BRITISH SHIPS).

MOTION FOR ADJOURNMENT.

MR. HENRY LABOUCHERE (Northampton), who was received with Opposition cheers, said: I beg to ask leave to move the Adjournment of the House on a matter of urgent public importance—namely, the firing on Greek forces in Crete by Her Majesty's ships. [*Cheers.*]

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR, Manchester, E.): There has been no firing on Greek forces. [*Cheers and Opposition cries of* "On Cretan forces!"]

MR. SPEAKER having read the Motion,

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY said: On a point of Order, Sir, may I ask whether, as the Under Secretary for Foreign Affairs has stated there has been no firing on Greek forces—[*Opposition cries of* "Cretan forces!" *and an* HON. MEMBER: "The House will decide that!"]—this Motion is in Order?

MR. LABOUCHERE: On a point of Order also, Mr. Speaker, I contend that the forces on whom the international ships fired were Greek forces. [*Cheers.*] The Cretans are Greeks, from my point of view; but I will change the word if you like.

*MR. SPEAKER: The Motion can be changed, no doubt, by using the words, "Cretan insurgents," or whatever the fact is—I do not know myself—but I do not think it is necessary to make the change as Cretans are, in one sense, Greek. [*Cheers.*] Is the hon. Gentleman supported by 40 Members?

The whole of the Members on the Opposition side of the House, including the occupants of the Front Bench, having risen in their places amid loud cheers,

Mr. LABOUCHERE, who was again greeted with cheers, moved "That this House do now adjourn." The hon. Member said that a few days ago the adjournment of the House was moved in order to call attention to what was going on in Crete, in regard to which many of them entertained the most profound distrust. [*Cheers.*] On that occasion they were told that no reply would be given to them. The Leader of the House told them that they must take very great care even when they merely asked for information from the Government, as the slightest mistake might lead to a great war in Europe. [*Ministerial cheers.*] He did not believe in this bugbear of a great European war. [*Cheers.*] They had information in the public newspapers that morning, which had been confirmed by the Under Secretary for Foreign Affairs, that the international fleet, with British ships in the front—[*cheers*]—had fired upon Greek forces—as he contended they were—but in any case they were Cretans fighting for their independence. [*Cheers.*] What was the explanation given to the House? Her Majesty's Government declared that the international forces had taken possession of three towns in Crete, and they protested that they only fired when they found that the Cretans would not recognise this occupation and tried to take those towns. But he would point out that the whole of Crete, with the exception of those three towns, was in the hands of the Cretans. [*Cheers.*] In those towns there were Turkish garrisons, and those garrisons, according to the newspapers, had frequently issued from the towns, waged war upon the insurgents, and had then fallen back on the towns. Was it surprising that the Cretans should wish to put an end to all this? [*Cheers.*] Upon what possible ground had the Government interfered by landing soldiers and marines to hold those towns, except for the benefit of Turkey? [*Cheers.*] Those towns would have been taken by the insurgents had not the Great Powers interfered, and now, not content with holding those towns, the English fleet had, to the horror of the English people, fired upon the insurgents and driven them back. It was time for the Liberal Party to speak out on this matter. [*Loud cheers.*] They were told that they were not to make this question of foreign affairs a Party question. [*Ministerial cheers.*] They made it a national question. [*Cheers.*] They believed that the people of England were determined that we ought not to interfere in any sort of way diplomatically, and still less by force of arms, in favour of the Turks in any part of the Turkish Empire, and yet that was what we were doing at the present moment. [*Cheers.*] He moved the adjournment of the House in order to give the Government the opportunity of explaining what was going on in Crete. But, so far as he was concerned, it was enough for him that the atrocious wickedness had been committed; and he would carry his Motion to a Division in order that, although they might be in a minority in the House, the country should clearly understand they should do their utmost to prevent any further action being taken on behalf of that miserable creature, that foul blot upon civilisation, the Sultan of Turkey. [*Loud cheers.*]

*Mr. SPEAKER: Order, order! I must remind the hon. Gentleman that he is speaking of a friendly Sovereign; and it is one of the rules of the House to speak of a friendly Sovereign with the same decency of language as would be employed in speaking of a Member of this House or of the other House. [*Ministerial cheers.*]

Mr. LABOUCHERE: I beg pardon, Mr. Speaker. I am aware of that rule, but I was carried away by the thought of the statements which have been made by Mr. Gladstone and other eminent Liberals in regard to the Sultan. [*Laughter and cheers, and Ministerial cries of "Oh!"*] I beg to move my Motion.

Mr. JOHN DILLON (Mayo, E.), in seconding the Motion, said that when the question of Crete was raised a few days ago, on a Motion for the Adjournment of of the House, appeals were made by the Government to the House not to disturb the Concert of Europe, and to observe that reticence which foreign affairs deserved. In his humble judgment the

House had been too silent on this question—[*cheers*]—and as a consequence they had this outrage—for it was regarded as an outrage by the great majority of the people of the kingdom—of the guns of her Majesty's fleet having been turned on men who, after centuries of oppression, were risking their lives in defence of everything a civilised people held dear, and were gallantly driving their oppressors, the Turks, before them. [*Cheers.*] For months they had been gulled by declarations as to the necessity of maintaining the Concert of Europe. But what had the Concert of Europe done—what had the mighty engines of the Great Powers which lay around the coast of Crete done to protect one man, woman, or child in Crete until their hands had been forced by the gallant Greek nation? [*Cheers.*] And were it not for the action of the Greeks, the fleets of the European Powers might still be hanging round the coast of Crete consulting and negotiating until the whole population of the island was murdered. [*Cheers.*] What was the situation in Crete? The House was told that the Powers of Europe had undertaken at the eleventh hour to maintain peace and order, and to protect the inhabitants of Crete; and in the same breath they were told that it was impossible for the Powers to communicate with the interior of the island. The fact was that the Powers of Europe would not solve this question or allow the Greeks to solve it. [*Cheers.*] He charged against the Government—no matter what evasive answers might be given in the House—that at the present moment the forces of England were ranged on the side of the Turks. [*Cheers.*] He was not surprised that the Speaker had intervened to protect the Sultan as a friendly Sovereign. Until to-day, when they read the disgraceful news in the papers, the people and the House of Commons were under the impression that the Government did not desire the Sultan to be considered as a friend of this country. [*Cheers.*] He was not only a friend, he was an ally. [*Cheers.*] The House was told that Turkish authority prevailed in Canea under the protection of the marines of the six Powers. Therefore at present the British forces were the allies of the Turks and the enemies of Greece and the Cretan people. The answer of the Under Secretary had been carefully worded to minimise the details of this bombardment; but would the Government contradict the details given by the *Daily News* correspondent at Canea?—

> "At 4.30 this afternoon signals were made to the *Dryad*, *Harrier*, and *Revenge*, and also to one Italian, one German, and one Russian ship to open fire on the Cretan position."

Who was the dictator or commander-in-chief to set Her Majesty's ships in motion in this way? [*Cheers.*]

> "This was done. The British ships fired some 40 shells, making with the others about 70 in all, at the village and round house which were held by the Cretans. The flag was soon hauled down. Cease fire was sounded after ten minutes. Thereupon the flag was again hoisted. The rocks round the position were crowded with Cretans. The Turks, encouraged by the fleet, now opened a lively fusilade, while the Cretans were carrying off their wounded."

The British would fire on the Cretan insurgents, but they would not silence the Turkish batteries. [*Cheers.*] This account ought to be contradicted by some member of the Government, or an apology ought to be made to the House. The Government had made a mockery of the House by the replies which had been given to questions. [*Cheers.*] It had long been asserted that everything was being done for peace and order in Crete, and the other day the Under Secretary stated that the late Vali had been appointed in accordance with the arrangement with the Powers, that no attempt had been made to interfere with his authority, and that Turkey had loyally carried out the agreement with the Powers. Now the Vali himself stated that from the moment he landed in Crete he never had any authority, and that messengers were sent from Constantinople warning the Turkish troops to take no orders from him and give him no support. It was an uncontested fact that the whole arrangement was a fraud and an imposture from the beginning. [*Cheers.*] The reply given to him to-day was most unsatisfactory. He asked whether it was true that during the burning of Canea some three weeks ago five Christians had been put into an oven and baked alive?

*MR. SPEAKER: I must remind the hon. Member that last week there was a discussion on the general policy of the Government in the matter of Crete, and it is a rule of the House that the same question cannot be twice debated in the same Session on a Motion for adjournment. The present Motion refers to the firing on Greek forces by British war vessels at Canea, and to that point the hon. Member must confine himself.

Mr. DILLON said his argument was that the Powers had shown themselves ineffective in protecting the life and property in Crete, that the Greeks were the right people to undertake the task, and that the Powers had no right to prevent the Greeks from restoring order. He should like to know whether that would be in order?

*Mr. SPEAKER: I cannot give a general direction to the hon. Member beforehand; but the question whether five people were baked in an oven is not relevant to the matter before the House. I must call the hon. Gentleman's attention to the words of the Motion, which relate to the firing on the Greek forces by Her Majesty's ships, and I trust he will confine himself to what bears upon that question.

Mr. DILLON said that he had received information which made him gravely doubt the answer given by the Under Secretary, and he hoped further inquiries would be made. He wished to know what was the international position as between the British forces and the Greek forces in Crete? Was England at war with Greece? [*Cheers.*] If not, what right had England to turn her ships' guns on the Greek forces? [*Cheers.*] Either England was at war with Greece or was acting as the policeman of the Sultan. Was she lending her forces to do the dirty—the infernal—work of the Sultan? [*Cheers.*] High and mighty politicians had delivered lectures on international obligations; and Greece had been taken to task by *The Times* and other authorities for breaches of those obligations. What, then, was the international position of England? [*Cheers.*] There were times and occasions where the motive and the cause justified breaches of the law, whether national or international. If Greece had acted wrongly, from the narrow standpoint of international law, she had done it under great provocation and in a good cause. [*Cheers.*] He had lately seen a letter from a lady in Athens wondering at the action of the British Government, and saying that if we had seen in the streets of our towns women and children refugees with noses and ears cut off, our blood would boil. [*Cheers.*] Greece had violated international law, if at all, in the cause of human freedom, and the generous sentiment of all mankind approved her. [*Cheers*]. England had equally violated international law; but it was done to maintain tyranny and to outrage the sentiment of the whole civilised world. [*Cheers.*]

The FIRST LORD of the TREASURY: The House will learn without surprise that I do not mean to imitate the violence of language—[*cheers, cries of* "Oh!" *and* "What about the guns?"]—which has characterised the Mover and Seconder of the Motion we are now discussing. I speak with too great a sense of the responsibility which devolves upon the Government and of the difficulties and dangers impending over Europe as a whole to allow, as far as I am concerned and as far as I can help it, this Debate to degenerate into a controversy between the two sides of the House. ["Hear, hear!"] The hon. Member who opened the Debate, followed in this as in other matters by the Seconder, poured great contempt upon the very suggestion that the present condition of Europe was one which might well involve anxious considerations for all who care for the cause of peace—that if, either through error or misfortune, a spark really falls into the combustible material too widely spread, we may be on the verge of some great European catastrophe. [*Cheers.*] Those who deride such fears as illusory are surely blind themselves to facts of contemporaneous history. There have been in the history of Europe many periods when Europe was anxiously watching the ambitions of one great Power or another, not knowing whether such Power was not going for its own selfish purposes to precipitate warlike operations. Sir, there is absolute unanimity, there is an absolutely unanimous desire among every one of the Great Powers to avoid anything in the nature of war. [*Cheers.*] No ambition, no personal ambition, interferes or is likely to interfere with that desire. And yet when we find that the masters of these colossal armies are themselves moved with the deepest anxiety lest war should be declared, lest those embattled hosts should really be thrust one upon the other with results which nobody can contemplate without horror, surely it is not even for great international authorities like the hon. Gentleman who has just sat down—[*Cheers and laughter, and counter cheers and cries of* "No!"]

MR. DILLON: I did not pose as such. [*Cheers.*]

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY: Or the hon. Member for Northampton, who preceded him, to say that such fears are illusory, the creations of a disturbed brain. [*Cheers.*]

MR. DILLON: I said nothing about international authorities. I said what nine-tenths of the people of this country feel. [*Cheers.*]

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY: I hope that if the hon. Gentleman does me the honour to interrupt me again his interruption will be more relevant. I say that these fears to which I have given expression in this House, and which are entertained by every responsible Statesman in the North, in the South, in the East, in the West of Europe, are surely not to be brushed aside because the hon. Member for Northampton and the hon. Member for Mayo tell us they are illusory. [*Cheers.*] We are not concerned merely with the peace of Europe, although that is a consideration the gravity of which I should have thought could not have been exaggerated; we are also concerned, and I for one admit it, with the peace of Crete and with the future government of that island. The hon. Gentleman appears to hold the view that the action of the Greeks has been entirely in the direction—I am speaking now of the present condition of the island—of saving life and property, and that the action of the Powers has been wholly impotent to secure either of those great ends. Sir, there has been a sacrifice, a deplorable sacrifice, both of life and property in Crete, and I think if the hon. Gentleman will carefully and impartially consider who is most responsible for that loss and who has done most to obviate it, he will certainly not say that the international forces have been idle or ineffective, or that the actions of the Greek forces have been marked by success in these directions. [*Cheers.*] Let us always remember in dealing with this question of Crete that the population of Crete, although it may be a homogeneous population in point of race—I think it is so in race—is not homogeneous in point of religion, and that we have not merely to deal with a large number of those who are Christian by religion, but we have also to deal with a large minority who are Mahomedan by religion. Those who desire good government and security for life and property are bound to regard not less the security of Mahomedan life and property than that of Christian life and policy. Both are and both ought to be sacred to this House, and we ought to do all that we can, not only for one party alone, but for both. [*Cheers.*] Let me ask in the second place whether we are seriously to understand that this House is of opinion that when a town has been occupied by forces representative of the Great Powers, when the Great Powers have made themselves responsible for the peace and good order of such town, and when the town and the people are menaced by the operations of insurgents outside the walls, the Great Powers are to fold their arms and withdraw their ships. [*Cheers.*] Is that a policy which is seriously pressed upon the Government from any quarter of the House? Whatever our view may be of the proper future for Crete and of the action of the Greek Government, at all events these elementary propositions will be agreed to by both sides of the House—namely, that when the Great Powers have occupied and made themselves responsible for peace and security they ought not to tolerate from any outside force interference with the prerogative which they have taken on themselves. [*Cheers.*] I may say, in passing, that we have no information in any sense confirming the narrative the hon. Gentleman has given us of those transactions. I know nothing of the source from whence he derives his information.

MR. DILLON: From the Special Correspondent of the *Daily News.* [*Cheers, and ironical cheers and laughter.*]

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY: I have nothing to say against that gentleman, whose name I know nothing about. But I may say to the House that there is no information in the possession of Her Majesty's Government, and, therefore, there can be no information given to the House, which in any sense confirms what has fallen from the hon. Gentleman.

MR. DILLON: Will the right hon. Gentleman say whether the Government have received any information on the subject?

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY: No, we have no details. Having now briefly dealt with these two points of the European situation in the first place, imperilled, as we think, by these transactions, and of the condition of Crete and the action of the Great Powers resisting aggression upon towns under their immediate protection, I come now to what is, I believe, after all, at the bottom of the strong sentiments which I doubt not most genuinely animate hon. Gentlemen opposite—namely, the future condition of the island. Upon this subject the House will not think that I desire to keep anything from them when I say that we feel ourselves absolutely bound by the present conditions of international communications to speak with the utmost reserve upon this point. As I understand the matter, hon. Members opposite argue in this way. They say:—

> "Here are the Great Powers engaged in exacting from Turkey and trying to introduce into the island reforms which may look very well upon paper, but which, after all, are not so very much better than other reforms which have been extorted by the same influence from the same Power, and which may suffer the same fate as those previous reforms have done."

I think hon. Members opposite will admit that I have put their argument which is at the bottom of their feeling on this question fairly and in a manner which they will not desire to alter or, I hope, to add to. I can only say upon this point that Her Majesty's Government entirely feel the force of that argument. They recognise perfectly well—perfectly clearly, as clearly as any hon. Gentleman opposite can do—that to leave Crete in a condition, bless it with what paper reforms you like, in which it would rest with the Turkish Government to upset by its own will the good work which Europe has endeavoured to accomplish—to do that would fall far short of the international duties we have taken upon ourselves. [*Cheers.*] I do not think that I ought to say more upon the subject. The House will, I hope, appreciate the difficulties under which I speak. [*Cheers.*] And I hope that, although I am necessarily most reticent in the observations I have to make in regard to the future, the House will allow that the frank and clear statement of the difficulties which hon. Gentlemen opposite see in the future, and which we recognise as clearly as they do, may satisfy them that everything will be done which we can do to obviate dangers of which we ourselves are fully conscious. [*Cheers.*] With that declaration, which I trust may not be unsatisfactory, I hope that the House may consent to bring to an end as soon as may be a Debate which I can most conscientiously say will, in my judgment, serve neither the interests of Europe, nor the interests of Crete, nor—perhaps of no less importance—the interests of this country. [*Cheers.*] The task in which we are engaged is an anxious and difficult one. I hope the House will not make it more difficult by Debates animated, I believe, by honest, fervid feeling, by the expression of sentiments which I fully recognise not only exist strongly in this House, but are largely felt by gentleman of all opinions and all classes out of doors. [*Cheers.*] I believe that if they do not wholly trust our capacity they will at all events give us credit for good intentions —[*cheers and cries of* "No!"]—and for an earnest desire to do the best we can for the population of the island with a full consciousness of all the difficulties that have prevented reforms in the past, and an earnest desire to see that those difficulties shall not interfere with reforms in the future. [*Cheers.*]

*SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT (Monmouthshire, W.), who rose amid cheers, said: I am quite sure that no man in this House will speak on this subject without a sense of responsibility; but this I do feel, that the time has come when the voice of England ought to be heard upon this question. [*Cheers.*] Upon a question involving the liberties of the Greek people the voice of England has always been the first and the leading voice. I think that it is just 70 years since the death of Canning. In those days the voice of England was heard in Europe, and with great effect, in the cause of Greece. The right hon. Gentleman has invited our silence and he has spoken of the combustible condition of things in the Greek waters. Yes, Sir, but it is because of the combustible condition of things there that we protest to-day against shells from English men-of-war—[*cheers*]—being exploded in the midst of that combustible material. The right hon. Gentleman has spoken sarcastically of the appeal of my hon. Friend the Member for

Mayo to the principles of international law. I am afraid I must also submit myself to his lash; I must ask, What is the international position which England claims to occupy to-day in Crete? ["Hear, hear!"] What is the position of things in Crete? Crete is a country nominally subject to Turkey. It is a part of the Turkish dominions. An insurrection has arisen in Turkish dominions. Why are you there? [*Cheers.*] What are you doing there? What is your object? Why, Sir, apparently your object is to assert and to maintain the dominion of Turkey against the insurgents. [*Cheers.*] What were those bombs fired from the British Fleet for? I suppose to put down the insurrection in Crete as against the Turks. The right hon. Gentleman has said that you have occupied these towns. Yes, but what have you occupied them for? [*Cheers.*] Why are you in those towns at all? For what purpose did you go to them? Well, the Greek forces have joined the insurrectionary forces in Crete. That, of course, is on their own responsibility. One country may join one side in an insurrection. The Greeks have joined the insurrectionary Cretans, and you have joined the Turks. [*Loud cheers.*]

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY: That is not correct. [*Cheers.*]

*SIR W. HARCOURT: But what is correct? [*Cheers.*] We know whom the Greeks have joined. Whom have you joined? [*Cheers, and an* HON. MEMBER: "Neither."] I want to get to the bottom of the situation internationally. What are you doing there, and what is the object at which you are aiming? [*Cheers.*] Now, there is another statement to which no answer has been made. A question has not been put, but I find this stated in the correspondence to-day, and I should like to know if it is true:—

> "The foreign admirals went to-day to Agioi Theodoroi, where Colonel Vassos' camp is situated. On their return they invited the commander of the Greek warship *Navarchos Miaulis* to call upon them, and informed him of their decision to attack the Greek troops with the four men-of-war anchored off Agioi Theodoroi if Colonel Vassos should advance into the interior."

This is in *The Times* correspondence of to-day, and we ought to have a statement as to whether or not it is true. It proceeds:—

> "The commander of the *Navarchos Miaulis* and the British Admiral then proceeded to the Greek headquarters and acquainted Colonel Vassos with the decision of the foreign commanders."

Is that true? Did the British Admiral make that communication to Colonel Vassos? And then, I ask, if that is so, What is your international situation? By what right and on what title and from what point of view are you taking sides in this insurrection? [*Cheers.*] That is an international question on which I am afraid the right hon. Gentleman would condemn me if I offered an opinion. But what we have a right to do is to ask Her Majesty's Government their opinion on this subject. [*Cheers.*] We are told that the Great Powers have taken this matter up. Well, Sir, but the Great Powers have been taking these matters up for a long time. [*Cheers.*] We have had the Concert of Europe in Armenia. What was told us with reference to the Concert of Europe in Armenia? That nothing could be done, and now we are waiting upon the Concert of Europe to determine upon the future of Crete, and meanwhile we are bombarding the insurgents. [*Cheers and laughter.*] That is not a condition of things which, in my opinion, ought to be allowed to continue. ["Hear, hear!"] If the Concert of Europe cannot come to a conclusion on the subject of the treatment of Crete, we ought not to take the part which unfortunately we seem to have been taking in these affairs for the last two days. ["Hear, hear!"] We have received a statement, and I am satisfied with that statement—it is understood that Lord Salisbury has sent a circular to the Powers to say that they should not interfere with Greece—and I should have thought interfered with Crete at all—until the Powers had come to a conclusion as to what was to be done in the future with Crete. If that is so, why are you bombarding in the meantime? [*Cheers.*] Why do the Powers not come to a conclusion in the matter. ["Hear, hear!"] I should like to know whether the Government adhere to that position —the sound position which is stated to have been taken up by Lord Salisbury in this matter. Why not adhere to that position—that they will take no part with reference to Greece, and that they will take no part in the Cretan insurrection, until a conclusion has been arrived at by the Powers as to the future treatment of Crete? ["Hear, hear!"] We are told that if we meddle in these matters there will be universal war. That argument has been used—I was going to say it has been abused—[*cheers*]—for some time. Whenever anything occurs, whether in Armenia, in Crete, or anywhere else, you say at once, "Do not say a word, or there will be universal war." But we are not going to make war. We want nothing. Why should war take place? ["Hear, hear!"] I do not understand what this universal war is to be. We are not going to fight anybody. Who is going to fight, and against whom? We ought to have some explanation of that. [*Cheers.*] Why, then, are we to be told, with reference to this Concert of Europe, which does nothing, that we are to hold our peace, and take part in nothing, because universal war will occur, and no explanation is given why a war should occur, or of what nature it will be? We ought to understand whether we are acting in this matter according to the old formula of that superannuated diplomacy which goes by the name of the integrity and independence of the Ottoman Empire? [*Cheers.*] Then we shall understand our position. It is one against which I shall protest. I rather gather from the right hon. Gentleman the hope that what the Government are proceeding to do is to detach Crete from Turkish rule. That is the only policy which, in my opinion, is worthy of an English Government—[*cheers*]—and I hope that the Government are pursuing that policy. If, as I had believed from the account given of the circular of Lord Salisbury, it were the fact that he was pressing that policy, that he was demanding and pressing upon the Powers to come to an understanding upon that subject, I can assure the Government that, as far as I am concerned, I should have given them my cordial support. [The FIRST LORD of the TREASURY: "Hear, hear!"] I hope that is still their policy. I think the principle laid down by Lord Salisbury is a perfectly sound one, and I hope he will adhere to it, whatever else may be done by any other Power. [*Cheers.*] What is wanted is, that the Powers should come to a determination without delay on the question of emancipating Crete from Turkish rule. That is the point to which I think we ought to direct all our thoughts and energies—["hear, hear!"]—but in the meanwhile, until such a decision has been arrived at, and in order to precipitate such a decision, let us, for Heaven's sake, abstain from being the leading actor in putting down this insurrection—[*cheers*]—because we are presented to Europe and to Greece as the bombarding Power in this affair. Why is England, who is, I believe, the most desirous to bring this matter to a speedy and safe conclusion—why should we be put forward as the leading actors in this transaction? [*Cheers.*] I regret that very much, as on the policy of the Government generally in endeavouring to come to a settlement I am not disposed to oppose them, but rather to support them in what I understand to be their policy in demanding a settlement on the Cretan question before they interfere in any way with Greece. If that is their policy I am sure they will be supported. ["Hear, hear!"] But what shocks this House and gives great uneasiness and causes great condemnation outside this House is that, in the meanwhile, we should appear as the active opponents of the Greek cause by what we are doing, that we should be occupying these towns in Crete—for whom? Obviously for the Turk, who is nominally master of Crete. I confess I think this bombardment a most unfortunate event—an event which places England in a false position in the eyes of all the world. [*Cheers.*] My hon. Friend the Member for Northampton has made this Motion, as I understand it, as a protest against that transaction, and in order that, in the House of Commons, where we have an opportunity of expressing the voice of the people we represent, we may protest, until the emancipation of Crete is accomplished, against our being the foremost to take up arms, as it were, against a people who are fighting, and rightly fighting, for their own freedom. [*Loud cheers.*]

MR. GIBSON BOWLES (Lynn Regis) said that the right hon. Gentleman had made a most serious and dangerous proposal. The right hon. Gentleman's speech was an invitation—nay, a challenge—to the Government to break up the Concert of Europe. The conflict in Crete was a conflict between the Greeks on the one hand, and united Europe on the other.

[*Opposition cries of* "Oh!" *and cheers.*] Hon. Members had apparently forgotten that not six months ago the Powers of Europe, acting together, framed a new constitution for Crete. It was true that they did not know exactly what it was—[*Opposition cheers*]—but that constitution did exist, and the Powers had appointed their own Governor in the island, where he was ruler until he absconded the other day. It was contrary to fact to say that England was fighting with Greece. What had really occurred was that Greece had undertaken a piratical expedition. [*Loud Opposition cries of* "Oh!" *and cheers.*] Yes; for no allegation had been made against Turkey, and no demand had been made for reparation of an injury. It was, therefore, a piratical expedition. [*Renewed cries of* "Oh!"] But he did not understand the proceedings of the Powers. He could not comprehend why one day they should prohibit Greece from landing troops and munitions of war and permit her to do so on the next. [*Opposition cheers.*] It was not, however, correct to suggest, as the right hon. Gentleman had done, that England was fighting either against Christians or Greece. What England was doing was this—she was acting with the European Powers against a piratical expedition. Shots, however, had been fired, and practically England was at war at this moment. [*Opposition cheers, and* Mr. DILLON: "With whom?"] He did not quite know. [*Laughter.*] That was one of the things he wanted to know; but undoubtedly acts of war had been committed, and that was a matter upon which that House had a right to have all the information which the Government could give. He did not say that they had a right to information as to the negotiations of the Powers with respect to the future, but they ought to know the actual course of events of which the firing formed part. Crete was a region of mountains, with ravines running down to the seashore. Did the Government intend to occupy the seaport towns and to leave the Greek troops in occupation of the interior? Did they intend to allow the Greeks to continue to land troops, stores, and munitions of war in Crete, and did they intend to prevent the Turks from doing likewise? Although the constitution invented for Crete and surrounded with guarantees by the Powers had tumbled to pieces, the Government said that they would not do anything until they knew what the future was to be. He had no sympathy with this Motion for Adjournment, and he quite recognised the extreme gravity of the situation. At the same time, he could not forget that acts of war were being committed by British ships, and, in the circumstances, he held that they were entitled to have a plain statement from the Government of the plan by which they proposed to pacify the Island of Crete. ["Hear, hear!"]

SIR ROBERT REID (Dumfries Burghs) was glad that the hon. Member for King's Lynn had asked the Government for information. The position that they had been in during the whole of this Eastern crisis—for the last 18 months—had been most deplorable. The Government could not say that during that time any unpatriotic action had been taken by hon. Members on his side of the House. ["Hear, hear!"] But at that moment they did not know what the policy of the Government was either in regard to Armenia or in regard to Crete. ["Hear, hear!"] In the last 12 months they had heard the Under Secretary for Foreign Affairs say at least 40 times that these questions were being carefully considered by the Powers. Nothing had come of the negotiations of the Powers; they had not availed to prevent the shedding of Christian blood; all that they had done was to bring into odium and public contempt the Concert of Europe. ["Hear, hear!"] The hon. Member for King's Lynn said that there had been a piratical expedition on the part of Greece. Did not the hon. Member know that the essence of a piratical expedition was that it must be an expedition for which no Government made itself responsible? In the present instance the Hellenic Government had made itself responsible in circumstances reflecting the greatest honour upon it. [*Cheers.*] Let them consider for a moment what was the position of the Greeks. Their kinsmen, men of their own blood, were in an island some 60 miles from their own coast. These kinsmen of theirs had for the last 70 years been striving for freedom in various ways. They had fought for it repeatedly, and took part in the Greek war of independence, but were not allowed to share the fruits of victory.

They had been treated in a manner which could hardly bear recital, and what had they now at last risen for? It was to defend their wives and daughters against nameless outrages, to prevent their homes from being desolated and themselves from being slaughtered without pity by the same race that had perpetrated the atrocities in Armenia. Those were the reasons of the action of these men upon whom the guns of Her Majesty's ships had been firing. [*Cheers.*] The six Powers, afraid of one another, who had done nothing in Armenia, were content for some time to do nothing in connection with Crete. It was true that the six Powers did in August last succeed in getting a paper Constitution for Crete from the Turks, but that Constitution was only worth the paper it was written on—nothing more. These brave Powers never sent troops to Canea and the other towns of Crete when massacres were going on, but they interfered as soon as the Greeks landed. He should think that the Greeks had come to the conclusion that the Concert of Europe was contemptible; at any rate they were not afraid to risk shedding their blood in support of men of their own race, men belonging to the most famous race in Europe, who saved civilisation against Oriental attack 2,300 years ago. [*Cheers.*] Every gallant man must desire that the legitimate aspiration for amalgamation on the part of Greece and Crete should be fulfilled, whenever its fulfilment should be possible consistently with European peace and order. ["Hear, hear!"] The Opposition had not been unreasonable in their conduct. Last autumn it was pointed out with much force by the Chancellor of the Exchequer, in a speech which had a great effect upon the agitation then begun, that we could not operate effectually in a military or naval sense to assist the Armenians, and immediately it was seen that further agitation would draw the country into danger without doing real good to the wretched Armenians the Opposition suppressed—perhaps too much—["hear, hear!"]—the feelings with which they were inspired. But then we did not take the part of the Turks. What was being done now was something quite different, and the participation of our ships in the matter was an indelible disgrace to the British Government. ["Hear, hear!"]

Sir Robert Reid.

Their ships had fired upon poor, wretched people who had risen for no other purpose than to defend their homes, their wives, and children. [*Cheers.*] Those were the people upon whom the Government had fired, and it was an unworthy act and an unmanly duty to impose on British seamen. [*Cheers.*] He deeply regretted it, and he feared that it would result in the degradation of the great name and fame of this country in the eyes of Europe and of the people of the East. The First Lord of the Treasury had suggested,—

> "Here are we entering upon three towns; is it to be tolerated that the insurgents shall come in and fire on towns where our flag is flying?"

But was it the case that the Government were allowing the Turks to fire from within those ramparts on the insurgents? [*Cheers.*] It could not be denied that the Turks were doing this. What was the position? It was that we, the British Power, by means of our Navy and Marines, were holding these three towns and allowing the Turks to sally out and fire on the insurgents when the latter approached to return the fire—which he hoped they would always continue to do. [*Cheers.*] No one would satisfy the average Englishman, Scotchman, or Irishman that this was a worthy or a respectable thing for a great Power like this to do. The Leader of the Opposition had spoken in a manner which must have attracted the attention and the respect of the House. The right hon. Gentleman had stated that it was our duty to have remained neutral, at all events until after the future of Crete had been settled, and not to take any aggressive action against Greece until that time had arrived. He understood that his right hon. Friend was limiting his observations to the point which was necessary to raise for the moment. For his own part, however, he declared that, whether arrangements were made or not, if at any time in respect of this matter the British Government was found attacking Greece, whether before or after any such arrangement, he for one—and he believed there were a great many other hon. Members—would object in the strongest possible way. [*Cheers.*] If we could not be saviours, let us not be executioners. [*Cheers.*] What the terror might be that seemed to haunt the right hon. Gentleman and the Government he could not say, nor did he deny the great responsibility of his position or seek to ignore the difficulties of the position; yet, in spite of the right hon. Gentleman's assurance that all the Powers were most anxious to avoid war, somehow we might find ourselves embarked in a war. He accepted the statement of fact, and did not seek to question it; but it was a very curious situation. At all events, this was clear—that the peace of Europe would not be improved by taking up the position of firing on the insurgents in Crete; that could do nothing to improve the prospects of peace. [*Cheers.*] It seemed to be a most strange thing that there were no materials, no details, in the hands of the Government, although the incidents took place on Saturday.

THE FIRST LORD OF THE ADMIRALTY (Mr. G. J. GOSCHEN, St. George's, Hanover Square): They took place yesterday.

SIR ROBERT REID said if this was the case they must put up with the want of information.

MR. DILLON: How did the *Daily News* know about it?

SIR ROBERT REID said at any rate this fact was true, that under some orders—they did not know what—British ships had fired on these unhappy insurgents, whose cause was as sacred, as honourable, as that which any men had ever risen to defend by arms. [*Cheers.*] He expressed his deep regret that not a word had been said to show regret for this action, which he thought would have far-reaching consequences, not only in respect of the Government themselves, but because it would leave a lasting stain on the reputation of this country. [*Cheers.*]

THE FIRST LORD OF THE ADMIRALTY: I do not suppose that it is the intention of right hon. and hon. Gentlemen opposite first to misrepresent what has taken place and then to express their indignation about it. We have a few particulars, and I can place before the House real facts as to what took place. The incident is, of course, to be regretted—[*ironical laughter*]—everyone must regret that an incident of this kind should have been necessary. But the fact was that time after time the insurgents had been warned that they were not to advance to such a point where their guns would command the town. In that town there would be various detachments of the allied Powers, and if the insurgents placed their guns where they intended to place them they would have been in command of the spots where the allied forces had been placed. In these circumstances, day after day a council of Admirals urged the insurgents and Colonel Vassos not to advance beyond certain points. They showed as much patience and forbearance as it was their duty to show in such circumstances, because it was admitted that the great object should be to prevent a shot from being fired. Notwithstanding all the remonstrances, or possibly in order to force the situation, the insurgents disregarded what had been done by the allied commanders and took up those positions which would have commanded the town. The right hon. Gentleman says that we attempted to put down the insurrection. I say it is a ridiculous exaggeration. [*Cheers.*] It is not a misrepresentation, and there was no object—

*SIR W. HARCOURT: Will the right hon. Gentleman kindly answer my question upon this dispatch, wherein it is stated that the incident took place, not yesterday, but on Saturday? [*The right hon. Gentleman again read the telegram in The Times, dated Canea, Feb. 20, as already given.*]

THE FIRST LORD OF THE ADMIRALTY: I am perfectly prepared to say that the word "interior" must be an entire mistake. There is not an indication in a telegram received from Canea that that was the policy or the act of any single Admiral. I see now what the right hon. Gentleman feared was that Colonel Vassos was attacked in order that he might not take some steps into the interior. That is an entire mistake. The Admirals represented that the situation in the town of Canea was getting more dangerous day after day; and it was in consequence of the advance of the insurgents on Canea, and on account of that alone, that they were obliged to take this action, which all regret, though deemed to be necessary not only for the defence of Canea but for the defence of the detachments in that place. That is the explanation of the incident so far as we have information on the subject. In reply to what was said by the hon. and learned Gentleman, that we have not attempted to save a drop of Christian blood—["hear, hear!"]— I have to say that he has not read the dispatches, and he has not read the newspapers. [*Cheers.*]

SIR ROBERT REID: What I said was that they had not succeeded in saving it.

THE FIRST LORD OF THE ADMIRALTY: Then you have not read the dispatches. [Several HON. MEMBERS: "Where are they?"] I will tell you. Hon. Members have said that there is no Party purpose in all this. [*Ministerial laughter and cheers.*] Why, then, these exaggerations; why are you telling the public outside who have not access to the documents and to the same information—

SIR ROBERT REID: I say it is true. [*Cheers.*]

THE FIRST LORD OF THE ADMIRALTY: I say not only that it is false—[*cheers*]—but that not even the enthusiasm of the hon. Member justifies the gross carelessness that can alone— ["Oh, oh!" *cries of* "Withdraw," *and cheers.*]

*SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT: The right hon. Gentleman speaks of dispatches; where are the dispatches? [*Cheers.*]

THE FIRST LORD OF THE ADMIRALTY: The right hon. Gentleman, with all his Parliamentary resource, is not going to save the hon. Member. [*Opposition cries of* "Where are the dispatches?" *and uproar.*] The right hon. Gentleman quoted a dispatch which he had seen in a newspaper this morning. [*Opposition cries of* "No, no," *and* "Yes, he did" *from the Ministerial Benches.*] I will state the whole information and what is known by everyone who has studied this question. ["Oh, oh!"] I am not anxious merely to defend the Government, but I am anxious that false statements which might reflect on the general policy of this country should not be allowed to circulate. I say that we have assisted the Christians in many parts of Crete, that many a Christian woman and child is saved now that would not have been saved. ["Oh, oh!" *and cheers.*] Hon. Members may accept it from me that this is so. We have conveyed, we have watched the embarkation of Christians from various Mussulman towns, we have assisted to get them off, we have assisted to feed them, and we have done all we could in order to protect Christian life. [*Cheers.*] When the Consuls have telegraphed that Christians were in danger in any one of these towns we have immediately sent a ship there in order to overawe the Mussulmans and to protect life. Why are we there? We are at those places where the Mussulmans are in the majority, and where the Christians are in the minority, and our presence gave security to both. We have been absolutely neutral as between Christian and Mussulman; we have been anxious to save the lives of each equally. I have shown what the truth is in regard to the firing on the insurgents. I have shown that it is not true, that it is absolutely false, that it was for the protection of the Mussulmans or Mahomedans that we have been acting. We have sent ship after ship, we have increased our forces there, not to put down the insurgents, but in order to have ships at those points where disorders were likely to take place, and in order to assist in keeping order. And let me further remind the House with regard to the charge brought against us that we have been favourable to Turkey in this matter. The fact is that pressure was put on the Turkish Government not to send troops to Crete. We made them diminish their garrisons there, we did all we could to prevent this lamentable outbreak between the Mahomedans and the Christians, who, after all, are both Cretans. It is not only the Christians who are Cretans, but the Mussulman and Mahomedan population of the island also. We have done our best to keep an even scale between the two sections, and we shall continue to do our best to see whether after all, notwithstanding all these deplorable incidents, we shall not be able to say that the intervention of the Concert of Europe has been to the advantage of Crete and to the inhabitants thereof, whether Mussulman or Christian.

SIR ROBERT REID: May I say one word of personal explanation? I deeply regret that I should have been the subject or the occasion of any heat on the part of the right hon. Gentleman. I think those who heard what I said, and what I think I said, will never suppose I intended to impute to the Government that they did not attempt or desire to rescue Christians. Of course they attempted and desired to rescue Christians. All I meant to say, and all I think I said, was that they had not succeeded, and in my humble opinion, in regard to Armenia, which is I think what I was speaking about, that statement is absolutely true. I have always refrained from making personal attacks, and I regret that, for some reason best known to himself—["Oh!" *from the Ministerialists*]—the hon. Gentleman should have attacked me.

MR. VESEY KNOX (Londonderry) said that, according to the published reports for three or four days past, under the shelter of the ships of the Powers and the protection of British bluejackets and marines, the Turks had been making sorties and attacking the Cretans in the villages. If our troops were doing police duty in Crete why did not they do police duty upon every disturber of the peace, whether he were Mohammedan or Christian? The First Lord of the Admiralty had said, warnings had been given to the Greeks and to the Cretans that they were not to advance nearer to Canea, but all the time the Turkish troops were allowed to issue forth from under the ramparts of Canea and attack the Cretans. Was it not human nature in these instances that the Cretans should attempt to stop these sorties? A telegram had just arrived in the House stating that neither the French nor the Italian vessels fired a single shot last Sunday afternoon. [*Cheers.*] Was that true or not? ["Hear, hear!"] Was it a fact that the whole shame, the whole disgrace of that Christian Sunday afternoon's work—["hear, hear!"]—rested upon Germany, England, and Austria? Was it true that the only two other free countries in Europe refused to take their part in that butchery of Christians. If that were so, it infinitely deepened the shame that rested upon the British Government and the Britsh nation. Another part of the right hon. Gentleman's statement required explanation. He told them that for several days past the British and other Admirals had been warning the Greeks and Cretans not to attack Canea. He presumed those orders were reported home, and that the right hon. Gentlemen knew those threats were being made. Therefore, it was clear the blame for what had happened was not the blame of the Admiral but the blame of the Government at home. When the Government, a few days ago, asked for the confidence of the House and refused to give to the House the plain facts as to what were the orders given to the Admirals, those were the orders given. [*Cheers.*] It was butchery—butchery of Christians, done to order by the Government of Great Britain. [*Renewed cheers.*] Those were the plain facts, and the man who was directly responsible for the action of the ships was not the sailor in command, but the First Lord of the Admiralty at home. ["Hear, hear!"] Again, he asked how was it we showed such zeal in butchery? The others were content with one vessel apiece. Two of them did not even fire a shot from their single vessels, but we fired more shots than the rest of the vessels put together. If we wanted to preserve the Concert of Europe one would have thought that we should have had more respect for the other nations than to outdo them. But the zeal for the Concert of Europe was a secondary matter; we wished to show the great naval strength of Great Britain, and so we were entitled before the world to this latest exhibition of our maritime supremacy. The people of this country had been taxed over and over again the last few years to increase the Navy. Did they suppose that this was the sort of purpose to which British ships and British men were to be put? The event of that Sunday afternoon would not soon be forgotten by the great mass of God-fearing people of this country. ["Hear, hear!"] The Government had used its power to attack Christians, and they said they protected Christians; but when, in the course of protecting Christians had they ever shot a Turk? [*Cheers.*] Let the Government name a case. There had not been a case in all the disputes in Crete in which they had fired a single shot to defend the Christians against the Mussulmans, but they had seized the first available opportunity to attack the Christians in defence of the Turks at Canea—not to protect helpless Turks, but to protect Turks in the possession of arms who had been engaged in sorties upon the Christians, and who were now our allies in operations of war against the Christians on the heights surrounding the town, and who had used the sheltering power of our batteries in order to fire on wounded Cretans as they were being taken away from the field. Those were the plain facts of the story, and under the circumstances it was the duty of every man in the House who had any feeling for the fame of England, and of Ireland, and of Scotland, who were thus dragged at England's heels—it was the duty of every man in the House who had any resepct for the power of Christendom, to give a vote in favour of the Motion as a protest against the bloodguiltiness of Her Majesty's Government. [*Cheers.*]

SIR ELLIS ASHMEAD-BARTLETT (Sheffield, Ecclesall) said that the whole basis of the case presented to the House by the hon. and learned Member for Dumfries Burghs (Sir R. Reid) consisted of the most absolute misstatement of the facts. [*Laughter.*] What were the facts with regard to the present movement in Crete? It was by no means clear that the Cretan insurgents themselves, or the bulk of them, at any rate, wanted the intervention of Greece. But the action of Greece had forced the position in Crete, and had forced the hands of the Powers. It was by no means clear that the arrival of an armed Greek force was desired by the Cretan Christians. They desired autonomy, equal laws, and a Christian Governor, and those concessions had been made. The only excuse which could be given for the action of the Greeks was that there was a serious condition of anarchy in the island at the time of the intervention. The statement that since August last there had been massacres of Christians by Mussulmans in Crete was absolutely false. [*Opposition laughter.*] There was not a shred of evidence in support of it. The truth was that at this moment the persecuted, the outraged, and the massacred in Crete were the Mussulmans and not the Christians. [*Opposition laughter and* "Hear, hear!"] That was the simple truth, and if a European Commission was appointed to investigate into the facts, what he said would be absolutely confirmed. The only correspondent on the spot, the correspondent of *The Times*, gave evidence, not on hearsay, but quoted from Italian, Russian and French officers who had seen those cases of massacre of Mussulmans, men, women and children. In August last the Turkish Government gave way completely to the demands of the Powers, and granted to Crete an entirely new Constitution, which was gratefully accepted by both sections of the population.

*MR. SPEAKER: Order, order! The hon. Gentleman is going outside the question before the House. I am quite aware there has been considerable latitude in this discussion, but I think the remarks of hon. Gentlemen are too remote from the Motion.

Mr. Vesey Knox.

SIR E. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT said he was answering the hon. Gentleman who had stated that the new Constitution for Crete had been rendered null and void by the Turkish Government. That was another absolutely false statement. A large portion of the new Constitution had been put into force and was in operation. What was the result? The moment there appeared to be a chance of a settlement being made and tranquillity restored to the island, the Greek secret societies sent emissaries to Crete and poured 20,000 stands of arms into the island. It was in consequence of this that the Austrian Government last November proposed the blockade of the Piræus.

*MR. SPEAKER: Order, order! The hon. Gentleman will not be in order in pursuing that line of argument.

SIR E. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT said he must, therefore, confine himself to the statement that not a single fact had been advanced in the Debate in support of the allegation that there had been massacres of Christians by Mussulmans and to justify the intervention of Greece. It was of the utmost importance to the Christians throughout the Ottoman Empire that justice should be done to the Mussulmans in Crete. ["Hear, hear!"] There had been no attack on the insurgents in the island; it was the insurgents who had attacked Canea. [*Laughter.*] That town was crammed with defenceless Mussulman women and children, and the only protection they had from the insurgents was that afforded by the forces of the Powers. If the truth were only known in this country, the sympathy of that large section of the people which hon. Gentlemen opposite boasted that they had with them would disappear. He hoped the Government would not allow the so-called facts of hon. Members opposite to be poured upon the country without definite contradiction. The Government knew that the provocation came from the Christians, and they ought not to hesitate to lay the whole truth of the case before the country, so that the people might have before them both sides of the question. ["Hear, hear!"] After all, there were 70,000 Mussulmans in Crete, and they had as much right to live and to protection as the Christian population. Since the reduction of the Turkish garrisons the Cretan Mussulmans had been at the mercy of the Cretan Christians, except in two or three towns, and the Powers were bound to protect these Mussulmans, between whom and outrage and wholesale butchery there now only stood the Marines of the allied Powers. For the reasons he had given he should earnestly vote against the Motion. ["Hear, hear!"]

MR. F. A. CHANNING (Northampton, E.) said the First Lord of the Treasury and the First Lord of the Admiralty had evaded the real facts which led to the firing by the ships on Sunday. The correct version was to be found in the official dispatch of Colonel Vassos, the Greek commander, who said:—

> "On receipt of intelligence that the Canea garrison was marching against the Christians, I sent a company of volunteers to co-operate against the 1,500 troops of the Canea garrison."

That was the origin of the operations which occurred on Saturday and Sunday. It was perfectly obvious that the statements of the First Lord of the Treasury as to the threats of the Greek commander upon the towns occupied by the allied forces, and of the First Lord of the Admiralty that the insurgents were advancing their guns to a position from which they could command the interior of Canea, were absolutely inconsistent with what had actually occurred. The facts were as given in the dispatch of Colonel Vassos, and the Government had deliberately run away from them. It had been ascertained that the act of war by the British ships was committed in obedience to some orders, and before the Debate was closed the House must insist on knowing by whom those orders were given. [*Cheers.*] They had the clearest proof that the advance of the Cretans was solely and entirely due to an attack begun by the Turkish troops—that the Turkish troops were allowed to go out from their fortresses under protection of the guns of the British Fleet and commit marauding outrages against the insurgents, and when the insurgents retaliated and defeated the Turks, then the British Admiral ordered his men to fire upon the Cretans and commit this terrible act of war. ["Hear, hear!"] They had a right to say that the Government should deal with the facts and not indulge in such vague generalities as those which the First Lord of the Treasury and the First Lord of the Admiralty had endeavoured to use as soporifics to the common sense of that House and of the country. [*Opposition cheers and Ministerial laughter.*] There had been a gross, wicked, and tyrannical interference with the position of these insurgents by the British Fleet under the orders of the British Government—["hear, hear!"]—and they should insist on having the fullest explanation of how this came about. They had a right to know what this act of war was to be followed by. Was this policy of turning loose the strongest weapons of naval warfare in the world to mow down these poor Cretans to be followed by the blockading of the Piræus, and an interference on the part of this country with the splendid attempt of the Greeks to obtain their liberty?

SIR JOHN LUBBOCK (London University) said the accusation made by his hon. and learned Friend the Member for Dumfries of a stain being cast on the British name was one which ought not lightly to be made in that House. ["Hear, hear!"] His hon. and learned Friend had told them that he made no personal attack upon any Member of the Government, but if he were not attacking the First Lord of the Admiralty, who was he attacking? [*Cheers.*] Was he attacking the British Admiral? He believed hon. Members opposite would agree that it was not right for any hon. Member to get up and in the House attack their Admirals abroad unless they had the clearest evidence that they had done something which they ought not to have done. [*Cheers.*] He did not rise to continue this discussion, but rather to express a very earnest hope that it might be allowed to come to an end. [*Ministerial cheers and Opposition cries of* "Oh!"] He believed there was not really any great or very important difference between the two sides of the House as to what they wished at the present moment. He believed they would all agree that this was a most critical moment for Europe as a whole. ["Hear, hear!"] They were standing upon a powder barrel, and if it once went off there might be terrible results to the whole of Europe. If, when the whole circumstances came to light, it was claimed that Her Majesty's Government had done anything contrary to the policy of this country, he should make no complaint of any attack upon them. He gladly recognised that up to the present time, in these difficult circumstances, the Leaders of the Opposition had adopted a wise and patriotic policy. ["Hear, hear!"] He spoke with a deep sense of the gravity of the situation, and of the importance to all of them throughout Europe of maintaining the Concert of Europe and of friendly and harmonious action between the Great Powers. Was that likely to be assisted by such language as they had heard that afternoon from some hon. Gentlemen opposite? [*Cheers.*] It would be in accordance with the traditions of English policy and of the House of Commons that they should, while negotiations were going on, give their support to the Government and leave to them the responsibility. ["Hear, hear!"] Discussions in that House at the present moment were, he maintained, dangerous, and he hoped the House would not imperil that peace which they all had at heart by continuing a discussion which could do no good and which might do incalculable harm. ["Hear, hear!"]

MR. PHILIP STANHOPE (Burnley) asked for distinct and decided declarations from Her Majesty's Government on two points. They had heard in the course of that Debate reference made to the circular of Lord Salisbury in which he declared, on the part of England, that he would not be a party to the employment of force against the Cretans unless there was a distinct understanding as to the future government of the Island of Crete. They had had no explanation whatever as to the tenor of that circular. Had Lord Salisbury, in the name of England, declared—what he thought every Englishman felt he ought to declare—that the future government of Crete assented to by Great Britain should in no sense whatever be connected with the Turkish Empire? ["Hear, hear!"] Unless he had made that declaration, then the sooner he and England withdrew from the Concert of Europe the better it would be for the liberties of the Cretans. ["Hear, hear!"] If he had made that declaration, then, he asked, why was the incident of yesterday permitted by Her Majesty's Government? [*Cheers.*] He had the highest opinion, as they all had, not only of the valour of the Admirals commanding their Fleet, but of their good sense and prudence. But the Admirals in this case were merely the instruments of the Government. [*Cheers.*] It was not the Admirals they were attacking, but the Gentlemen who were sitting on that Front Bench opposite, and who by their silence—not what he would call a wise and patriotic reticence, but a shamed and humiliated reticence—showed that they were unable to explain the incident which had cast a stain on the name of England. ["Hear, hear!"] The other point on which he wished for a declaration from the Government was this—whether they were to understand that the Great Powers of Europe now occupied the four towns in Crete for the purpose of maintaining order. If that were so, he asked that the Government should make a distinct declaration that from those towns no Turkish garrison or troops should be allowed to make sorties. ["Hear, hear!"] Unless they took that responsibility upon themselves, what was the need of the presence of the allied forces in those towns? They were there to maintain order, and surely the first step towards that end was to see that the Turkish soldiers in those towns were kept in proper check and control. He believed that when the country became aware of the lame and lamentable explanation which had been offered by the Government they would say that if the Concert of Europe was to be maintained by means like this, the sooner they of Great Britain had done with it the better. ["Hear, hear!"]

MR. STUART-WORTLEY (Sheffield, Hallam) said he should like to know whether the main and initial fact was not this—that the British Government, allied with the Powers, had practically prevented the Sultan from suppressing the insurrection in Crete, and had not thus rendered to the Cretan population service infinitely greater than any that would have been rendered if they had abstained from intervening between the contending parties? ["Hear, hear!"] The hon. Member who had just spoken said we had made ourselves responsible for preventing sorties from the Turkish garrison.

MR. STANHOPE: That they ought to have been prevented.

MR. STUART-WORTLEY said if we made ourselves responsible for that, we must go further, and prevent attacks on the garrison. It was generally supposed, and was a matter of history, that a garrison with an enemy outside made sorties to repel attack. This was not all the protection afforded to the insurgents, for had we not, by our occupation of the island, prevented the garrisons being reinforced, as otherwise they surely would have been by large bodies of troops from Constantinople? ["Hear, hear!"] He hoped the House would pause well before condemning what had been done on this occasion, and he could not admit the alternative policy that had been offered to that of Her Majesty's Government, an alternative policy which would mean, if it meant anything, that we should abstain from all interference, and leave Turkey to suppress this insurrection according to her known and ordinary methods, by fire and sword, and by practices that to every civilised nation were infinitely worse even than fire and sword. ["Hear!"] He could not congratulate Members of the Opposition when, with singular ineptitude, they had no better alternative to offer. ["Hear, hear!"]

MR. EDWARD MORTON (Devonport) desired some definite information upon points as to which the House had only had assertions. Three assertions had been made on reports in newspapers whose correspondents had on other occasions been found to be right on matters of fact when Government statements were found to be wrong. The first of these was that a force of the Powers in the town of Canea had protected the Turks in making a sortie against the insurgents, who had not attacked them. The second was that the Powers had forced the insurgents out of a position which they had been allowed to maintain for four days previously. The third assertion made, to which a partial denial had been given, was that the Powers caused information to be conveyed to the commander of the Greek force that he would be opposed by force if he endeavoured to go into the interior of the island. Further, he asked the Under Secretary for Foreign Affairs if he could give any information as to the allegation that a British gunboat had brought under the control of British ships a Greek vessel carrying supplies for the Greek troops in Crete? The answer of the First Lord of the Treasury was similar to that given by Mr. Disraeli in the summer of 1876 when asked questions—that official dispatches did not contain the information. The First Lord of the Admiralty was the first to introduce party heat into the Debate—["oh, oh!"]—with a number of vehement assertions for which neither he nor his colleagues had given a particle of evidence. Twenty years ago there was a very similar position, and Mr. Disraeli gave denials of statements because they were not in official reports. One thing came to his mind in connection with the present situation. Only last year, at the Lord Mayor's banquet, Lord Salisbury, making excuses for the helplessness of the Powers in dealing with the Armenian question, said:—

> "We at least possess no Army big enough to attack Turkey, and our Navy cannot sail across the mountains of Armenia."

Here was a case where the Navy could and did sail to the seat of operations, and what did they find? Instead of making war on the accursed savages who massacred Christians whenever they could, they found that the British guns were turned against the Christians Lord Salisbury pretended he wanted to protect. ["Hear!"] One thing the Government could tell them—if not facts upon official information, they could state their intentions. It was a significant fact that the principal ships that fired, following the lead of the British ships, yesterday, were German ships. The French ships did not fire, the Italian ships did not fire; they were German ships that took part with British ships in the bombardment. He asked, Were the Government veering round to the views of the Emperor of Germany? Were they, by protecting the Turks in making sorties on the Christian insurgents, in bombarding the insurgents out of a place they had been allowed to occupy for four days, and in allowing Turkish guns to fire on the wounded—were they going back on their former position and to that of twenty years ago? Were they going to assist the Emperor of Germany in bombarding Greece itself? ["Oh, oh!"] Was that the significance of the German ships taking part with us in this bombardment? The First Lord of the Treasury had brought before the House in solemn tones the dangers of a European war if we did anything to protect our fellow-Christians in Turkey, and it seemed a strange argument from a Government who only thirteen months ago were ready to face the world in arms for British interests alone. [*Cheers.*] It seemed to him a strange comment upon the Government views that, having refused to make war, they should proceed to commit murder. ["Oh, oh!"] The right hon. Gentleman (Sir J. Lubbock) said we were seated on a powder-barrel, and it was perhaps a similar idea with regard to their position in this country which had chastened the utterances of Her Majesty's Ministers. It was almost the same position twenty years ago, when a small Liberal minority faced a Government whose majority sometimes went up to 200, and that Government was supporting Turkey as the present Government did yesterday. For four years the minority carried on the unequal political war, and the first time the country had the opportunity of speaking, it was found to be overwhelmingly opposed to supporting Turkey and in favour of Turkey's Christian victims. He ventured to think that it was the memory of this that had imparted a somewhat chastened note to the speech of the Leader of the House, and he ventured to predict that, whatever might be the Government majority on this occasion, following the Concert of Europe and the multitude to do evil, the Government would be found to be writing and sealing its own doom; and, just as their predecessors did twenty years ago, they would find they were running up a severe and terrible reckoning for the future of their Party, when the country would have an opportunity of stating that in its view the Government had betrayed the national honour and gone counter to its wishes and deepest sympathies. ["Hear!"]

*Mr. CHARLES DARLING (Deptford) rose chiefly to perform the humble office of conveying to the hon. Gentleman who had just spoken some of that information for which he professed himself to be so anxious, and as the hon. Member had spoken in terms recognising the accuracy of the Press as contrasted with unreliable official information, he could give him information from a newspaper whose authority he would acknowledge—*The Westminster Gazette.* When the hon. Member asked why it was that only the German ships fired beside the British, *The Westminster Gazette* supplied the answer in a telegram from Canea. He would therein find that at a meeting of the Admirals it was decided to open fire on the insurgents only after the latter refused to obey the injunction conveyed to them not to advance any further. The ships of the Powers were drawn up in line from east to west, and the British vessels were called on to fire first, and the German, Austrian, and Russian ships in succession. When the hon. Member found significance of the European Concert coming to an end in the fact that the French and Italian ships did not fire, let him further consult *The Westminster Gazette* telegram, and he would learn that the order to cease firing came before it was necessary for the French and Italian vessels stationed at the western extremity of the line to take part in the demonstration. Then came information that would be distasteful to Members opposite, for it was reported that none of the insurgents were killed by the cannonade, which caused merely material damage, not even "moral and intellectual damage." [*Laughter.*] Hon. Members appealed to everybody to vote for this Motion, but would they be so ready to support it if they thought there was the remotest chance of it being carried? ["Yes."] What would be the result of carrying this Motion for Adjournment? It would be the very worst day's work possible for the Cretans, because if the Motion were carried the Concert of Europe, so far as we were concerned, would be at an end. It would simply mean that we should withdraw from the Concert of Europe, but it would not mean that we were going to face the other Powers of Europe in arms on behalf of Greece. After all, this Motion for Adjurnment would not have done unmitigated harm—as such Motions generally did—for it would have shown the Powers of Europe that there was in this country a very strong feeling in favour of doing even more than they were inclined to do on behalf of Crete. At all events, all the Powers of Europe—which were always sceptical—would be convinced, when they saw the Leader of the Opposition enthusiastically approving of a raid into the territory of a friendly Power—[*laughter and cheers*]—that this country had got rid somewhat of its "unctuous rectitude," and that would be something gained. [" Hear, hear!"] He should like to ask, Did anyone doubt, after the speech of the First Lord of the Treasury, that Crete would never again be handed back to Turkey? Did anyone doubt that the Powers of Europe had decided upon something in future for Crete, which could not be very far different, perhaps, from independence, or possibly integration in the kingdom of Greece? Could anyone doubt that practically the cause of Crete had gained very largely by the part taken by this country in preventing a European war? The Leader of the Opposition asked who were going to war and where would they fight? War would take place upon those frontiers of Greece which were nearest to Turkey. Did not anybody know what would happen if this country were to stand aside, and the Turks be allowed to go at the Greeks in their own way? Who could pretend not to see that that would only be the beginning of a war in which France, Austria, Russia, and Italy would all take part? [" Why?"] Why? Because we were probably the only Power in Europe that did not want something that belonged to the Sultan. He thought that after this Debate there was not a Power in Europe but would recognise that unless they were held back a little this country could not be kept from breaking away from the Concert of Europe altogether, and therefore, while they were asking the people of this country to have patience a little longer, it would become the Powers of Europe on their part to see if they might not somewhat hurry their operations and give some evidence of their anxiety not only to solve this difficulty, but to solve it soon, being morally assured that if the wound were kept open for a little longer that conflagration would occur in Europe which no one but the right hon. Gentleman opposite doubted the possibility of. [" Hear, hear!"] The situation was not without a parallel. The bombardment of the insurgents was a regrettable incident, but it was not unlike the act of the Government of Italy, when the Royal troops performed the painful duty of firing on the patriots at Aspromonte, and wounding their leader, Garibaldi.

SIR HENRY CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN (Stirling Burghs) gathered from the remarks of the hon. Member for Deptford, in the first place, that he was an ardent sympathiser with the Greek nation and Greek Government in this matter; in the second place, that this discussion would have done a great deal of good; and, in the third place, that Turkey would never be able to reassert her rule over Crete. He also gathered that it was the opinion of the hon. Gentleman that the most desirable thing for them to contemplate was that the Concert of Europe should as speedily as possible come to a decision in this matter in order to put an end to the present condition of affairs. [" Hear, hear!"] He rose for the purpose of putting a question to the Government. They had no information, as he understood it, or only the very vaguest information, as to the circumstances of the last two or three days. A London paper appeared to have a correspondent who had sent fuller information than the Government possessed. He did not blame the Government and their lack of information on the matter. It was also impossible for them at present to lay before the House Papers on the subject of Crete, which would require further consideration or take time to print. But one thing, it appeared to him, might be given to Parliament which might go far to satisfy and soothe what was undoubtedly the somewhat ruffled condition of the public mind, and that was the instructions given to our Admiral as to his action in the present crisis. [*Cheers.*] They wanted to know what the position of the British Squadron there was, and what the position of the Admiral was. [*Cheers.*] Was he bound to do anything that the Concert of Europe directed him to do, and, if so, who represented the Concert of Europe at Canea, or any other point where action was necessary? [*Cheers.*] They wished particularly to know what his instructions were. He must be acting under some definite instructions from his own Government, as well as any instructions that might come from the so-called Concert of Europe. [" Hear, hear!"]

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY: If the right hon. Gentleman will put a Question on the Paper to-morrow with regard to the instructions to our Admiral, I will have the precedents looked into and see whether it can be done. But I may inform him that undoubtedly our Admiral is not bound to act against his judgment with the majority. Unanimity among the Admirals is required.

*SIR C. DILKE said this incident could not be treated by itself without regard to the whole policy of this country in her dealings with Greece. It had been assumed by three speakers at least in the Debate that Turkey, if left to herself, would be able to crush Greece. That was not the case. If the Turks were to try by sea to reach Crete with reinforcements they would fail in getting there. Their ships would be torpedoed and sunk, and the destruction of the Turkish power would be all the more rapid. The Greeks believed that the same would be the case with regard to the frontier of Thessaly, and this country was believed by Greece to have twice led the Concert of Europe to prevent the Greeks from obtaining provinces which would otherwise have fallen to them. ["Hear, hear!"] No doubt, as a nation, we were the best friends of Greece in Europe, but it was not thought so by the Greeks, at any rate, as far as the Government was concerned. The future of the Eastern Mediterranean lay with Greece. The feeling of the people of this country was almost unanimously on the Greek side. But he was one who would do much to prevent the forcible partition of the Ottoman Empire. [*Cries of* "Oh!"] Yes, for he believed in the danger of war. ["Hear, hear!"] But we ought not to interfere by force against that side which had the whole future of the Eastern Mediterranean Sea at its command. Greece was anxious to be our friend; she was a maritime Power, and would be drawn by associations to desire alliance with us, and free scope should be given to the feeling of the people of this country on behalf of Greece. [*Cheers.*] The Opposition had been singularly tolerant of the foreign policy of the present Government. Not in the Mediterranean only, but in the Pacific, it had been marked by a great change in the position of the country. The foreign policy of the Government ought to be thoroughly debated on a better occasion than the present, but he could not be silent when the whole aspirations of the Greeks were involved, and felt bound to raise his voice to, if possible, prevent those aspirations from being used as the shuttlecock of party. [*Cheers.*]

Motion made, and Question put, "That this House do now Adjourn." The House divided:—Ayes, 125; Noes, 243.—(Division List—No. 40—appended.)

The announcement of the figures was received with Ministerial cheers.

AYES.

Abraham, William (Cork, N.E.)
Acland, Rt. Hon. A. H. Dyke
Allan, William (Gateshead)
Ambrose, Robert (Mayo, W.)
Arch, Joseph
Asquith, Rt. Hn. Herbert Henry
Austin, Sir John (Yorkshire)
Austin, M. (Limerick, W.)
Barlow, John Emmott
Bayley, Thomas (Derbyshire)
Beaumont, Wentworth C. B.
Birrell, Augustine
Brigg, John
Brunner, Sir John Tomlinson
Buchanan, Thomas Ryburn
Burns, John
Burt, Thomas
Caldwell, James
Cameron, Sir Charles (Glasgow)
Cameron, Robert (Durham)
Campbell-Bannerman, Sir H.
Causton, Richard Knight
Channing, Francis Allston
Colville, John
Condon, Thomas Joseph
Crilly, Daniel
Crombie, John William
Curran, Thomas B. (Donegal)
Dalziel, James Henry
Davies, M. Vaughan- (Cardigan)
Davies, W. Rees- (Pembrokesh.)
Davitt, Michael
Dillon, John
Donelan, Captain A.
Dunn, Sir William
Ellis, John Edward (Notts.)
Farquharson, Dr. Robert
Fenwick, Charles
Ferguson, R. C. Munro (Leith)
Flynn, James Christopher
Foster, Sir Walter (Derby Co.)
Fowler, Matthew (Durham)
Gilhooly, James
Gladstone, Rt. Hn. Herbert John
Goddard, Daniel Ford
Gold, Charles
Griffith, Ellis J.
Harcourt, Rt. Hon. Sir William
Harrison, Charles
Hayne, Rt. Hon. Charles Seale-
Holburn, J. G.
Humphreys-Owen, Arthur C.
Johnson-Ferguson, Jabez Edw.
Joicey, Sir James
Jones, William (Carnarvonsh.)
Kay-Shuttleworth, Rt. Hn. Sir U.
Kearley, Hudson E.
Kinloch, Sir John George Smyth
Knox, Edmund Francis Vesey
Labouchere, Henry
Lambert, George
Langley, Batty
Lawson, Sir Wilfrid (Cumblnd.)
Leng, Sir John
Lockwood, Sir Frank (York)
Lough, Thomas
Luttrell, Hugh Fownes
Lyell, Sir Leonard
Macaleese, Daniel
McDermott, Patrick
McEwan, William
M'Ghee, Richard
M'Hugh, Patrick A. (Leitrim)
McKenna, Reginald
Maden, John Henry
Mellor, Rt. Hn. J. W. (Yorks.)
Monk, Charles James
Montagu, Sir S. (Whitechapel)
Morgan, J. Lloyd (Carmarthen)
Morley, Rt. Hn. John (Montrose)
Morton, Edward John Chalmers

First Lord of the Treasury.

Mundella, Rt. Hn. Anthony John
Nussey, Thomas Willans
O'Brien, James F. X. (Cork)
O'Brien, Patrick (Kilkenny)
O'Connor, James (Wicklow, W.)
O'Connor, T. P. (Liverpool)
O'Kelly, James
Owen, Thomas
Palmer, Sir Charles M. (Durham)
Parnell, John Howard
Paulton, James Mellor
Pickard, Benjamin
Pickersgill, Edward Hare
Power, Patrick Joseph
Price, Robert John
Provand, Andrew Dryburgh
Reid, Sir Robert T.
Rickett, J. Compton
Roberts, John Bryn (Eifion)
Roberts, John H. (Denbighs.)
Robson, William Snowdon
Roche, Hon. James (East Kerry)
Samuel, J. (Stockton-on-Tees)
Schwann, Charles E.
Smith, Samuel (Flint)
Spicer, Albert
Stanhope, Hon. Philip J.
Strachey, Edward
Sullivan, Donal (Westmeath)
Tanner, Charles Kearns
Wallace, Robert (Edinburgh)
Wallace, Robert (Perth)
Walton, John Lawson
Warner, Thomas Courtenay T.
Wayman, Thomas
Wedderburn, Sir William
Whittaker, Thomas Palmer
Williams, John Carvell (Notts.)
Wills, Sir William Henry
Wilson, John (Durham, Mid.)
Wilson, John (Govan)
Woodall, William
Woods, Samuel
Yoxall, James Henry

TELLERS FOR THE AYES, Mr. Thomas Ellis and Mr. McArthur.

NOES.

Acland-Hood, Capt. Sir A. F.
Allhusen, Augustus Henry Eden
Ascroft, Robert
Ashmead-Bartlett, Sir Ellis
Atkinson, Rt. Hon. John
Baden-Powell, Sir Geo. Smyth
Bagot, Capt. Josceline FitzRoy
Bailey, James (Walworth)
Baillie, James E. B. (Inverness)
Baird, John George Alexander
Balcarres, Lord
Baldwin, Alfred
Balfour, Rt. Hon. A. J. (Manch'r)
Balfour, Gerald William (Leeds)
Banbury, Frederick George
Barnes, Frederic Gorell
Barry, A. H. Smith- (Hunts.)
Barry, Francis Tress (Windsor)
Bartley, George C. T.
Bathurst, Hon. Allen Benjamin
Beach, Rt. Hon. Sir M. H. (Bristol)
Begg, Ferdinand Faithfull
Bennett, Henry Currie Leigh-
Bethell, Captain
Bhownaggree, M. M.
Biddulph, Michael
Blundell, Colonel Henry
Bond, Edward
Boscawen, Arthur Griffith-
Bousfield, William Robert
Brodrick, Rt. Hon. St. John
Brookfield, A. Montagu
Brown, Alexander H.
Bucknill, Thomas Townsend
Burdett-Coutts, W.
Butcher, John George
Campbell, James A.
Carlile, William Walter
Carson, Edward
Cavendish, R. F. (N. Lancs)
Cavendish, V.C.W. (Derbyshire)
Cayzer, Charles William
Cecil, Lord Hugh
Chaloner, Captain R. G. W.
Chamberlain, Rt. Hon. J. (Bir.)
Chamberlain, J. Austen (Worc'r)
Chaplin, Rt. Hon. Henry
Charrington, Spencer
Chelsea, Viscount
Clare, Octavius Leigh
Clarke, Sir Edward (Plymouth)
Cochrane, Hon. Thos. H. A. E.
Coghill, Douglas Harry
Cohen, Benjamin Louis
Collings, Rt. Hon. Jesse
Colomb, Sir John Chas. Ready
Colston, Chas. Edw. H. Athole
Cook, Fred Lucas (Lambeth)
Corbett, A. Cameron (Glasgow)
Courtney, Rt. Hon. Leonard H.
Cranborne, Viscount
Cripps, Charles Alfred
Cross, Herb. Shepherd (Bolton)
Currie, Sir Donald
Curzon, Rt. Hn. G. N. (Lanc. S.W.)
Curzon, Viscount (Bucks.)
Dalbiac, Major Philip Hugh
Dalrymple, Sir Charles
Darling, Charles John
Dickson-Poynder, Sir John P.
Dixon, George
Dixon-Hartland, Sir Fred. Dixon
Donkin, Richard Sim
Dorington, Sir John Edward
Douglas, Rt. Hon. A. Akers-
Drucker, A.
Duncombe, Hon. Hubert V.
Dyke, Rt. Hn. Sir William Hart
Edwards, Gen. Sir James Bevan
Egerton, Hon. A. de Tatton
Fardell, Thomas George
Fellowes, Hon. Ailwyn Edward
Fergusson, Rt. Hn. Sir J. (Manc'r)
Fielden, Thomas
Finch, George H.
Finlay, Sir Robert Bannatyne
Firbank, Joseph Thomas
Fisher, William Hayes
Fison, Frederick William
FitzGerald, Sir R. U. Penrose
Flannery, Fortescue
Fletcher, Sir Henry
Folkestone, Viscount
Forster Henry William
Forwood, Rt. Hn. Sir Arthur B.
Foster, Harry S. (Suffolk)
Fry, Lewis
Galloway, William Johnson
Garfit, William
Gedge, Sydney
Gibbs, Hn. A. G. H. (City of Lond.)
Gibbs, Hon. Vicary (St. Albans.)
Gilliat, John Saunders
Goldsworthy, Major-General
Gordon, John Edward
Gorst, Rt. Hon. Sir John Eldon
Goschen, Rt. Hn. G. J. (St. G'rg's)
Goschen, George J. (Sussex)
Goulding, Edward Alfred
Graham, Henry Robert
Gray, Ernest (West Ham)
Green, Walford D. (Wednesb'ry)
Greene, Henry D. (Shrewsbury)
Gretton, John
Gull, Sir Cameron
Halsey, Thomas Frederick
Hamilton, Rt. Hon. Lord Geo.
Hanbury, Rt. Hon. Robert Wm.
Hare, Thomas Leigh
Haslett, Sir James Horner
Heath, James
Helder, Augustus
Hermon-Hodge, Robert Trotter
Hill, Rt. Hn. Lord Arthur (Down)
Hoare, Samuel (Norwich)
Hobhouse, Henry
Holland, Hon. Lionel Raleigh
Hopkinson, Alfred
Houldsworth, Sir Wm. Henry
Howell, William Tudor
Hozier, James Henry Cecil
Hutton, John (Yorks. N.R.)
Isaacson, Frederick Wootton
Jeffreys, Arthur Frederick
Jessel, Captain Herbert Merton
Johnston, William (Belfast)
Johnstone, John H. (Sussex)
Jolliffe, Hon. H. George
Kemp, George
Kenrick, William
Kenyon-Slaney, Col. William
Kimber, Henry
King, Sir Henry Seymour
Knowles, Lees
Lafone, Alfred
Laurie, Lieut.-General
Lawrence, Wm. F. (Liverpool)
Lecky, William Edward H.
Legh, Hon. Thomas W. (Lanc.)
Lockwood, Lt.-Col. A. R. (Essex)
Loder, Gerald Walter Erskine
Long, Col. Chas. W. (Evesham)
Long, Rt. Hn. Walter (Liverpool)
Lopes, Henry Yarde Buller
Lowther, Rt. Hn. James (Kent)
Loyd, Archie Kirkman
Lubbock, Rt. Hon. Sir John
Lucas-Shadwell, William
Macartney, W. G. Ellison
Macdona, John Cumming
Maclean, James Mackenzie
McCalmont, H. L. B. (Cambs.)

McIver, Sir Lewis
McKillop, James
Malcolm, Ian
Manners, Lord Edward Wm. J.
Maple, Sir John Blundell
Marks, Henry Hananel
Martin, Richard Biddulph
Mellor, Colonel (Lancashire)
Melville, Beresford Valentine
Meysey-Thompson, Sir H. M.
Milbank, Powlett Charles John
Mildmay, Francis Bingham
Milner, Sir Frederick George
Milward, Colonel Victor
Monckton, Edward Philip
Montagu, Hon. J. Scott (Hants.)
Moon, Edward Robert Pacy
Morrell, George Herbert
Morrison, Walter
Mowbray, Rt. Hon. Sir John
Murray, Rt. Hn. A. Graham (Bute)
Murray, Charles J. (Coventry)
Murray, Col. Wyndham (Bath)
Myers, William Henry
Nicol, Donald Ninian
Northcote, Hon. Sir H. Stafford,
Orr-Ewing, Charles Lindsay
Pender, James
Penn, John
Plunkett, Hon. Horace Curzon
Pollock, Harry Frederick
Powell, Sir Francis Sharp
Pryce-Jones, Edward
Purvis, Robert
Rasch, Major Frederic Carne
Renshaw, Charles Bine
Richardson, Thomas
Ridley, Rt. Hon. Sir Matthew W.
Ritchie, Rt. Hon. Chas. Thomson
Rollit, Sir Albert Kaye
Round, James
Russell, Gen. F. S. (Cheltenham)
Russell, Sir George (Berkshire)
Russell, T. W. (Tyrone)
Samuel, Harry S. (Limehouse)
Sandys, Lieut.-Col. Thos. Myles
Savory, Sir Joseph
Scoble, Sir Andrew Richard
Seely, Charles Hilton
Sharpe, William Edward T.
Shaw-Stewart, M. H. (Renfrew)
Sidebotham, J. W. (Cheshire)
Simeon, Sir Barrington
Sinclair, Louis (Romford)
Skewes-Cox, Thomas
Smith, Abel H. (Christchurch)
Smith, Hon. W. F. D. (Strand)
Stanley, Lord (Lancs.)
Stanley, Henry M. (Lambeth)
Sutherland, Sir Thomas
Talbot, Lord E. (Chichester)
Talbot, John G. (Oxford Univ.)
Taylor, Francis
Thorburn, Walter
Thornton, Percy M.
Tomlinson, Wm. Edw. Murray
Tritton, Charles Ernest
Valentia, Viscount
Warkworth, Lord
Warr, Augustus Frederick
Webster, R. G. (St. Pancras)
Webster, Sir R. E. (Isle of Wight)
Welby, Lt.-Col. A. C. E.
Wharton, John Lloyd
Williams, Colonel R. Dorset
Williams, Joseph Powell- (Birm.)
Wolff, Gustav Wilhelm
Wortley, Rt. Hon. C. B. Stuart-
Wylie, Alexander
Wyndham-Quin, Major W. H.
Wyvill, Marmaduke D'Arcy

TELLERS FOR THE NOES, Sir William Walrond and Mr. Anstruther.

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

MILITARY WORKS (MONEY) BILL.

Considered in Committee :—

[The CHAIRMAN of WAYS and MEANS, Mr. J. W. LOWTHER, in the Chair.]

Clause 1—

ISSUE OF MONEY FOR THE WORKS MENTIONED IN THE SCHEDULE.

(1.) The Treasury shall issue out of the Consolidated Fund or the growing produce thereof such sums not exceeding in the whole *five million four hundred and fifty-eight thousand pounds*, as may be required by a Secretary of State for defraying the costs of the works specified in the schedule to this Act incurred at any time after the thirty-first of March one thousand eight hundred and ninety-six.

(2.) Before any moneys are issued for the purpose of expenditure under any head in the schedule to this Act, a Secretary of State shall submit to the Treasury an estimate, with such details as may be required by the Treasury, of the expenditure under that head for which it is for the time being proposed to issue money, and shall therewith state the period within which it is proposed to expend the money so issued.

(3.) There shall be no excess of expenditure under any head in the schedule above the amount stated therein for that head, unless the Treasury and Secretary of State are satisfied that the excess will be compensated by savings on the expenditure under another head, so that no excess will be caused over the total expenditure specified in the schedule, and in such cases the savings may be applied in payment of the excess.

MR. T. LOUGH (Islington, W.) moved, in sub-section (1), to leave out the words "*five million four hundred and fifty-eight thousand*" and to insert the words "*three million.*" He said that one of the precedents on which the right hon. Gentleman in charge of the Bill most relied was that of the Barracks Act of 1890. According to the statement made under that Act there was, on March 31st last, £1,143,000 unexpended under the Act, and if the expenditure this year had proceeded at the same rate as in the two previous years there would still be enough money in the hands of the military authorities for two years more. The amount asked for now was unnecessarily large. He suggested that the sum should be restricted to three millions, because the whole of this expenditure practically passed out of the control of that House the moment the Bill had passed through Committee. The amount for the purchase of the land on Salisbury plain, and about half-a-million for ranges, were the only precise amounts that had been mentioned, and which enabled them to see how the expenditure was built up. He protested against the small items being included, which should properly come upon the ordinary Estimates. If this Amendment were adopted, there would still be sufficient money left to the Government for everything that was wanted to be done under the Bill. The small items would then be excluded from the Bill, with the result that a great deal of waste and extravagance might be avoided. Loans of such great magnitude should only be made for large works, such as those in the Naval Works Bill. They had not been satisfied with the answers they had received on this subject, and he therefore begged to move the Amendment standing in his name.

*THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR WAR (Mr. BRODRICK, Surrey, Guildford) said he did not think the hon. Member had made out a very good case for the change he proposed. The hon. Member had had an opportunity of hearing what were the grounds on which they asked for the present sum, which, on two occasions, he had himself endeavoured to justify. The hon. Member's suggestion was that a sufficient allowance would be a million for barracks, a million for ranges (including accommodation for manœuvring and mobilisation), and a million for defence works, and he tried to justify this proposal by stating that there were unexpended balances still left from the Barracks Act. His hon. Friend the Financial Secretary had already explained that, although a sum of about £780,000 was not actually expended, that sum had been already allocated to certain works which, if not actually in progress, would be in progress directly. That did not in the slightest degree relieve them from putting up barracks in other places provided for in the schedule. He did not think it was the case at all that there were many small works in the barracks item. It was desirable not only that large barracks should be erected, but that smaller barracks at the coaling stations should also be provided for by the Bill. He knew nothing that was more likely to conduce to waste or extravagance than the proposal of the hon. Member, which would compel them to get forward piecemeal with these works. The sum they now asked for was one which had been cut down to the smallest possible dimensions. It was stated that the Bill was without precedent. That was not the case. This Bill was absolutely in accordance with precedent, and he thought it was certainly the most convenient plan that the House should be able to criticise the scheme as a whole, and to decide upon it as a whole.

MR. D. F. GODDARD (Ipswich) supported the Amendment, because it seemed to him they should take every opportunity of opposing the expenditure of money which ought not, in his opinion, to be covered by loan at all. It was admitted that the whole of the money asked for under this Bill was not to be raised on loan, but what he and his hon. Friends desired was a definite statement as to what part of the money was to be raised on loan and what part was not to be so raised. The right hon. Gentleman defended the system of terminable annuities by stating that it laid the whole scheme before the House. That was not a very satisfactory answer. He could not see why, if the Government had a definite scheme, they should not state whether they intended to carry it out by way of loan or in one year's Estimates. If they stated their scheme hon. Members would have an opportunity of judging of it without being pledged to a term of years, as now proposed. He was confident it would be generally conceded that some of the items in the five-and-a-half millions sterling ought not to be covered by loan extending over a period of anything like 30 years. £66,000 was asked for converting Woking female prison into barracks. He did not think that such an item for such a purpose should be raised by way of loan. Neither did he think that the item for the replacement of huts should be raised by loan. If any municipal authority were to come to the House of Commons or to the Local Government Board and ask for sanction to borrow money for such a purpose, and to spread the repayment over 30 years, sanction would be at once refused. The loan system was calculated to confuse the minds of the taxpayers as to the amount that was really being spent, and it ought not to be carried too far. There were some items specified in the Bill as to which they had but very scanty information. There were, for instance, the items of £1,120,000 for defence works, and £1,149,000 for ranges, including accommodation for manœuvres. The military charges were constantly increasing, and the House had, therefore, a right to ask to be supplied with the fullest details. On these grounds he felt obliged to support the Amendment proposed by his hon. Friend.

*Sir C. DILKE said that, although he supported the Bill and should vote with the Government in most, if not all, of the divisions that would be taken upon it, there was one point upon which they might reasonably ask the Government to give an assurance. Hon. Members experienced great difficulty in ascertaining the total military and naval expenditure in any particular year. Ultimately they knew how much had been spent in a given 12 months, but they did not know it for a long time afterwards. He, therefore, asked the Government to undertake that the Ministers responsible for the various departments should, when making their annual statements, mention the estimated amount to be spent out of loan money in the course of the year, and also state the sum which had been spent out of loan money in the past year. [" Hear, hear!"]

Mr. HUDSON KEARLEY (Devonport) thought the point raised by his hon. Friend the Member for Islington as to the expenditure on short-lived work was one deserving of attention. Government compelled local authorities to pay off borrowed money according to a well-defined schedule, that was to say, they allowed local authorities to borrow money for buildings for a certain number of years, but they did not allow them to borrow money for furniture and many other purposes for anything like the same period. If the Government laid down such a rule for local authorities, they ought to adhere to it themselves. Much of the expenditure now proposed must be very short-lived. There was, for instance, the expenditure for barracks. That must be short-lived, and the repayment of the money borrowed ought not to be spread over so long a time as 30 years. There were many things for which money was to be obtained on loan which would be non-existent before 30 years expired. Much had been said about the schedule. As a matter of fact it was so much waste paper, for it would not appear in the Act of Parliament, and there was nothing to cause it to be adhered to in any way. Under Sub-section 2 of Clause 1, the money could be spent as it was thought proper to spend it. He proposed to move as an Amendment later on that the Estimate should be presented to the House rather than to the Treasury. If it were presented to the House, the House would have some control over the money; but, seeing that it was proposed by the Bill to refer it to the Treasury, the House would lose all control, and they were therefore entitled to ask the Government to diminish the amount of the loan.

*Mr. BRODRICK said it had never been intended to include in the loan works that were not of a permanent nature. Barrack furniture, guns, or temporary equipments were not included. It was proposed to apply the loan entirely to permanent works, such as the structure of barracks, of defence works, and the purchase of land. In reply to the right hon. Gentleman the Member for the Forest of Dean he might say that, in regard to loans, it had always been the custom of the War Office to provide Parliament with a statement of the sums actually expended each year. In the present instance the War Office proposed to supplement that statement by another annual statement of what was proposed to be spent. The House, therefore, would have complete control over the money, and would be able to review the progress of the works from time to time. ["Hear, hear!"]

Mr. REGINALD McKENNA (Monmouth, N.) said the promise of the right hon. Gentleman to provide an annual statement of the amount proposed to be spent was satisfactory, so far as it went. But his main reason in supporting the Amendment was, that a sufficient justification for not placing this expenditure on the annual Estimates had not been given by the Government. The only excuse advanced was that contractors desired to be paid according as they proceeded with their work. But surely that could not be accepted as a valid reason for the course proposed by the Government. He was perfectly certain that any contractor would be quite willing to undertake any work in the sure faith that Parliament, on the application of the Minister responsible, would vote the money. He thought a protest ought to be made against this growing practice of withdrawing Army and Navy expenditure from the detailed criticism afforded by the Estimates, which, if persisted in, would lead to a complete revolution in the forms of the House.

Mr. W. WOODALL (Hanley) said he desired to call attention to the fact that the Act was intended to be retrospective.

*The CHAIRMAN of WAYS and MEANS: That does not arise on this Amendment, but on a subsequent Amendment.

Mr. CHANNING thought his hon. Friend was justified in moving the Amendment, both as a protest against this growing Army expenditure, for which no possible justification had been advanced by the Government, and against the withdrawal of the particular expenditure proposed by the Bill from the control of the House. The late Mr. Childers, who was a past master in all financial questions, had denounced as bad and improper the policy which the Government were now pursuing of attempting to oust from the control of Parliament the expenditure on those military works. The Barracks Act, which was passed when the Conservatives were last in office, afforded an ample illustration of the impropriety of the course which the Government were now pursuing. The Government had demanded under that Act far more than they had required. As large a sum as £778,000 had been left over, and no explanation whatever had been given as to the purposes to which it had been applied. He thought that a most objectionable method of dealing with public money. What guarantee was there that the same thing would not happen under this Bill? What guarantee was there that the Government, having obtained money on the pretence of wanting it for one purpose did not spend it on another? Anyone who looked at the schedule of the Bill must see the flimsy character of the proposed works. In truth, the Bill, like many more Bills of the Government, was a sham. He was sure the country would repudiate it in the most emphatic way on the very first opportunity.

Mr. J. BRIGG (York, W.R., Keighley) complained that there were not sufficient details forthcoming as to the new hospitals which it was proposed to build in Dublin, Edinburgh, and London. Had they no military hospitals there before? What was the cost to be? They had no information as to the items which they were asked to vote. He looked jealously upon these hospitals. It was the beginning of a very large and expensive item, which they might have to follow up for years. There was another item, and that related to Winchester Barracks, which had been destroyed by fire. Was there no insurance on Winchester Barracks?

*The CHAIRMAN of WAYS and MEANS ruled that the hon. Member was going outside the Vote.

Mr. WOODALL asked what amount of work had already been executed?

*The FINANCIAL SECRETARY to the WAR OFFICE (Mr. Powell-Williams, Birmingham, S.): I have already answered that across the Table. The sum is £86,000.

Mr. T. LOUGH said it had been admitted that there was a sum of money from last year which had not been expended. They ought to know about that before they voted a further large sum. He thought the building of barracks might be done for a much smaller sum than the amount asked for. The point he wanted specially to make was with reference to temporary earthworks. These works would not last 30 years. The Palmerston Works did not last 30 years.

Mr. J. GILHOOLY (Cork Co., W.) asked for information as to the proposed works in Bantry Bay—whether they were going to make the line of railway from Kenmare?

*The CHAIRMAN of WAYS and MEANS ruled that this was a matter which could not be dealt with at that time.

Question put, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Clause."

The Committee divided:—Ayes, 147; Noes, 47.—(Division List, No. 41.)

On the return of the Chairman of Ways and Means, after the usual interval,

Mr. LOUGH proposed, in sub-section (1), to leave out the words "at any time," and to insert the words "within seven years." He said that as the Bill read at present it was provided that this very large sum of money might be issued to defray the cost of the works specified in the schedule, incurred at any time. He, therefore, proposed to substitute for that "incurred within seven years from the passing of this Act." His object was to oblige the War Office, if the money was not spent within a reasonable lapse of time, to come back to the House. Under the Bill as it stood the War Office might carry out the works in the Schedule or not, they might spend all the money or not, as they liked; in fact, they might do what they liked with it. The expenditure might be spread over 40 or 50 years. What was the effect of that? He believed that the money granted under the Act of 1872 was only exhausted a year or two ago—indeed, he believed there was even now some little balance of £50 or £60 still unspent. The money might dribble out of the Treasury in the same way under this Bill, and he proposed that there should be a limit of time fixed. The reason why he had suggested seven years was because the last Barracks Act was passed in 1890. The effect of putting in a limit was that if, for any reason, the War Office found it was not discreet or wise to spend all the money, at the end of seven years they would have to come back to the House and show what had been spent, and to leave it to the House to say whether the Act ought to be extended. The right hon. Gentleman opposite might say that they ought to trust the War Office, but he would point out that it was absolutely certain that the right hon. Gentleman and his Party would not be at the War Office at the end of seven years. So that he was really going a long way to meet the right hon. Gentleman by giving him time to spend the money.

*MR. POWELL-WILLIAMS said he hardly realised the ground on which the hon. Gentleman made this proposal. The hon. Gentleman seemed to think that the present Government would have quitted the War Office before the seven years he proposed had expired; but supposing that were the case, and supposing the suggested limit of time were put on this expenditure, it would be exhausted before the Party to which the hon. Gentleman belonged came into power, and they would have nothing to spend under this loan. The hon. Gentleman suggested that unless a limit of time of this kind were put upon the expenditure, the War Office would be in a position to spend the money or not as they pleased; but the hon. Gentleman seemed to forget that this money could only be expended for purposes specified in the Bill, and, therefore, it was not a matter in which the War Office could do as they pleased. He did not see how the hon. Gentleman could expect to gain anything by putting in a limit of seven years. No limit of time was imposed under the Barracks Act or under the Act of 1888. Reference had been made to the Cardwell Loan of 1872, and it had been said that up to a short time ago the purposes for which that loan was granted had not been fulfilled. That was rather an argument against the Amendment, as the delay that took place in carrying out the purposes of the Cardwell Loan proved that unexpected difficulties might be encountered in the execution of works, and that it might be impossible to complete them within a fixed period. A considerable amount of the money provided under this Bill had to be spent abroad. The acquisition of land and building operations abroad were often attended with long delays. If a limit of seven years were imposed the War Office would very likely find at the end of that time that some of the contemplated work was not completed, and it would then not be possible to finish it with the money provided by the loan. It was, however, the intention of the War Office—and he believed that that intention would be carried out—to spend this money within seven years, but it was not expedient to fix that or any other limit.

MR. J. C. FLYNN (Cork, N.) supported the Amendment on the ground that Parliament ought not to part for an indefinite period with its right to control the expenditure of the War Office or of any other spending department. The Financial Secretary had rather given his case away by saying that it was the intention to complete these works within seven years. He thought his hon. Friend would be willing to substitute eight years or even nine for the number mentioned in the Amendment. It was undesirable to withdraw for ever large sums of money from the control of Parliament, whether there were precedents for such withdrawal or not. He admitted that it might not be convenient for the War Office to come to Parliament every year and to place a certain portion of this sum upon the Estimates. That might put the War Office in a very difficult position, and might interfere with the proper execution of the works. But it was a different thing to give the War Office absolute control over this money for all time. Supposing that at the end of, say, seven years, the money was not exhausted, and that it should be thought that there had been wasteful and extravagant expenditure, surely Parliament ought to have an opportunity of interfering. There was no certainty that the hon. Member opposite would keep the position of Financial Secretary for seven years, or that his successor would have the same high reputation that he had. If they parted with all control over this money, and if the barracks to be erected in Dublin should be built on an insanitary site, hon. Members who might wish to call attention to the matter would be told that they could not do so, and that Parliament was committed to this expenditure and had no right of revision. Circumstances might easily arise in consequence of a change of Ministry, or even of one Minister, or of a change of opinion respecting the works themselves, which would render it desirable and expedient to reconsider the subject after the lapse of seven years or of some such period. If the work had been well done the War Department would lose nothing by coming to Parliament. He trusted, therefore, that the Government would consent to fix a time when Parliament could again be heard on this subject.

Mr. DILLON regretted that the hon. Member for Islington had named in his Amendment so long a period as seven years. He did not admit that the War Department had made out a good case at all for this Works Loan Bill. He did not see why the Government should not ask every year in the Estimates for the amount of money they intended to spend in the year, and thus give Parliament an opportunity of criticising their policy and plans. He was in favour of the Amendment, but thought that two or three years ought to be the limit instead of seven years. They had heard that day of a loan under the Barracks Act passed in 1890, which was not nearly expended at the present hour. [Mr. Powell-Williams: "It is all appropriated."] Yes, but it was not spent. He held that every man who was in a responsible position and intrusted with the expenditure of money should be viewed with suspicion by Parliament. That was the principle upon which the Estimates were submitted for discussion. No Minister had a right to plead that the same trust should be put in him as would be put in him were he dealing with private affairs. The way in which the Barracks Act Loan had been used supplied the strongest possible argument against the course which it was now proposed to take. It afforded the strongest illustration of the evils that might arise from giving a free hand to a Minister for a number of years. In the case of the Royal Barracks in Dublin the original proposal was to construct—

*Mr. BRODRICK asked whether the question of the Royal Barracks in Dublin could be raised now. He thought it could only be dealt with on the Vote for the interest on the Works Fund in the Estimates of the year.

*The CHAIRMAN of WAYS and MEANS said that he understood the hon. Member for East Mayo was only referring to the subject by way of illustration.

Mr. DILLON said that was so. The Financial Secretary had quoted the Barracks Act as a precedent for granting this new loan without any limit of time, but it really ought to be a warning to them not to do so. Although the immense sum of £160,000 had been paid over, the barracks were still in the most unsatisfactory and insanitary condition. Then, again, the proceedings in connection with the Royal Barracks had been most extraordinary. Some portions of the barracks had been floored at great cost and then pulled up, but after an enormous expenditure of money the barracks were still left in a very unsatisfactory condition. He did not think that a stronger argument could be offered for having those sums on the annual Estimates than the fact of the Committee being asked now to sanction this large sum for an unlimited period.

Mr. GODDARD thought that the Amendment was a reasonable one. It appeared to him as if the Government had not much confidence in the country supporting their proposals when they objected to the insertion of so reasonable a time limit. He believed that there was not a work mentioned in the schedule which could not be carried out within the seven years mentioned in the Amendment. It was unreasonable to ask for a long extension of time in these matters. The Financial Secretary had referred to the works that were carried out in foreign stations. There might be some difficulty as to completing purchases of land abroad, and so on; but surely, when the Government put forward a programme of certain works, they had formed some conclusion as to whether they could carry them out, and none of them were of so extensive a character as to involve the acquisition of a very large tract of land. Most of the works were in the nature of enlargements, replacements, and additions to garrisons; and he asserted that there was no weight in the argument that in connection with those parts of the works situated at foreign stations there should be any real difficulty in acquiring land. Though, as he knew, there might be some slight difficulty in acquiring land in foreign places, men of business were enabled to overcome that difficulty with comparative ease, and no negotiations, according to his experience, had taken seven years. Therefore a time limit should be inserted with regard to works of a definite character, because it was undesirable to lay down a programme which might not be completed within 20, 30, or 40 years.

MR. JOHN BURNS (Battersea) said that if he were disposed to find fault with the Amendment it was that seven years was too long a period. He understood that this was a matter of urgency, and he thought that five years were long enough. The Committee had voted 5½ millions, but in his judgment the best plan would be to vote annually that portion of the sum which had not been spent in the preceding year. He believed that all those works, however urgent, could be carried out in a year or two years. He noticed that there was £59,000 for hospital accommodation at Sierra Leone; but knowing as he did that station, he could see reasons why perhaps in time the military authorities should abandon Sierra Leone as an hospital centre; and in a year or two they might suggest a healthier spot. After being half way through the alterations which were contemplated, sanitary conditions might prompt an abandonment of Sierra Leone. He objected to money being spent on a site and buildings that could not be permanently guaranteed. The same remark applied to Aldershot, which was, on the other hand, a healthy place. £150,000 were to be spent for continuation ar replacement of huts in peramanent mat rials; but 40,000 acres were to be a quired as a manœuvring ground on Sali bury Plain. Perhaps in a twelvemont a large portion of this £150,000 migh be justifiably diverted to Salisbury Plai instead. Again, St. Lucia was to l put into a stronger position; bu there was no guarantee that strategist would not alter their opinion six month hence; and therefore he objected eve to one-tenth of the £250,000 in 189 being spent on St. Lucia. The mone might be invested, and the House c Commons ought to be in a position t review this expenditure every year. I the Committee gave the Government blank cheque, they deprived the Hous of Commons of opportunities of effectiv criticism once a year as to how th money was being spent or wastec Why the Government opposed thi Amendment he could not understand, ex cept that possibly some of the Wa Office authorities were a bit doubtful c some of the sites for barracks and hosp tals which they had recommended, an hoped by this blank cheque to do wha they would not attempt to do if the were tied up to an annual, or a thre five, or seven years' limit. As matte stood, the House of Commons was simpl asked to hand over 5½ millions to th military authorities to do what the pleased with it.

MR. DILLON, on the point of orde said the Amendment did not require th Government to spend the whole of th 5½ millions within seven years. On th contrary, if they did not spend it al the portion which was unspent the should account for to Parliament.

MR. LOUGH said the Committee ha only had one answer from the Gover ment, and that of the most unsatisfacto character. The hon. Member gave aw his case. He said the Government i tended to spend the whole money with seven years. But, mark what the sta of the answer was. It was, We want limit of time, because the money c only be spent on the purposes specifi If the hon. Member looked at sub-secti 3 of the clause he would see that t specification had not a shred of meani in it. If the Government spent more the barracks they might spend more the ranges; or, if they spent less on t ranges they might spend more on Salisbury Plain. They might throw it into the sea, as they pleased. There was no guarantee that the money should be spent in accordance with the schedule. If the Government wanted to shorten the proceedings they should accept the Amendment.

*MR. BRODRICK repeated that the Government could not accept the Amendment. They had undertaken to lay before the House every year, not merely a statement of the expenditure incurred during the past year, but an estimate of the probable expenditure for the subsequent years, thus giving the House, on two occasions an opportunity of investigating and criticising the performances and proposals of the Government. The Estimate for the year would, in every case, he stated by whoever was responsible for introducing the Estimates. The subject could be criticised upon that Vote, and it could be criticised again on the interest taken on account of the works voted, which would have to be charged each year.

MR. FLYNN pointed out that the House of Commons could not repudiate the interest due. That would be a most ungracious proceeding.

*MR. CHARLES HARRISON (Plymouth) said the schedule showed that there was no practical difficulty in coming to the House for further money if the work was not completed. That was in fact the present state of things. The very note put into the schedule referred to "works not completed." But no inconvenience was stated to have been caused by such interruption to the carrying on of those works. Application was now made to increase the capital sum originally dedicated to particular works, and if there was no inconvenience in reference to the application there could be no inconvenience in coming, at seven years, for the purpose of applying for further money. It was more than possible that the defence works might get out of date in seven years, looking to the constant advances in artillery and military science. He had seen in his day works constructed at Gibraltar which were absolutely useless at the present time. In seven years time the whole system of defensive works might be so entirely changed that this House should be called upon to exercise a control over the capital expenditure. So in regard to barracks. There was a revolution every five years in sanitary arrangements. They could not tell what might be the state of science seven years hence in regard to military works and sanitation, and yet the House of Commons was called upon to hand over to the Department five millions of money without any specification except for a comparatively small sum. For these and other reasons, he submitted that the control of Parliament over the expenditure ought to be maintained, and if the capital had not been spent in the seven years, that then a further opportunity should be afforded to Parliament to review the situation.

THE FIRST LORD OF THE ADMIRALTY appealed to the Committee to now come to a decision on the Amendment. He thought that what had fallen from his right hon. Friend should have had the effect of shortening the discussion.

MR. MCKENNA had been satisfied to some extent, though not wholly, by the reply of the right hon. Gentleman when he said that hon. Members would have the opportunity of discussing the matter each year on the Estimates, as to the amount that had been expended or was to be expended. If that were so, and they were each year to vote upon it—

*MR. BRODRICK: No, no, not to vote upon it. ["Hear, hear!"]

MR. MCKENNA: Then what was the use of discussing the matter if there was to be no vote. ["Hear, hear!"] On that ground alone he should be prepared to support the Amendment.

*MR. BRODRICK said that there could be no vote again on moneys that had been already voted by Parliament; but the work of the expenditure could be criticised on the Estimates, and it would be open to hon. Members to move a reduction on the Estimates or to move a reduction in the Under Secretary's salary if they disagreed with the action of the War Office in the matter.

MR. MCKENNA said that that did not meet his main objection. One of the details of the Bill, as had been said, was to fortify London. Now, under the Bill as it stood the whole of the five and a half millions might be spent on that one purpose, if the Government chose so to decide. ["Hear, hear!"] If there had been an opportunity of voting every year on that work—

*THE CHAIRMAN OF WAYS AND MEANS: Order, order! That point does not arise on the Amendment, which is to limit the expenditure of the money within seven years. ["No, no!"] If this Amendment is carried the whole of the money would have to be spent in seven years. [MR. LOUGH: "No, no."]

MR. MCKENNA said the words were that the money should be expended as might be required by the Secretary of State, not necessarily that the whole amount must be spent in seven years. The object was to limit the works to seven years.

*THE CHAIRMAN OF WAYS AND MEANS said the argument of the hon. Member was that every year this proposal was to be discussed on the Estimates, but that was not met by the Amendment.

MR. MCKENNA granted that the point was not met by the Amendment, but he certainly understood that the right hon. Gentleman promised that hon. Members would have an opportunity of discussing the matter every year on the Estimates. ["Hear, hear!"] One of the objects he had in supporting the Amendment was to put a check on the extravagance of the War Office. He had by no means been satisfied with the reasons the Government had given to show why the Amendment should not be accepted. Unless some limit of time was imposed the Committee would be giving the Government a blank cheque for five and a half millions to spend when they liked and how they liked. It would be possible even for them to devote the whole of the money to one purpose. ["Hear, hear!"]

MR. LABOUCHERE said that when he entered the Chamber a short time before he ascertained by inquiry that an impression did prevail among many hon. Members on that side of the House that the Under Secretary had promised that the matter would be brought up each year in the Estimates, and that hon. Members would be able to discuss and vote upon it. ["Hear, hear!" *and Ministerial cries of* "No, no!"] But now they knew that was not to be the case. The proposal to place some limit of time on the expenditure of the money and on the works was a most reasonable and legitimate one. Supposing a General Election took place on the morrow and the Liberals got into power, though they were in for six years they would not have anything to do with this wasteful expenditure—no, not even to the extent of a shilling. [*Cheers, and Ministerial laughter.*] If they did he would as cheerfully vote against them as he intended to vote then against right hon. Gentlemen opposite. [*Cheers.*] Then supposing after this time that right hon. Gentlemen opposite again came into power, they would have the whole of this money at hand, but by that time the condition of things might have wholly changed. ["Hear, hear!"] He was fully of opinion that there ought to be some limit of time inserted in the Bill, and the only hesitation he had in voting for the Amendment of his hon. Friend was that seven years was too long a period. He should have preferred a much shorter period—say four or five years, for it should not, he thought, be so long as possibly to extend the matter to other Parliaments. ["Hear, hear!"] For those reasons he should vote for the Amendment.

Question put, "That the words 'at any time' stand part of the Clause."

The Committee divided:—Ayes, 178; Noes, 68.—(Division List, No. 42.)

MR. LOUGH proposed, in sub-section (1), to leave out the words "ninety-six," and to insert the words "ninety-seven." He said he anticipated no objection to this Amendment. As the clause stood loans would date from the end of the last financial year instead of, as they should, from the end of the present financial year, 31st March 1897. He could hardly think that the figures 1896 had been inserted intentionally, he thought it must be a mistake or misprint and, if so, he would be glad that he interrupted, but if the date 1896 was intended then it appeared to him a monstrous proceeding. What was the position of the right hon. Gentleman at the end of 1896? He had an amount of £1,150,000 of the Barrack Loan of 1890 according to the average expenditure of the previous years, and yet with this large amount in hand he brought in this Bill giving it a retrospective character in regard to the date from which it should start. The Under Secretary had answered a question to-day, and probably that answer would enter into the reply now. He said that a certain amount of this money had already been expended, some £80,000 or £90,000. It was a most improper proceeding if any money had in this way been expended, it touched the point of the control of the House of Commons over the expenditure of the kingdom. It was a monstrous thing that any money should be expended under a Bill before that Bill had been discussed. Perhaps the right hon. Gentleman would say that the amount of £90,000 was wanted, and if that were so, then it might have been obtained in two ways. It might have been taken from the last loan, or, better still, it might have been placed on the Estimates, and then it would have come before the House in a legitimate way. To ask the House to give the Bill a retrospective character would be to set a bad precedent on these financial operations. He appealed to the present Chancellor of the Exchequer and his predecessor to say if there was any precedent for such a proposal to meet a rash expenditure of the War Office.

*MR. BRODRICK said of the two courses the hon. Member suggested in regard to the expenditure since March 31, 1896, he was at a loss to know which was the more objectionable. First the hon. Member said the money might have been provided out of the balance of the Barrack Act 1890, thus diverting the money to different services altogether to those contemplated in that Act. The hon. Member's proposal was that the Government having judged themselves that the money under the Barracks Loan of 1890 should be applied to one service should deliberately apply it to another. That was a course the Government did not think it ought to take. An alternative suggestion was that the requirements should be included in the Votes for the year. The Bill was introduced last year and would have been carried had time permitted. The proposal to put the money on the Votes was negatived for the best of all possible reasons, that the House and the Public Accounts Committee should be able to judge of the expenditure on the different services, but to spread part of the expenditure over the Votes of 1896-7 and then subsequently to transfer the major portion of a large sum to the Bill would be an unsound system of finance and one that a Minister would adopt if he desired to hide what had been done from public criticism. It was a course that the Public Accounts Committee would certainly condemn and obviously would be a financial inconvenience. For these reasons the course proposed in the Bill had been adopted.

MR. T. R. BUCHANAN (Aberdeenshire, E.) said though he supported the Bill he did not quite think this retrospective proposal was one to be commended. The right hon. Gentleman had not stated whether there had been a precedent for a Loan Bill being brought before the House when part of the money borrowed under it had been already spent. Was this £86,000 spent upon new works?

*MR. POWELL-WILLIAMS said the sum of £86,000 was expended entirely upon fortifications under the Imperial Defence Act. The whole of the money provided by the Estimates having been expended, the War Office was in the position last year of either absolutely stopping the works which were going on, and in respect of which some contracts had been made, or of having to anticipate by a month or two the sanction of Parliament to continue the works. The latter course was adopted, it being absolutely necessary to take that step, and the sum of £86,000—wholly for fortifications—was expended in that way.

MR. BUCHANAN: Are we to understand that this £86,000 was spent in continuation works which had been undertaken by the Imperial Defence Act?

*MR. POWELL-WILLIAMS: Yes.

MR. BUCHANAN remarked that that answered his question as to whether these were new works or not, but he should like to have an answer to his query as to whether there was any precedent for bringing forward a Loan Bill borrowing money, and spending part of that money before the Bill had been passed?

*THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Sir MICHAEL HICKS BEACH, Bristol, W.) replied that there was. In the autumn of 1895 the House of Commons sanctioned the principle of the Uganda Railway, and a small sum was voted to commence operations. On the basis of that sanction a certain sum, he thought over £100,000, was expended in the first eight months of 1896, before the Act of last Session authorising the loan of £3,000,000 for the purpose became law, and such anticipatory expenditure was included in that Loan Act. ["Hear, hear!"]

MR. BUCHANAN admitted that that, to a certain extent, was a precedent; but the assent of Parliament was given in the autumn of 1895.

*THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER: So it has been for these works. The schemes of which the works comprised in the £86,000 form part, had all been previously sanctioned by Parliament.

MR. BUCHANAN: The assent of Parliament to the grant of the money had not been given.

*THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER: The money had been spent upon the strength of the sanction already mentioned.

MR. BUCHANAN asked whether, it being found this further expenditure was necessary, the regular method would not have been either to have obtained the money from the savings of other War Office Votes, or to have come before the House with a Supplementary Estimate on the subject?

*THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER replied, No. As his right hon. Friend had said, it would have complicated the accounts in a manner that would have made them absolutely unintelligible to Parliament. They thought it a more regular financial proceeding, as Parliament had sanctioned the works and a large expenditure upon them had been by loan, that they should be carried on by loan in the same way.

MR. BUCHANAN, whilst recognising the force of what the Chancellor of the Exchequer said, remarked that the process which had been adopted weakened the control of Parliament over the expenditure of public money. He presumed that there was no more money left under the Imperial Defence Act for the completion of these works. It was thought proper, however, that the works should be completed, and money, not authorised by Parliament, had been expended for their completion, upon the trust that this Bill would be passed and the money made available. Surely that was a somewhat irregular process.

MR. McKENNA observed that, as he recollected the matter, it was stated, in reply to a Question last July or August, that this £86,000 had been spent upon Irish harbours. They now understood

from the Chancellor of the Exchequer that that money was found partly under the Imperial Defence Act. But there was no authority in that Act to expend any money for the defence of Irish harbours, and there had never been any Parliamentary authority for the expenditure of a single penny of public money upon Irish harbours. In the case of the Uganda Railway the issue was brought before the House whether they would or would not sanction the expenditure, and the House agreed to do so. The principle was accepted, and the amount agreed upon, on a Supplemental Estimate, and the money subsequently ordered to be raised by loan, the expenditure since then having been defrayed out of the loan. In the case of the Uganda Railway there was a preliminary vote by the House for the expenditure of the money, but there had been no such vote for the expenditure of money in respect of Irish harbours, and no authority under the Imperial Defence Act for such expenditure. The money had been expended in the hope of the passing of a certain Measure. It was anticipated that the Measure would have passed last year, and upon that anticipation money had been expended without any prior authority as to principle or amount. In such a case as that he submitted that the right hon. Gentleman was without any defence to the Amendment put forward by his hon. Friend that this Act should not be retrospective. He did not think that the procedure of that House in relation to the provision for the construction of the Uganda railway was analogous to that which had been adopted in the present case. In the present case a portion of the money asked for by this Bill had been already spent, and now the Government came down to the House with this Measure and asked that under it sanction should be given to their illegal expenditure. He should certainly support the Amendment. ["Hear, hear!"]

MR. T. P. WHITTAKER (York, W.R., Spen Valley) said that he had two great objections to this Bill. In the first place a portion of the money asked for under this Bill had been already spent before it was voted. There could be no excuse for the War Department having adopted such a course. They knew that the money would be required, and they ought to have come to the House and asked for sanction to spend it. Instead of taking that course they spent a portion of the money, and at the end of the financial year came to the House of Commons and asked for their sanction for an expenditure which had already been incurred. He regarded that as being a most irregular course of proceeding. He did not know whether the War Department had any experience of the principles which regulated local expenditure, but he might inform the right hon. Gentleman opposite that in case a local authority spent money in advance of their right to do so, the Local Government Board made the matter a serious cause of complaint. He thought that that was a sound principle of finance, and that it should be enforced against Government Departments as well as against local bodies. It was impossible under our present system to know precisely where we stood in the matter of these loan Bills, or to know whether they were sanctioning a past or a future expenditure. These loan Bills overlapped each other to such an extent that it was impossible to say when one loan was finished with or another began. It would be far better if one loan were to be cleared off distinctly and definitely before another was begun. From the Bill itself no definite information could be obtained. In his opinion they ought to vote money for future expenditure only. ["Hear, hear!"]

MR. HARRISON said that he regarded this question as a very serious one, involving as it did the financial procedure of that House. It was not the ordinary case of an Estimate being slightly exceeded owing to the absolute necessities of the work, and then the Government asking Parliament to sanction that overdraft. In this case the expenditure was made under two Acts, the Imperial Defence Act, 1888, and the Barracks Act, 1890. Both Acts devoted not merely a capital sum to the work in question, but, by express enactment, declared that although amounts might, under certain conditions, specified under certain heads, be amalgamated and applied to other heads or subhead of expenditure, yet that the excess should not cause the total expenditure to exceed the total sum specified in the Schedule. There was, therefore, only a vote of the capital sum, but an express statutory prohibition against any excess over that sum being paid without the sanction of Parliament. In his view no Government Department should be allowed to expend money without the express sanction of Parliament. In the face of distinct statutory prohibitions, it might well be that as Parliament was voting a capital sum to be raised on loan for the purposes of these sums, the House might in principle have stipulated that the Department should be expressly prohibited spending more over a period of years unless they came back to Parliament and obtained sanction. In these circumstances he should certainly support the Amendment. ["Hear, hear!"]

MR. COURTENAY WARNER (Stafford, Lichfield) said that he thought that the House was entitled to some more definite explanation from the Government as to the reasons that had led them to adopt the course they had done in reference to this matter, and why they had incurred an expenditure which had never been authorised by Parliament. The Government were endeavouring by means of this Bill to cover up the illegal conduct of which they had been guilty. He had never heard of any previous Measure founded upon the principles upon which this Bill was based.

MR. CHANNING thought they were entitled to some explanation. They had no information before them, it was all wrapped up in this mysterious policy of Conservative Ministries, which consisted of asking for vast sums of which no particulars were given to the House. They had no information as to whether there was or was not a surplus under the Imperial Defence Act. If they did not receive an adequate explanation they must record an emphatic protest against these items being withdrawn from control.

Question put, "That the words 'ninety-six" stand part of the clause."

The Committee divided. Ayes, 191; Noes, 75.—(Division List, No. 43.)

MR. KEARLEY moved the Amendment which stood in the name of the hon. Member for Londonderry, namely, in Sub-section (2) to leave out the word "Treasury," and to insert the words "House of Commons." The effect of the Amendment would be that before any moneys were issued the Secretary of State should submit an estimate to the

House of Commons. The Treasury were altogether unreliable in such matters. In the Barracks Act of 1890 there was a clause of which this was an exact counterpart—

> "The Secretary of State shall submit to the Treasury an estimate of any expenditure proposed."

There was a large expenditure upon the Dublin Barracks. The House of Commons were given to understand that about £60,000 was to be spent on those barracks, but, notwithstanding that the Act provided that an estimate must be submitted, the work was proceeded with without an estimate. When the work was measured up the contractor claimed £150,000, and, after protesting, the Treasury paid that amount. He cited that as a justification for objecting to the Treasury having control of these estimates. The proper people to whom these estimates should be submitted were the Members of the House of Commons. It would be argued that that would be inconvenient, and that the Treasury were the proper body. But the Treasury had grossly neglected their duty.

*THE CHAIRMAN OF WAYS AND MEANS: If I correctly understand the proposal of the hon. Gentleman it is that an estimate should be laid before the House of Commons in order that the House of Commons should decide upon it. Such a proposal would be clearly out of order, because that would be contrary to what the House has already decided. If the hon. Member merely proposes that an estimate of the expenditure should be laid on the Table of the House, for the information of hon. Members, that, of course, would be in order.

MR. KEARLEY said that that, of course, was his proposal. [*A laugh.*] If an estimate of the expenditure was submitted to the House year by year, the House would be able to keep in touch with that expenditure, which for many reasons was most desirable. So far, no Amendment had been accepted by the right hon. Gentleman. He thought he had given reasons why his own modest Amendment at least should be accepted. It only made the moderate demand that the Estimates should be submitted to the House instead of to the Treasury.

*MR. BRODRICK said he had already given an undertaking that what the hon. Gentleman desired should be done. The Government proposed to give the Treasury control in the first instance. But they would lay before the House every Session a statement of the expenditure under the Act for the preceding year, and an Estimate of the amount required for the ensuing year, so that the House would have every year opportunity for discussing the expenditure under the Act. The hon. Gentleman was under a delusion in supposing that the original Estimate of £60,000 for alterations in the Royal Barracks, Dublin, was intended to cover the whole work. It was an estimate for only part of the work. For years the engineers had been baffled in their search for the source of the continual outbreaks of disease in the barracks; and it was only by removing the soil in all parts of the barracks and discovering cesspools of which there had been no previous knowledge that the evil had been got rid of. That, of course, was a work for which it would have been impossible to contract. The Public Accounts Committee would be able to comment upon it, and, therefore, having given that pledge he hoped the hon. Member would consider his Amendment unnecessary.

*MR. WOODALL said he should vote with his hon. Friend. He thought the right hon. Gentleman opposite was hardly fair in raising an objection to the Amendment under consideration, by referring to another not before the Committee. Why was objection made to the return now proposed, and in a form approved by the Treasury? The Committee was already aware of the very large powers they were giving under the proposal of the Government. The power was given to divert money from works sanctioned to other works during the progress and expenditure over a long term of years. It was very important that the House of Commons should be constantly in touch with the expenditure of this money. Having conceded the principle he could not understand the refusal of the Government.

*THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER was very much surprised to hear that the hon. Member intended to support the Amendment. Really the Amendment did not carry out what the hon. Member who moved it desired. He did not understand that the hon. Member who had just sat down desired to get rid of the Treasury control. ["Hear, hear!"] The Amendment as it stood was intended to provide that the expenditure should be submitted as an annual Vote to the House of Commons. That was a different matter altogether. If the hon. Member desired to retain Treasury control, he ought not to press this Amendment but submit another at the end of the sub-section providing that the matter should be submitted to the House of Commons. He asked for the Chairman's ruling on the point.

*THE CHAIRMAN OF WAYS AND MEANS said that was distinctly his view, but he felt that he could not stop the hon. Member.

MR. LOUGH said he had put down an Amendment which he understood had been accepted. What was the answer of the right hon. Gentleman? He said, because he objected to the next Amendment he could not accept the present one. He thought their contention was perfectly reasonable. The principle had been conceded, but the right hon. Gentleman had declined to give legal expression to it.

MR. WARNER said that the Committee wanted to be in a position to know what the Government were doing. Under the Bill as it stood, there would be no control by the House, no power over what was spent, the objects on which it was spent, or the time that was occupied in its spending.

Question put, "That the word 'Treasury' stand part of the clause."—The Committee divided:—Ayes, 181; Noes, 65.—(Division List, No. 44.)

MR. LOUGH moved to omit Sub-section (3). He said that the sub-section was pure surplusage, and the Bill would be greatly improved if it were left out. The sub-section dealt with excess of expenditure under any particular head of schedule, and said "There shall be no excess of expenditure under any particular head, unless." It was the word "unless" that he objected to. It invalidated the only useful provision the sub-section contained. The clause said:

> "Unless the Secretary to the Treasury and the Secretary of State shall be satisfied that there will be a saving."

It was a most problematical arrangement at the best. He thought that, the fact that there was a saving on one head should not sanction an expenditure of more than was required on another head. If something was saved in barracks it was no reason why another range should be built; and similarly, if, say, £500 was saved in defence works, why on earth should more than was required be spent on barracks? He thought that if any amount could be saved it should not be taken out of the Consolidated Fund at all.

*MR. BRODRICK said he found it rather difficult to believe that the hon. Gentleman was quite serious in moving this Amendment. In large works of this kind it was impossible to be certain that the contract amount would not be exceeded in some way or other, or that works in the way of foundations or otherwise would not require to be made good; and if such expenses could be met by a judicious saving in some other of the works contemplated under the Bill, surely there was no reason why it should not.

Amendment negatived.

Question put, "That Clause 1 stand part of the Bill."—The Committee divided:—Ayes, 173; Noes, 55.—(Division List, No. 45.)

Clause 2:—

BORROWING FOR PURPOSES OF ACT, AND ACCOUNTS AND AUDIT.

(1.) The Treasury may, if they think fit, at any time for the purpose of providing money for the issue of sums out of the Consolidated Fund under this Act, or the repayment to that fund of all or any part of the sums so issued, borrow money by means of terminable annuities for such period not exceeding *thirty years* from the passing of this Act as the Treasury may fix, and all sums so borrowed shall be paid into the Exchequer.

(2.) The said annuities shall be paid out of moneys provided by Parliament for army services; and if those moneys are insufficient, shall be charged on and paid out of the Consolidated Fund or the growing produce thereof, but shall not be payable as part of the permanent annual charge for the National Debt.

(3.) The Secretary of State shall in every financial year cause to be made out and laid before the House of Commons an account, in the form required by the Treasury, of the money expended and borrowed and the securities created under this Act, and the accounts of expenditure under this Act shall be audited and reported upon by the Comptroller and Auditor General as appropriation accounts in manner directed by the Exchequer and Audit Departments Act, 1866.

MR. LOUGH moved, in Sub-section (1) to leave out the words "may, if they think fit, at any time," and to insert instead thereof the word "shall." He desired to remove the indefinite character of the clause as it stood. The clause was drawn so that the Treasury need not borrow for the purposes of the Act unless they liked, but they did not know what the Treasury would do if they did not borrow. He feared that there would be some objectionable alternative savings. In his opinion the phraseology of the Bill could not be defended.

*MR. BRODRICK opposed the Amendment, saying that the clause was drawn in the ordinary way.

*MR. HARRISON said he maintained that the *rationale* of the Bill was based on the supposition that this was capital outlay for permanent works which ought not to be provided for out of revenue, but out of capital. It was stated during the Debate that the whole of these works were of a permanent nature, and the sole argument in favour of asking Parliament to part with its annual control of expenditure was simply because this outlay was provided for in a lump sum, and to be voted once and for all. No portion of this £5,000,000 was proposed or ought to be taken out of revenue. The whole ought to be raised by loan, and the Amendment gave effect to this proposal, and prevented any part being paid for out of revenue, and unless it was adopted there was nothing in the Bill, as at present drawn, which prevented the money from being taken entirely or largely out of revenue.

MR. FLYNN said that he did not consider the explanation of the Under Secretary to be a satisfactory one. Either the money was to be raised by loan, or it was not; and the Committee wished to know how the Government stood exactly with regard to the Measure. Did the Government propose to come to Parliament annually for sanction as to the unexpended portion of the money, or did they think it was inadvisable to come to Parliament for a ratification of the sums that were to be expended. This large sum contained in the Bill was to be spread over an indefinite period, and it appeared that Parliament should not be competent to revise the expenditure. If that was the position of the Government in the matter, surely the words of the suggested Amendment were more in keeping with the object which the Government had in view than the words in the Bill itself.

And, it being midnight, the Chairman left the Chair to make his Report to the House.

Committee report Progress; to sit again upon Thursday.

PUBLIC HEALTH (SCOTLAND) BILL.

Adjourned Debate on Second Reading (5th February) further adjourned till Thursday.

LAW OF EVIDENCE (CRIMINAL CASES) BILL.

Second reading deferred till Thursday.

SUPPLY [19TH FEBRUARY].

Resolutions reported.

ARMY ESTIMATES, 1897-8.

1. "That a sum, not exceeding £553,000, be granted to Her Majesty, to defray the Charge for the Pay, Extra Pay, Bounty, &c. (exclusive of Supplies, Clothing, &c.) of the Militia (to a number not exceeding 135,243, including 30,000 Militia Reserve), which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1898."

2. "That a sum, not exceeding £76,000, be granted to Her Majesty, to defray the Charge for the Pay and Miscellaneous Charges of the Yeomanry Cavalry, which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1898."

3. "That a sum, not exceeding £627,200, be granted to Her Majesty, to defray the Charge for Capitation Grants and Miscellaneous Charges of Volunteer Corps, including Pay, &c. of the Permanent Staff, which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1898."

Resolutions agreed to.

4. "That a sum, not exceeding £639,000, be granted to Her Majesty, to defray the Charge for Transport and Remounts, which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1898."

Mr. FLYNN asked the Government if they could now say whether they would grant a return of the number of horses bought in Ireland last year as compared with the number in former years.

*Mr. POWELL-WILLIAMS said he understood from what was said on Friday night that the hon. Gentleman wished the return to extend as far back as ten years. He was not yet in a position to say whether such a return could be furnished.

Dr. TANNER asked how it came to pass that the Austrians bought Irish horses, and the English Government absolutely refused to do so? In the matter of the sale of horses he maintained that his country was wronged.

Resolution agreed to.

5. "That a sum, not exceeding £2,553,400, be granted to Her Majesty, to defray the Charge for Provisions, Forage, and other Supplies, which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1898."

Mr. FLYNN said he desired to raise again the question of the supply of foreign meat supplied to the troops stationed in Ireland. The Financial Secretary to the War Office had stated in Committee that the maximum amount was 60 per cent. of foreign meat—it might be less, it could not be more—but he was informed that this did not accurately represent the facts. The hon. Gentleman seemed to think that, by informing the Committee that the War Office would make inquiries, an end had been put to the matter. The War Office had been postponing a fair answer to this very legitimate complaint for a long time, and they wished, before this Resolution was agreed to, for some full, satisfactory and, if possible, final explanation from the Financial Secretary. He would remind the House that they could get good Irish beef and mutton at very low—certainly at very reasonable—prices; and it was not economy—it was false economy—to supply these hard, frozen junks of indifferent beef to the soldiers of their Army.

*Mr. POWELL-WILLIAMS said the hon. Member claimed that with regard to these purchases Ireland should have preferential treatment.

Mr. FLYNN said Ireland wanted nothing of the kind. All they wanted was fair play.

*Mr. POWELL-WILLIAMS said, with reference to the hon. Member's statement that the troops were fed with junks of frozen meat, that the meat supplied to the troops was subjected to the severest inspection. It was of first-rate quality, and no complaint whatever from the troops reached the War Office. The proportion of frozen refrigerated beef was 60 per cent. at the outside, and the proportion of frozen mutton was one-seventh of the whole supply. He had pointed out to the hon. Member in Committee that, as a matter of fact, the proportion of fresh meat actually supplied to the troops was higher than that laid down in the contracts. The Secretary of State had appointed two officers specially to look into this matter in all its details, and to endeavour, if they could, to surmount the difficulties, which undoubtedly were great in certain directions, with a view to a further purchase of home produced meat becoming possible. He thought the hon. Member ought to be satisfied with that assurance. The hon. Member could find out for himself, by reference to any of the Army Service Corps authorities, that this matter was involved in the greatest difficulty, and that any premature dealing with it would result in a serious failure of the supply to the troops.

Resolution agreed to.

6. "That a sum not exceeding £1,016,400, be granted to Her Majesty to defray the Charge for the Staff for Engineer Services, and Expenditure for Royal Engineer Works, Buildings, and Repairs, at Home and Abroad (including Purchases), which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1898."

7. "That a sum, not exceeding £118,600, be granted to Her Majesty, to defray the Charge for Establishments for Military Education, which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1898."

8. "That a sum, not exceeding £54,800, be granted to Her Majesty, to defray the Charge for Sundry Miscellaneous Effective Services, which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1898."

Resolutions agreed to.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ALDERSHOT AND FARNBOROUGH) BILL.

Second Reading deferred till Thursday.

BERRIEW SCHOOL BILL.

Second Reading deferred till Thursday.

SUPPLY.

Committee deferred till Wednesday.

MILITARY LANDS ACT (1892) AMENDMENT BILL.

Committee deferred till Thursday.

TRUSTS (SCOTLAND) BILL.

Committee deferred till Thursday.

WAYS AND MEANS.

Committee deferred till Wednesday.

LAND LAW (IRELAND) (No. 2) BILL.

Second Reading deferred till Tuesday 2nd March.

CORONERS' INQUESTS (RAILWAY FATALITIES) BILL.

Second Reading deferred till Wednesday.

STEAM ENGINES AND BOILERS (PERSONS IN CHARGE) BILL.

Adjourned Debate on Motion for committal to Standing Committee on Trade, etc. [17th February] further adjourned till Thursday.

SHOP ASSISTANTS (HALF-HOLIDAY) BILL.

Second Reading deferred till Friday.

LICENSING EXEMPTION (HOUSES OF PARLIAMENT) BILL.

Second Reading deferred till To-morrow.

BENIN EXPEDITION.

On the Motion "That this House do now adjourn,"

Sir JOHN COLOMB (Great Yarmouth) asked the First Lord of the Admiralty, in view of the rumours in circulation, if the Government had any information in reference to the expedition to Benin?

The FIRST LORD of the ADMIRALTY: Yes; I am glad to say news has been received of the successful issue of the expedition and with very little loss of life. The following is from Consul General Moore:—

"Advanced from Ologbo, 14th, in two columns, joining up on 16th. Benin City taken afternoon 18th. Distant 24 miles. Running fight entire route. Great difficulty with carriers getting up water. Considerable resistance taking city; entire force brought up; numbers, 540 men; casualties since my No. 8:—One naval sergeant, one chief petty officer, two Marines, one sergeant Protectorate force, one scout, one carrier killed; one Marine officer, one warrant officer, one petty officer, four Marines, one seaman, six force, eight carriers, three scouts, one interpreter severely wounded; three Marines, two seamen, two force slightly wounded. City now deserted. Neither king nor Juju men captured. A few natives of Phillips's party have come in from bush. Dreadfully mutilated human sacrifices met *en route*, and in city crucifixions and mutilations. Juju houses, compounds surrounding them, reek with human blood several deep holes in compounds filled with corpses. Effects of Europeans, Phillips's party, found in King's palaver house. Admiral proposes remaining few days assist establish Protectorate force here with necessary supplies. Immediate action taking (*sic*) capture king and Juju men and pacify country. Inhabitants inclined come in. All survivors well. No fever." [*Cheers.*]

Adjourned at Twenty-five minutes after Twelve o'clock.

HOUSE OF LORDS.

Tuesday, 23rd February 1897.

LORD FARNHAM.

Petition of Somerset Henry Maxwell Lord Farnham claiming a right to vote at the elections of Representative Peers for Ireland: Read, and referred to the Lord Chancellor to consider and report thereupon to the House.

NEW PEER.

Sir Joseph Lister, Baronet, President of the Royal Society, having been created Baron Lister of Lyme Regis in the County of Dorset—Was (in the usual manner) introduced.

House adjourned at Half-past Four o'clock, to Thursday next, a Quarter past Ten o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

Tuesday, 23rd February 1897.

NOTICES OF MOTION.

CLERICAL INCOMES (TAXATION).

Mr. JAMES ROUND (Essex, Harwich): To call attention to the Taxation of Clerical Incomes; and to move a Resolution.—[*Tuesday, 23rd March.*]

SHOPS (HOURS OF LABOUR).

Sir JOHN LUBBOCK (London University): To call attention to the excessively long hours of labour in shops; and to move a Resolution.—[*Tuesday, 23rd March.*]

TAXATION (LONDON) (GRANTS IN AID).

Mr. T. LOUGH (Islington, W.): To move, That, in the opinion of this House, it is desirable that a Select Committee be appointed to consider whether the amount annually received by London under Grants in Aid bears a just proportion to the amount contributed by London to the General Taxes of the Nation.—[*Tuesday, 23rd March.*]

QUESTIONS.

POST OFFICE MONEY ORDERS.

Mr. JAMES RANKIN (Herefordshire, Leominster): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury, as representing the Postmaster General, with regard to the fact that the cost of Post Office money orders under £3 has recently been raised from 2d. to 3d., whether he will consult the Postmaster General with a view to obtaining an abatement of the rate for members of friendly societies who largely transmit their payments, mostly under £1, by means of Post Office money orders?

Mr. E. STRACHEY (Somerset, S.): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury, as representing the Postmaster General, whether he is aware of the loss inflicted on members of friendly societies by the increase of the commission on money orders under 20s. from 2d. to 3d.; and whether the charge cannot be reduced to what it was before the increase?

The SECRETARY to the TREASURY (Mr. R. W. Hanbury, Preston): So far as I have been able to ascertain it is not the fact that the affiliated societies, who form a large majority of the friendly societies, make any large use of money orders for the transmission of their remittances. It is, however, true that the Hearts of Oak Society, which is organised on a different basis from the other societies, and makes all its remittances from its head office in London, has represented that it has suffered serious inconvenience from the change. I find, however, that the society is in the habit of directing its members to remit small sums of 2s. 6d. and 1s., which could be remitted to them for 1d. and ½d. by postal orders, per money orders made payable at one particular sub-office in London; and I find that they have also given instructions to their members that money orders and postal orders should not be crossed. It is difficult to understand why the society thus deliberately imposes a charge of 2d. or 3d. on its members for the transmission of small sums of this amount, which could be forwarded with absolute security by a crossed postal order. If the case of the society stood alone the Postmaster General would not feel justified in withdrawing the recent alterations in the Money Order Regulations. It is found, however, that very poor persons who have been in the habit of transmitting portions of their wages or other sums to their families complain that they have suffered from the recent changes, and the Postmaster General is therefore prepared to consider whether it is possible, by an alteration in the machinery for the transmission of the smaller orders, so to reduce the cost as to enable him to reduce the commission on a £1 order to 2d. ["Hear, hear!"] Some little time may elapse before it may be possible to make this change, which may require the sanction of the Legislature before it can be effected.

Mr. J. McLEOD (Sutherland) asked whether any representations had been received from banking firms on the subject of these orders?

Mr. HANBURY said he was not aware that there had been any such representations.

NATIONAL SCHOOL TEACHERS (IRELAND).

Sir THOMAS LEA (Londonderry, S.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether his attention has been drawn to meetings of the National School Teachers of Ireland, where resolutions have been passed requesting that the rate for school teachers' residences be reduced from 5 per cent. to the time extended from 35 to 61 years for repayment; and if the Government will accede to the request?

The CHIEF SECRETARY for IRELAND (Mr. Gerald Balfour, Leeds, Central): Resolutions of the nature referred to have been received. I could not, however, say whether the Government are prepared to accede to the request of the teachers without having an opportunity of further considering the proposals put forward, as well as the views thereon of the Commissioners of National Education, who, I understand, have had the subject before them at their meeting today. I may also remind my hon. Friend that the question raised is largely a financial one affecting the Treasury, and that legislation would be necessary, in any event, to give effect to the proposals—even should it be considered desirable to make any alteration in the existing law.

BANN DRAINAGE.

Sir THOMAS LEA: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland if the Government have any intention to introduce a Bill dealing with the Bann Drainage this year?

Mr. GERALD BALFOUR: The reply to this Question is in the negative.

PILOT SERVICE, FALKLAND ISLANDS.

Mr. J. W. SIDEBOTHAM (Cheshire, Hyde): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Admiralty whether the Government maintains the pilot service of Port Stanley, Falkland Islands; whether there is need of a good strong tug boat for life-saving purposes and for assisting vessels in distress; and whether any vessels have been lost in close proximity to the port for lack of such a tug; and, if so, whether one can be placed in the port without delay?

The SECRETARY of STATE for the COLONIES (Mr. J. Chamberlain, Birmingham, W.): The Colonial Government maintains the pilot service at Port Stanley. My attention has not been called to the need of a tug boat, but I will cause inquiry to be made. Vessels have been lost in the proximity of Port Stanley, but I am not aware that their loss can be attributed to the want of a tug boat.

POLICE PATROL, SKIBBEREEN.

Mr. JAMES GILHOOLY (Cork Co., W.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland (1) whether complaints have reached him that a tenant farmer named John Ross, who was evicted from a farm at Lugacoppel, near Skibbereen, is continuously annoyed by a police patrol who visit the farm on which he at present resides, enter his house, which is situate several miles from the evicted farm, and question his children as to his (Mr. Ross's) movements; (2) whether he is aware that Mr. Ross repeatedly offered The O'Donovan of Lissard to allow the rent of the evicted farm which was £60, Poor Law valuation £38, to be fixed by the Land Commission or by arbitration, and solvent security given for its payment; and (3) whether, in view of

Mr. Ross's offers of amicable arrangement, this action of the police will cease?

MR. GERALD BALFOUR: It appears to be a fact that on two occasions in October last a police patrol entered the house of John Ross, but there is nothing unusual or exceptional in this, as the police very often when on duty enter houses and are cordially received. Of course when their presence is objected to they leave. I am informed that Ross's children were not questioned by the police as alleged. I have no knowledge as to the truth of the fact alleged in the second paragraph.

LAND COMMISSION (IRELAND).

SIR THOMAS LEA: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland when the Returns of the rents fixed by the Head Commission on appeal in November and December last will be laid upon the Table; and if the Returns will give the rents as fixed by the Sub-Commission and revised by the Head Commission?

MR. GERALD BALFOUR: The Returns of proceedings for November and December last have been presented to Parliament, but these Returns do not contain the information indicated, which is given in the Annual Report of the Land Commission. The preparation of the Monthly Returns in the form suggested would add considerably to the labour and expense of compilation, and would needlessly change the system of presenting the average annual results which has been followed since 1881. I trust, therefore, that my hon. Friend will not press for any alteration in the form of the existing Returns.

CAPTAIN DONELAN (Cork, E.): On behalf of the hon. Member for North Kilkenny (Mr. MCDERMOTT), I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware of the great inconvenience suffered by the tenant farmers of County Kilkenny, owing to the delay in holding a Sub-Commission Court to deal with their cases; and whether he can state about what date these tenants may hope to have their cases inquired into?

MR. GERALD BALFOUR: A Sub-Commission Court sat in September 1896, and disposed of all cases save two in the county referred to, received up to the 31st July preceding. A further sitting for the county will be held at the earliest date possible having regard to the claims of other districts. The applications received from this county since the 1st August last are not, I am informed, numerous.

POSTAL ACCOMMODATION (COUNTY LEITRIM).

MR. PATRICK M'HUGH (Leitrim, N.): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury, as representing the Postmaster General, whether he has received representations from the inhabitants of Cormongan, and adjoining districts, near Drumshanbo, County Leitrim, complaining of the want of postal accommodation; is he aware that the Postmaster at Drumshanbo, who is a shopkeeper, has opposed the establishment of a sub-post office at Cormongan; and will he have the matter inquired into with a view to granting the people of Cormongan the accomodation they ask for?

MR. HANBURY: The Postmaster General has not received any representations in regard to the want of postal accommodation in the district referred to, and he is not aware that the postmaster at Drumshanbo is opposed to the establishment of a sub-post office at Cormongan. Inquiry will be made as to the possibility of establishing a post office at Cormongan, and the result shall be communicated to the hon. Member.

FOREIGN VESSELS IN BRITISH PORTS.

MR. W. F. LAWRENCE (Liverpool, Abercromby): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade, is he aware that it is alleged by the Liverpool Steam Ship Owners' Association, in their Annual Report for 1896, that vessels that have been transferred from the British to a foreign flag are sailed in and out of British ports loaded more deeply than they could have been loaded under the British flag; and what steps do the Board of Trade propose to take with a view of securing to British shipping the right to compete on equal terms with foreign shipping in the ports of the United Kingdom?

THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF TRADE (Mr. C. T. RITCHIE, Croydon): I have seen the allegations to which my hon. Friend refers. Every effort is made by the Board of Trade to secure equal treatment under the law for British and foreign ships in the matter of loading at ports in the United Kingdom. In 1896 40 foreign ships were detained in our ports for overloading, as against 11 British, and, for bringing in deck loads in contravention of the law, 7 foreign ships were proceeded against as compared with only 1 British. I will cause every case which is brought under my notice to be carefully considered; but I am advised that the present law is not inadequate so far as overloading of foreign ships leaving our ports is concerned.

MR. WARR (Liverpool, East Toxteth): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade (1) whether he is aware that, as stated by the Liverpool Steam Ship Owners' Association, in their Annual Report for 1896, a foreign vessel embarking only cabin passengers in this country is exempt from all the regulations applicable to British emigrant vessels, even although such foreign vessel may be carrying emigrants on the voyage upon which such cabin passengers are carried; (2) whether the German Emigrant Regulations permit of 30 per cent. more emigrants being carried with 40 per cent. less boat accommodation than is permitted by the British Regulations; and (3) whether the Board of Trade are prepared to take such steps, so far as British ports are concerned, as will enable British shipowners to compete on equal terms with foreign shipowners using such ports, and to enforce on foreign vessels such Regulations as are deemed necessary according to the British Regulations to insure the safety of the passengers carried from this country?

MR. RITCHIE: I am aware of the statements in the Report to which my hon. Friend refers, and I am advised that the effect of the law is as stated in his Question. I have no authentic information with regard to the present German Emigrant Regulations as compared with our own. The Board of Trade have no power under the existing law to interfere with a foreign emigrant ship unless she takes emigrants from a port in the United Kingdom, and as at present advised, I am not prepared to propose an alteration of the law on the subject. With reference to the last Question put to me by my hon. Friend, I have to say that I see great difficulty in applying to the ships of foreign nations without their consent the Regulations which we consider in this country to be desirable in the interests of safety.

INDIAN MAIL SERVICE.

SIR JOHN LENG (Dundee): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury, as representing the Postmaster General, whether, in view of the threatened difficulties to the transit of the Indian mails through France and other European countries on account of the plague at Bombay, and the possibility of the existing mail service being interfered with, arrangements will be considered for conveying the Indian mails from Port Said direct to this country; whether he is aware that the distance by sea between Port Said and Plymouth is almost identical with that between New York and Plymouth, which has been done by mail steamers in little more than six days; and whether, in the event of serious interruption of the overland mail service, either in consequence of quarantine regulations or international complications, an expeditious sea service can be provided?

MR. HANBURY: No objection has yet been raised to the transit of mails from India through Italy and France; and in the event of that route being interrupted hereafter the hon. Member may rest assured that every effort will be made to secure the conveyance of the mails to this country by sea as quickly as possible. His calculations as to distances are accurate, but the shortest voyage from New York to Plymouth occupied about six days and a half, and the average length of the passages was nearer seven than six days. He is of course aware that the conditions of the passenger trade have not developed nearly so high a speed on the lines to and from the East as on the New York line; that on the latter there are few steamers afloat that can accomplish the voyage to New York in a little over six days, and these are not available for the Mediterranean and Eastern service.

TRUCK ACT (RAILWAY COMPANIES).

MR. S. WOODS (Essex, Walthamstow): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether he is aware that under the Truck Act, 1896, several of the large railway companies and some of the printing trades have posted up in their works long lists of new additional fines to be taken from their employees' wages, to which fines the workmen object; and if he will take the necessary steps to remedy the grievances of which the workmen complain.

Mr. J. WILSON (Durham, Mid.) said before the right hon. Gentleman answered this Question he would ask him another anent this matter—namely, whether deductions are made legal simply by posting a list of them without previous consultation with the workmen and their agreement in such fines being imposed; and whether, as a primary step, workmen were consulted and their assent obtained to the breaking of an existing contract?

*The SECRETARY of STATE for the HOME DEPARTMENT (Sir Matthew White Ridley, Lancashire, Blackpool): I do not quite follow the Question of the hon. Member, but perhaps he will communicate with me afterwards. In reference to the Question on the Paper I have to say no, I am not aware that any new additional fines have been posted up. What has happened is that the companies, under the obligation imposed by the Act, have posted all the fines which they held themselves formerly entitled to inflict. The result of this compulsory publication has been to make these fines subject to criticism and enable such as are objectionable to be abolished. I am taking steps at the present time to obtain information with the view to removing any grievances that may exist under the Act.

Mr. J. WILSON repeated his Question.

*Sir MATTHEW WHITE RIDLEY: No posting of notices makes fines legal.

Sir HOWARD VINCENT (Sheffield, Central): Will the right hon. Gentleman say, does the Truck Act of 1896 impose any fines whatever on the workmen?

*Sir MATTHEW WHITE RIDLEY: No, it imposes no fines whatever. ["Hear, hear!"] What it does, as I have more than once explained, is, it compels the publication of fines not previously illegal in order that it may be seen if those fines are now really legal or not under the other provisions of the Act.

Mr. J. SAMUEL (Stockton): Does not the Act give power to impose fines? [Hon. Members: "No, no."]

*Sir MATTHEW WHITE RIDLEY: No; it does exactly the contrary. ["Hear, hear!"]

Mr. LOUGH: Will the right hon. Gentleman say what evidence is there that these fines now posted formerly existed?

*Mr. SPEAKER said these Questions were travelling into irregularity.

Mr. J. SAMUEL: Is the right hon. Gentleman in a position to inform the House of the number of applications under Section 9—

*Mr. SPEAKER ruled that notice should be given of this Question.

PERTH AND DUNDEE PRISONS.

Mr. C. L. ORR-EWING (Ayr Burghs): I beg to ask the Lord Advocate whether he can state the number of prisoners which can be accommodated in Perth and Dundee Prisons respectively, and if he also can state the number of prisoners in each prison on 1st February 1897?

*The LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. Graham Murray, Buteshire): The cell accommodation in Perth is:—

Ordinary cells	529
Cells for female convicts ...	197
Criminal lunatics in rooms ...	87
Total for Perth ...	813

In Dundee—

Ordinary cells	116

On 2nd February there were confined in Perth Prison—

Ordinary prisoners ...	68
Female convicts	14
Criminal lunatics	64
Total for Perth ...	146

And in Dundee Prison, on the same date, there were—

Ordinary prisoners ...	108
Making in all	254

Mr. ORR-EWING: I beg to ask the Lord Advocate whether he can state if an addition is now being built at Dundee Prison; and whether, in view of the fact that the journey from Dundee to Perth occupies 30 minutes in the train, Dundee Prison is a feeder for Perth Prison?

*The LORD ADVOCATE: Yes, Sir; when Dundee Prison was taken over it had 153 cells, many of which needed improvement. In the alterations 37 cells were lost. The intention is to replace these, and to add 38 more cells by prison labour. Dundee, during 1896, fed Perth Prison with 625 prisoners; but the intention is to make the transfers less frequent.

LOAN FUND SOCIETIES (IRELAND).

CAPTAIN DONELAN: On behalf of the hon. Member for North Longford (Mr. JUSTIN MCCARTHY), I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland (1) whether he is aware that, owing to serious defalcations and frauds on the part of the late senior clerk of the Edgwarthstown Loan Fund Society, the Loan Fund Board in Dublin dissolved that Society about a year ago; (2) whether the books of the Society were regularly inspected by the Loan Fund Inspector, who failed to perceive irregularities in the accounts, and expressed no disapproval of the system of management; and (3) whether, having regard to the fact that, owing to the dissolution of the Society and the difficulty of collecting outstanding debts by a receiver, who now desires to be relieved of his duties, the debenture holders are likely to be heavy losers, any relief or compensation will be given to them for the loss of securities through defalcations and frauds which the Inspector of the Loan Fund Board, a body constituted by statute, and whose officers are Government officials, failed, from negligency or other cause, to detect for a long period of time?

MR. GERALD BALFOUR: The facts, I am informed, are as stated in the first paragraph. The books of the Society were examined periodically by the Inspector of the Loan Fund Board, and, consequent upon his reports to the Board, communications were addressed to the Trustees and Committee of the Society on the 10th March 1893, 21st March 1894, and 11th March 1895, directing their attention to various irregularities in its management and the conduct of the late clerk. As regards the third paragraph, I must repeat that neither the officers of the Loan Fund Board nor those of the local societies working in connection with the Board are civil servants of the Crown, and that Government exercises no control over the proceedings of the Board or of the local bodies. The Government cannot accept any responsibility in the matter, and cannot relieve or compensate debenture holders who may sustain loss under circumstances such as indicated in the Question.

CONVICTION FOR PERJURY (POLICE CONSTABLE MURRAY).

MR. E. H. PICKERSGILL (Bethnal Green, S.W.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether he has released Thomas Murray, a police constable at Hampstead, who, on the 24th November last was convicted of perjury at the Central Criminal Court, and sentenced by the Common Serjeant of London to nine months' imprisonment with hard labour; if so, whether Murray has received a free pardon, a conditional pardon, or a remission; and whether he advised the Crown to exercise its prerogative in this case on grounds affecting the conviction, or in simple mitigation of sentence?

*SIR MATTHEW WHITE RIDLEY: Yes, Sir; Murray has been released, Her Majesty being pleased, on my advice, to grant a remission of the remainder of the sentence. The question whether a free pardon should also be granted is now under my consideration. The grounds on which my advice to the Crown was based were grounds affecting the conviction, and included certain important facts which were not before the Court.

VOLUNTEER DRILL HALLS, ABERDEEN.

CAPTAIN PIRIE (Aberdeen, N.): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury on what grounds the Lords Commissioners of the Treasury have declined to make payments in lieu of local rates in respect of Volunteer drill halls in Aberdeen and elsewhere; and whether, seeing that the local authorities are prevented from recovering such rates from the commandants of the regiments by a decision of the Court of Queen's Bench, the Government have considered the desirability of making such payments in future; and, if so, what decision has been arrived at?

MR. HANBURY: The invariable rule is for the contributions in lieu of rates to be charged on the particular fund which has to pay for maintaining the property. The maintenance of Volunteer property falls on Volunteer funds, towards which the taxpayer is only one out of many contributors. In conjunction with my hon. Friend the Financial Secretary of the War Office I have carefully considered the question whether a *primâ facie* case has, under these circumstances, been made out for imposing a rating contribution on the taxpayer, and we have come to the conclusion that it has not. The general taxpayer already foregoes his similar claims for Income Tax, Schedule A, and Inhabited House Duty; and, considering that the Volunteers are primarily a voluntary and local force, the local ratepayer may reasonably be expected to do the same in regard to the rates. This was the view taken by Parliament in 1863, when it expressly exempted Volunteer storehouses from rates.

EVICTION (COUNTY MONAGHAN).

MR. D. MACALEESE (Monaghan, N.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland (1) whether he is aware that Lord Rathdonnell has declined to accept the offer of purchase made by his evicted tenant, Margaret M'Manus, of Mullanavanog, County Monaghan; (2) on what date was M'Manus's proposal made, and on what date did Lord Rathdonnell communicate to the Land Commission his intention not to entertain the offer; and (3) did any document pass from the Land Commission to M'Manus about the 13th of November last accepting her as tenant at 20 years' purchase?

MR. GERALD BALFOUR: An application dated 6th October 1896, was made by Margaret M'Manus, but not received by the Land Commission till the 17th of that month. A notice was served on the landlord on the 13th November, and an objection dated the 5th instant was received from him in the office of the Land Commission on the 6th instant. The reply to the last paragraph is in the negative.

COLONIAL PREMIERS (VISIT TO LONDON).

MR. J. F. HOGAN (Tipperary, Mid): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies whether a decision has been arrived at in the matter of holding an Imperial Conference, during the visit of the Colonial Premiers to London, for the discussion and determination of questions of common Colonial concern; and, if so, whether he can give a general indication of the subjects to be discussed?

SIR G. BADEN-POWELL (Liverpool, Kirkdale) also asked the right hon. Gentleman whether he could now state in outline his scheme, proposed some time ago, for a conference on matters of mutual and Imperial interest between the Premiers of the several self-governing colonies who would visit England in connection with the celebration of the 60th year of Her Majesty's reign?

MR. J. CHAMBERLAIN: I will say in answer to both hon. Gentlemen that there is no question of holding what is called an Imperial Conference, but, of course, if the Premiers come, the Government will take the opportunity of discussing with them any matters of common interest which any of them may desire to raise. I may further say that up to the present time I have not received replies from five of the colonies out of the 11. As soon as I receive the whole of the replies I propose to lay them on the Table, with my own letter of invitation, and I think until I am able to do that I should be glad if all other questions would be postponed. [" Hear, hear!"]

IRISH MAIL SERVICE.

MR. BERNARD MOLLOY (King's Co., Birr): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury, as representing the Postmaster General, if he is aware that the mail train postal service from this country and from Dublin to Birr, Roscrea, and Nenagh has not been altered for some 40 years, and that the existing arrangements are such as to cause the greatest inconvenience to a district comprising about 70,000 inhabitants; and that owing to the present mail arrangements the practical effect is that for a distance of 60 miles from Dublin it requires two days for sending a letter and receiving a reply over that short distance; whether the claims made by the inhabitants of this district, and contained in a petition presented to the Postmaster General last July, will be satisfied before the conclusion of any new terms with the Great Southern and Western Railway of Ireland, and before the issue of any new time table; whether he will enforce the expenditure of some portion of the contract sum with the railway for the purpose of improving the railway connections with the above-named districts; and whether the existing post-offices of Birr, Roscrea, and Nenagh are now self-supporting?

Mr. HANBURY: In the short notice which the hon. Member has given of his Question, the Postmaster General has not been able to ascertain whether the postal service from this country and from Dublin to Birr, Roscrea, and Nenagh has or has not been altered for 40 years. He is not aware that the existing arrangements cause the greatest inconvenience to the district, and it certainly is not the fact that in every case it requires two days for sending a letter and receiving a reply to and from Dublin. The difficulty in serving these places is that it would not be desirable to add a stop at Ballybrophy to the time table of the Cork Day Mail, and that in consequence the Day Mail for Roscrea, Nenagh, and Birr is necessarily forwarded by the succeeding train. Whether any other arrangement can be made at a cost which would be justified will be considered in connection with the revision which is now engaging the attention of the Department. There has been no time to inquire whether the post offices at Birr, Nenagh, and Roscrea are self-supporting.

INDIAN FAMINE.

Mr. M. M. BHOWNAGGREE (Bethnal Green, N.E.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for India if he has received any information regarding the mortality caused in connection with the famine in the Central Provinces and other districts of India up to a recent date; and, if so, to furnish the number and other details regarding the same?

The SECRETARY of STATE for INDIA (Lord George Hamilton, Middlesex, Ealing): I have received the following information regarding mortality in the Central Provinces:—Total deaths in 1895, 349,137; 1896, 468,469. The latter year was exceptionally unhealthy, and it appears that cholera deaths were 37,479 in excess over those in 1895; fever, 59,342; diarrhœa and dysentery, 9,566; small-pox, 1,103; other causes, 11,842. This mortality gives for the whole year a death-rate of 36·03 per 1,000 in 1895, and of 49·03 per 1,000 in 1896 on the present population.

Mr. B. Molloy.

Mr. SAMUEL SMITH (Flintshire): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether, in view of the immense extent of the famine area in India and the heavy drain it will entail on the finances of that country, the Government will take into consideration the expediency of making a grant in aid of India from the Exchequer of this country?

The FIRST LORD of the TREASURY (Mr. A. J. Balfour, Manchester, E.) said that he had nothing to add to the answer which he gave to a similar question on January 21. He would remind the hon. Member that in a few weeks the Finance Minister of India would make his official statement to the House.

VOLUNTARY SCHOOLS BILL.

Major RASCH (Essex, S.E.): I beg to ask the Vice President of the Committee of Council on Education whether the Government would favourably consider a proposal to include Clause 24 of the Education Bill of last Session in the Bill now before the House?

The FIRST LORD of the TREASURY: I do not think it would be consistent with the Resolution the House has passed, to enlarge the scope of the Bill in the direction the hon. Gentleman desires. There are other objections also to the course he suggests.

Mr. JOHN DILLON (Mayo, E.) asked the right hon. Gentleman whether the Government proposed to take Wednesday, March 10, the day on which the Irish Land Bill was the first order?

The FIRST LORD of the TREASURY: I think I indicated in answer to a question put yesterday that we could not interrupt the business of the Committee stage of the Education Bill for a lengthy discussion on other matters. ["Hear, hear!"] Whether the Education Bill will be finished by the 10th of March it is impossible for me to say. The Bill will be taken on Thursday next and will go on *de die in diem*. The 10th of March would be the eighth day of discussion in Committee, and I should have thought that after eight days a short Bill might be easily disposed of. ["Hear, hear!"] But perhaps the hon. Gentleman has better information than I have.

Mr. DILLON said the right hon. Gentleman used a rather ambiguous expression when he said the discussion on the Education Bill could not be interrupted by a lengthened discussion on another Bill. Was the Irish party to receive this treatment as a reward for their support of the Education Bill?

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY replied that the hon. Member boasted of having supported the Government on the Education Bill, but he would remind him that he opposed every attempt of the Government to find time to discuss it. ["Hear, hear!" *and laughter.*]

EGLOSKERRY PARISH (CORNWALL).

MR. THOMAS OWEN (Cornwall, Launceston): I beg to ask the Attorney General, the County Council of Cornwall having, in 1894, held an inquiry to decide whether the parish of Egloskerry should be transferred from the Camelford Union to the Launceston Union, in April 1896 the clerk of the County Council sent an account for the expenses to the Chairman of the parish meeting, who has been advised that to pay the same would be illegal, and so, if on no other ground, because the claim was not made within 12 months, and that an auditor would be bound to disallow the payment if made; and, will he say, for the guidance of the parish meeting, whether they legally can pay this claim, and whether they must pay it?

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir RICHARD WEBSTER, Isle of Wight): I have been unable from the information contained in the Question of the hon. Member to trace the cause to which he refers, or to obtain sufficient information to answer the Question; but if, as I imagine, it relates to an inquiry at St. Gennys, it appears that the County Council had no power, under Section 36, to make an order for the transfer, and being an application which they had no power to entertain, the expenses of the inquiry were not recoverable from the Parish Council.

FINANCIAL RELATIONS (GREAT BRITAIN AND IRELAND).

MR. J. J. CLANCY (Dublin Co., N.): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury, in reference to his statement on 16th February, that he saw nothing in the terms of reference to the new Commission on Financial Relations to preclude that body from inquiring into the amounts expended in England, Ireland, and Scotland respectively, of the sums voted for purposes common to the United Kingdom in the event of the Commission thinking the inquiry relevant, whether he will so alter the terms of reference as not to leave the point of relevancy open to doubt?

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY: As I understand the hon. Gentleman's Question he desires me to so alter the terms of the Commission that it should be obligatory on them to inquire into the subject mentioned in the Question. I do not think that would be a proper course to pursue, and I cannot hold out any hope that we shall be able to pursue it. ["Hear, hear!"]

CRETE.

MR. GIBSON BOWLES (Lynn Regis): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether Her Majesty's Government have received any information as to the conduct the Government of Turkey intend to adopt as towards neutral ships during the state of war now existing between Turkey and Greece; and, in particular, whether Her Majesty's Government have reason to believe that Turkey will exercise her right to issue commissions to privateers and her right to capture Greek merchandise in neutral vessels on the high seas; and whether Her Majesty's Government propose to issue any Proclamation of neutrality?

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS (Mr. G. CURZON, Lancashire, Southport): There is no indication that the Turkish Government are intending to take any hostile measures at sea; and, as the Turkish Representative remains at Athens and the Greek Representative at Constantinople, it cannot be said that a state of war now exists.

MR. F. S. STEVENSON (Suffolk, Eye): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, in view of the fact that the Powers made arrangements to prevent an attack upon Canea, what steps they took to prevent a sally of the Turkish troops from that town for the purpose of attacking the Cretan position?

MR. F. A. CHANNING (Northampton, E.): Before the right hon. Gentleman answers, I should like to ask him a question of which I have given him private notice—namely, whether it is true, as stated in the dispatch of Colonel Vassos, that the Turkish troops sallied from Canea to attack the advanced position of the insurgents, or to defend the position held by Turks, and whether this was done by the order or with the approval of the representatives of the Powers?

Mr. CURZON: I only received the private notice of the hon. Gentleman's question two minutes ago. [*Ministerial laughter.*] With all respect to him and the House, I cannot undertake to answer these intricate questions on so short a notice, and I must ask him kindly to put it on the Paper. With regard to the question on the Paper, we have received no official intimation of any sally of the Turkish troops from Canea.

Mr. CHANNING: Is the right hon. Gentleman aware that the dispatch of Colonel Vassos was reported in *The Times* of yesterday?

Mr. CURZON: I have no official information of the dispatch in *The Times*.

Mr. F. S. STEVENSON: I beg to ask the right hon. Gentleman who gave the signal for the bombardment of the Cretan position by the combined fleet of the Powers?

Mr. CURZON: We do not know who gave the signal. The course of procedure was arranged between the admirals of the international squadron, and presumably the senior naval officer, who is the Italian admiral, gave the signal.

Mr. GIBSON BOWLES: Is the Italian Admiral in command of the squadron, including the British ships? [*Cheers.*]

Mr. CURZON: I am not a naval authority. Perhaps the hon. Gentleman will address his question to another quarter. [*Laughter.*]

Mr. GIBSON BOWLES: I will ask the First Lord of the Admiralty—

*Mr. SPEAKER: Order, order! The hon. Gentleman must put down notice of the Question, if addressed to another Minister.

Sir WILLIAM HARCOURT (Monmouthshire, W.): On behalf of the hon. Member for Stirling Burghs (Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman), I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether he can lay upon the Table the instructions given to the British Admiral in Cretan waters?

The FIRST LORD of the TREASURY: It would not be possible under existing circumstances to lay the instructions on the Table of the House. It has never been the practice, so far as I know, to make public the instructions given to military or naval officers on active duty, and the inexpediency of such a course would be greatly augmented in the present case, owing to the fact that we are acting in concert with other Powers, and it is impossible at present to lay on the Table the whole series of Papers bearing on the events in Crete.

Mr. THOMAS BAYLEY (Derbyshire, Chesterfield): Have the Government any official Report from the British Admiral in Cretan waters of what took place on Sunday last?

The FIRST LORD of the TREASURY: Does the hon. Gentleman mean telegraphic report?

Mr. THOMAS BAYLEY: Yes.

The FIRST LORD of the TREASURY: I think any question such as that of the hon. Member should be put upon the Paper.

Sir E. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT (Sheffield, Ecclesall) asked whether the Government had confirmation of the statement in *The Times* of to-day that over 1,100 Mussulmans, including many women and children, had been massacred in cold blood in Sitia, and that 2,500 Mussulmans were besieged at Selinos by Cretan insurgents and were in great peril, and whether the Great Powers proposed to take effective steps to save these unfortunate people from massacre?

Mr. CURZON: There has been no confirmation of the alleged massacre at Sitia, and Her Majesty's Consul reported on the 19th that the fate of the Mussulmans of one village only in that district—whose population must be far inferior in number—remained unknown. Inquiry on the spot was about to be held. With regard to Selino, the following two telegrams, dated February 22nd, have been received from Sir Alfred Biliotti:—

"Just returned with Russian and Italian Consuls from Selino district, where fight of extermination is carried on between the two sects. Mussulmans in very critical position. 1,700, with 246 soldiers and three mountain guns concentrated at Candamos four hours from sea-shore, where uninterrupted firing is exchanged for the last fortnight. At Spaniaco, an hour from sea, and Selino Castelli, 750 Mussulmans, 242 soldiers, and three mountain guns.

Christians refused provisions being sent to Candamos Mussulmans, but consented in writing to suspension of arms during seven days, and free passage to blockaded Mussulmans, provided that soldiers with arms and baggage were also withdrawn together. This declaration is under reserve of non-appearance of Greek troops. Candamos evacuation, which we shall submit to authorities, very dangerous, owing to hatred and extreme distrust of both races, which has increased after massacre by Christian escort of more than 100 Mussulmans from village of Sarakina, and of 12 Christians at Selino Castelli. We crossed to Candamos and back under Christian fire, although we had notified arrival and shown two white flags. On return to Selino Castelli found Christians firing from fresh positions above, bullets reaching boats. Organised exchange of prisoners. Doctors attended 10 wounded. Italian and Russian colleagues who went with me to Selinos send identic telegrams." (2.) "My Russian and Italian colleagues and I have done our best to calm the Christians with regard to the Cretan Question, giving them to understand that its solution depended exclusively on the Great Powers. This declaration produced a great impression upon the insurgents, but is not sufficient to save from a certain death the 2,000 Mussulmans blockaded in Candamos, nor perhaps the 1,000 at Spaniaco and Selino Castelli, if a Greek ship of war should make her appearance there. From a lengthy interview which we had with the insurgent chiefs, I gathered that the present outbreak of the Christians has not been caused by any serious local reason, but by the belief that horrible massacres had taken place in Canea, and by encouragement received from the presence of Greek ships of war and soldiers in Crete. Notwithstanding that the Greek flag is flying over the Christian camp of Selino, Christians and Mussulmans, last of whom repeatedly declared that they placed all their hopes in Europe, have openly expressed the wish that mixed occupation by the six Powers should be extended to their district as the only means of restoring order. They both stated that 300 troops would be sufficient for the purpose. My Russian and Italian colleagues are telegraphing similar information to their Governments."

SIR E. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT asked whether the Government could not authorise the dispatch of 300 troops to save the lives of these unfortunate men, whose lives, it was said, were in the greatest danger?

MR CURZON: That is a matter which clearly depends on an agreement between the Powers as to which I could not give an answer at this moment.

SIR E. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT said he would repeat the question on Thursday.

*MR. C. J. DARLING (Deptford) asked the Under Secretary for Foreign Affairs whether his attention had been called to a passage in the speech of M. Hanotaux in the French Chamber yesterday, as reported in *The Times*, in which the French Foreign Minister was reported to have said:—

> "M. Millerand thinks that we should have entered the Dardanelles and seized in his palace the man responsible for so many calamities. Such a proposal was made by one Power at the end of November, 1895, but it was set aside."

He wished to ask the Under Secretary whether that proposal was made, by what Power it was made, and who the man was it was proposed to seize?

MR. CURZON: That is not the question of which my hon. Friend gave me notice. [*Opposition cries of* "Read!"]

*MR. DARLING: I think I did ask whether England was the Power that made the proposal.

MR. CURZON: The answer to my hon. Friend's Question is in the negative.

*MR. DARLING asked, since it was not England, would the right hon. Gentleman state what was the Power that made the proposal referred to?

MR. CURZON: No, Sir. It is no part of my duty to answer in this House for any Foreign Power. ["Hear!"]

MOTIONS FOR THE ADJOURNMENT OF THE HOUSE.

*SIR C. DILKE (Gloucester, Forest of Dean) said he wished to ask a question of Mr. Speaker relating to the order of proceedings in the House. What was the proper course to be followed on a Motion for the Adjournment of the House being made after Questions? Should not the pleasure of the House first be consulted before the question was put as to the hon. Member moving the Adjournment having the requisite support?

*MR. SPEAKER said that the right hon. Baronet had correctly stated the Standing Order, and the course he always endeavoured to pursue. But sometimes he was anticipated by the House. He always first put the question whether it was the pleasure of the House that the Adjournment should be moved, and the proper course for hon. Members was to retain their seats and say "Yes" or "No." If there was no negative the House was taken to consent generally to the discussion. Hon. Members might differ upon the subject matter of the proposed discussion, and yet agree that it was a proper subject for discussion. So he hoped hon. Members would strictly observe the Standing Order, and, on the question whether it was their pleasure that leave be given, retain their seats, only rising, in case of a negative, on his putting the further question whether the hon. Member who wished to move the Adjournment had the requisite support.

MOTIONS.

WAREHOUSEMEN'S CERTIFICATES.

Bill to define the position and obligations of a Warehouseman who issues a Certificate of the deposit of a Warrant for the delivery of goods, and to render the title of the holder on such a document more complete, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Martin, Sir Albert Rollit, Mr. Alban Gibbs, Mr. Faithfull Begg, Mr. Howard, and Mr. Clough; presented, and Read the First time; to be Read a Second time upon Monday, 29th March, and to be printed.—[Bill 141.]

JURIES DETENTION.

Bill to permit Juries to separate in cases of felony, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Lloyd Morgan, Mr. H. D. Greene, Mr. Bucknill, Mr. Walton, Mr. Robson, and Mr. Samuel Evans; presented, and Read the First time; to be Read a Second time upon Tuesday next, and to be printed.—[Bill 142.]

PRISON-MADE GOODS (IMPORTATION).

Bill to restrict the Importation of Goods made by Foreign Convicts and Felons under duress, and unfairly competing with free labour in Great Britain and Ireland, ordered to be brought in by Sir Howard Vincent, Sir Frederick Seager Hunt, Mr. Labouchere, Mr. Muntz, Mr. Havelock Wilson, Mr. Maclure, Mr. Boulnois, Mr. Field, Major Rasch, Sir Benjamin Stone, and Sir Henry Howorth; presented, and Read the First time; to be Read a Second time To-morrow, and to be printed. —[Bill 143.]

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

JUDICATURE ACTS.

MR. ATHERLEY-JONES (Durham, N.-W.) rose "to call attention to the unsatisfactory working of the Judicature Acts," and to move:—

"That an humble Address be presented to Her Majesty praying her to appoint a Royal Commission to inquire into the administration of justice under the Judicature Acts, with a view to secure greater efficiency and economy."

The hon. and learned Member said he was afraid the subject upon which he had the honour to address the House was not of a fascinating character. Therefore he should endeavour to make as small a demand as possible upon its patience. But although the subject was not fascinating itself it was, he was perfectly sure, a very important one, because it affected the administration of justice, which he imagined to be almost paramount to any other institution in the country. He claimed some right for the Motion which stood in his name for the reason that a period of more than 25 years had elapsed since there had been an inquiry into the administration of justice in this country. Prior to that there were frequent inquiries into the mode in which justice was administered, and they from time to time led to changes in procedure not only in the High Court of Justice but also in the inferior Courts. The different changes culminated in the Judicature Act of 1873, which, with the amending Acts, constituted the procedure upon which the business of the High Court was conducted. It was a remarkable fact that, since 1873, there had not only been amending Acts, but rules piled upon rules, constituting a vast volume of detailed procedure and rules under which justice had to be administered. The following conditions were absolutely essential for the effective administration of justice: that it should be honest, expeditious, economic; and that the tribunals of the country should be popular so far as litigation or judicial proceeding could in any sense be considered popular. With the exception of the first condition, honest administration, he believed that every other condition was absolutely violated. He yielded to no one in his appreciation of the integrity of Her Majesty's justice, but the system was so cribbed, cabined, and confined, and so surrounded with technical and detailed obstructions that the result was very little removed from chaos. The system of judicature in this country, possibly with the single exception of France, was the most extravagantly expensive in the world. On the average every year one in 24 of the population of Great Britain was engaged in litigation.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir RICHARD WEBSTER, Isle of Wight): Civil litigation?

MR. ATHERLEY-JONES said he referred to litigation of a civil character in all the Courts. He believed that percentage was confined to civil proceedings only. They paid to the Law Lords, excluding the Lord Chancellor, no less a sum in salaries than £24,000 a year. The House of Lords as a working tribunal commanded respect, but he pointed out that the number of appeals which came annually before them averaged only between 60 and 70, while the number of appeals annually disposed of averaged only between 40 and 50. Ireland contributed annually only five of these appeals, and the number of appeals sent from the colonies had been steadily decreasing within the last two or three decades. The contrast with other countries, not only in respect of the remuneration paid to the judicial officers, but in respect to the work done, was most startling. He would turn to another tribunal, the continued existence of which was little short of a public scandal—the Railway Commission. In addition to the employment of one of Her Majesty's most distinguished judges on that Commission, there were two judicial officers paid £3,000 a year each, and there was also a staff. The amount of business that was done, however, by that Commission during the last year for which they had a report took only 21 days, and the number of cases disposed of amounted to the magnificent total of 24. He would suggest an immediate reform in regard to that Commission, because they might introduce the system that obtained with the Admiralty—a Judge of the High Court with assessors. The work would then be done at probably one-fiftieth of the present expense. The Attorney General would not deny that the Court of Admiralty performed its work to the satisfaction of litigants. As showing the unpopularity of the administration of justice in this country it was a curious fact, with the single exception of the Chancery Division, there had been an absolute shrinkage of litigious work in all the Courts. On the other hand, the business of the County Courts, which, except in a few isolated cases, did their work with expedition and gave satisfaction, had steadily increased. Going only as far back as the years 1873 and 1877, there was one case in the High Court to every 289 of the inhabitants, whereas now the number of cases had fallen to one in 360. Everybody knew that in the last few years the amount of commercial work had shrunk to insignificance, although every effort was made by the High Court Judges properly to encourage commercial work. The universal experience, not merely in the metropolis but throughout the circuits, was that the shrinkage of High Court work was due not so much to the amount of work which had been thrown upon the County Courts, but to the tendency of commercial bodies to withdraw their work from the cognisance of the Courts in favour of those domestic tribunals which they had themselves created, although they recognised that in those domestic tribunals the duties involved were not discharged so effectively as they would be in the High Courts. In the Court of Appeal the Judges were paid no less than £31,000 a year. From 1821 to 1825 there were 814 cases in that Court, and from 1891 to 1894, the number had shrunk to 574 cases. The explanation was that commercial men were shunning the High Court of Justice and were more and more availing themselves of the County Courts. So small was the amount of work to be done in the Court of Appeal that it was a common thing to find in the newspapers at least every fortnight the announcement that the Court was not sitting; and that notwithstanding the increase in population and in National Income, there was a great deal of work to be done, and a large amount of arrears of business to be made up in the Courts could not be denied. But why were not the Law Lords, who only sat for 50 days in the year, employed in assisting in disposing of the congestion of business which constantly arose in the inferior courts of the High Court of Justice. He did not think that the Law Lords, who were paid such large salaries, would be callous to any call made upon them of that kind in the public interest. But perhaps the greatest disgrace in our present judicial system was the vacations. What would be said if they were to close all the hospitals in London for nearly three months in the year, and to say that the doors of those hospitals should not be open except for cases of life and death? Yet that was precisely the position in the High Court of Justice. The doors of the High Court of Justice were closed from the 12th of August to the 24th of October, and for that period of three months no suitor could approach the Courts except in a case of utmost emergency, which was dealt with by the Vacation Judge. There was no parallel for such a state of things in any other civilised country. Was it not an absolute scandal that the Courts should be closed for five months during the whole of the year, and that they should remain closed for three months at one particular period? He did not blame the Judges, he blamed the system. No one grudged the Judges reasonable leisure. Their work was arduous, and they were necessarily men who had been called to their positions at a late period of their lives. But it was incumbent upon the Government to abolish this archaic system of long vacation and substitute for it a system of reasonable vacation. Again, the number of days on which the Judges sat was absolutely insignificant. Would the House believe that the Judges who were paid £5,000 per annum each, and in addition to that, £7 10s. per day for every day they were absent from London on Circuit, did not sit in London on an average for more than 115 days in the year per Judge, and that the total number of days they sit on Circuit or in London was less than 200 days per Judge? A Judge of a foreign country to whom he related these facts, said:—

> "Why, we sit in our Courts practically daily throughout the year, and we are not paid anything approaching the remuneration that is paid to your Judges."

It was a great scandal that in this country a complete and exhaustive return of the number of days the Judges sat could not be provided, as they were provided in France, and Italy, and Germany. In this country it was quite a matter of grace whether or not the Judges supplied the information. Indeed, two or three Judges absolutely refused to make such a return, and the consequence was that the number of days the Judges sat was mere guess work. He would also point out that this return of 200 days per annum per Judge was rather delusive. A Judge might only appear in Court or in Chambers for half an hour, and still it was put down as a day's attendance. Again, he did not blame the Judges but the system. But he would point out that though the Judges enjoyed this large amount of leisure their subordinates in the offices were compelled to work all the year round, with short vacations, and if they absented themselves from the office for a day they received a severe letter of condemnation, and if it occurred again they were discharged. He now came to a subject which he ventured to say was about the greatest scandal associated with the judicial system of any country of the world—he referred to the Circuit system. The Circuit work of the country had since 1873 decreased 30 per cent. according to the judicial statistics. In 1865 there were 693 cases on circuit. In 1894, with an almost geometrical increase in population and in wealth, there were only 1,124 cases, and of these 864 came from four Circuits, the Northern, the Midland, the Western, and South-eastern, leaving only 261 cases to be disposed of in the remaining five Circuits. The Judge on Circuit fixed the number of days he would attend in each Assize Town. As an illustration of how that system worked out he might mention the recent Assizes at Newcastle-on-Tyne. The Lord Chief Justice was there, and no one would suggest that he was not most anxious to discharge the duties of his office to the very best of his great capacity. His Lordship had only seven jury cases to dispose of, and these he finished on last Saturday. But he was not due in the next Assize Town until next Friday; therefore, Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday were spent in enforced idleness by the Lord Chief Justice.

Sir FRANK LOCKWOOD (York): What about crime?

Mr. ATHERLEY-JONES said that Mr. Justice Bruce was there to try criminal cases, which were compartively insignificant in number. On the Welsh Circuit there were no cases at many of the towns, yet judges were sent down to give three or four days of public time to each town. At Worcester there was only one prisoner and one cause, and yet four days were given. Was it not scandalous that judges, who were properly paid high salaries, and who received expenses at the rate of £7 10s. a day, should be sent to these towns on the pretence that there was something to do, and should have to spend days in absolute idleness while the

Courts in London were waiting for business to be dealt with, and litigants were driven away owing to the manner in which business was transacted? That the local Member insisted on the dignity of the Assize Town being maintained was no sufficient excuse; probably only a few innkeepers and livery-stable owners were concerned. Their interests did not justify this scandalous waste of public money and time on a system which had become a ridiculous anachronism. He would read from the Judicial Statistics a paragraph which was, in effect, the strongest condemnation of the present Assize system:—

> "More than 55 per cent. of the causes were entered at four towns—Birmingham, Leeds, Liverpool, and Manchester. About 50 per cent. of the whole number of actions tried were tried on the Northern and North-eastern Circuits. No actions were entered for trial at the following towns:—Huntingdon, Aylesbury, Oakham, Devizes or Salisbury, Welshpool or Newtown, Lampeter and Brecon. At the Winter Assizes only one action was entered at each of the following towns:—Guildford, Lewes, Hertford, Chelmsford, Bedford, Northampton, Reading, Oxford, Merioneth, Dorchester, Taunton or Wilts, Dolgelly, Ruthin, and Mold. At the Summer Assizes only one action was entered at Hertford, Cambridge, Ipswich, Bury St. Edmunds, Northampton, Carlisle, Oxford, Shrewsbury, Dolgelly, Ruthin, Mold, and Haverfordwest. Of the total amount recovered, more than one-half was recovered on the Northern Circuit. The largest number of days on which actions were tried at any town was 55."

It had been suggested that it would be possible to group towns for Assize purposes. That would be a good but inadequate change. But what was there to prevent the County Courts from being given an equally extensive jurisdiction with the High Court? Such a system already existed in Scotland. The County Courts would form an excellent tribunal; and it was to be remembered that the High Court did not at present do its Assize work efficiently. The Incorporated Law Society showed by figures, which were incontestable, that the commercial communities in Liverpool and Manchester, although favoured with more frequent Assizes, could not be satisfied with the way in which their business was transacted. During the Long Vacation they had to wait three or four months before they could get a cause on, and when the Judges did come down they always worked at high pressure in order to get back to London quickly. Instead of, as in London, sitting from 10.30 to 4 o'clock, the Judges sat from 9.30 in the morning up to 7, 8, 9, and even 10 o'clock at night. No one wanted a case tried in such circumstances, when everyone engaged was worn out. It was an absolute denial of justice; and the feeling in Liverpool was very strong. The Incorporated Law Society was constantly asking the Lord Chancellor to let a Judge sit continuously in Liverpool, but the only response was to send a Judge for a few days, and the scramble of business resulted in this—that cases of magnitude the Liverpool solicitors preferred to bring to London for trial. There was no reason why a co-equal jurisdiction should not be given to the County Courts. They already possessed power to deal with bankruptcy to any amount, to deal with employers' liability, and with Admiralty jurisdiction up to £500. Yet under the present ridiculous system they were forbidden to deal with a suit for more than £50. One of the grossest scandals of the day was that while the poor man bringing an action of tort for £50 damages must go to the High Court, the defendant might turn him out by summons on the ground that the plaintiff had no visible means. Of course litigants might have the option of going to the High Court instead of the County Court; but if a sufficient number of cases were not notified beforehand for an Assize, the business of one centre should be sent to be dealt with at another. There must also be some revision of the system of costs in the County Court. It cost as much to take out a plaint for £15 in the County Court as it took to issue a writ for £15,000 in the High Court. It appeared in the Judicial Statistics for 1893-4 that, including costs and fees, for every pound recovered in the High Court about 7s. was spent in costs. We had lately established the Commercial Court which, presided over by Mr. Justice Mathew and Mr. Justice Henn Collins, was becoming more and more popular, because litigants knew that they could get their causes tried there without unwarrantable delay, and that their cases would be from the beginning to the end, even in the interlocutory stages, under the control of the Judge himself. In the Chancery and the Probate, Matrimonial, and Admiralty Courts the same system was adopted with equally satisfactory results. But things were very different when they came to the Queen's Bench Division. When a cause was set down for trial before a special jury in that Division, it might be sixth or seventh in the day's list, with the result that if it were not reached that day it would be announced that no more special jury causes would be taken that week, and the witnesses who had been brought up to town would have to be sent back to the country in order to be again brought to London the following week. Again, when a special jury cause was not reached on a particular day when it was in the list for trial, the Judge of the Court might on the following day have to try prisoners at the Old Bailey, or to try Common Jury Causes, or to go on Circuit. Why could not a Special Jury Court be appointed, which should sit from day to day until every Special Jury Cause in the list for the Sittings was disposed of. Causes which were not reached in a day's list often most unaccountably and mysteriously disappeared from the list, and did not reappear for a long time. Such a state of things was a scandal, and amounted to a denial of justice. Turning to the question of costs, he found that in 1893 causes were tried, in which an aggregate sum of some £500,000 was recovered at a cost to the litigants of £200,000. Then there was our ridiculous system of the taxation of costs. In his opinion solicitors as a rule were not adequately rewarded for the trouble they had to take on behalf of their clients, and the result was that their whole object in conducting causes was to pile up costs by multiplying interlocutory proceedings. The consequence of such a system was that a wretched Taxing Master had to go through bills of costs, item by item, striking off a little here and there, with the result that the solicitors were dissatisfied, while the clients had to pay far more than they ought to do. Under the German system a solicitor was paid a sort of percentage upon the amount recovered, say £20 for each £100 recovered, and an additional sum for extra work. He was conscious that there were many other matters of detail that he ought to touch upon in bringing forward a Motion of this kind, but he felt that he had already trespassed at too great length upon the attention of the House, to whom he was very grateful for having listened to him with so much patience, while he dealt with this very dry subject. He hoped that his right hon. and learned Friend the Attorney General would not reject the very moderate proposal he had put forward, that there should be some inquiry had into this important question. The right hon. and learned Gentleman might, perhaps, think that the particular machinery of a Royal Commission was the best adapted for such an inquiry, but he himself would be content to accept any other form of inquiry which the right hon. and learned Gentleman might suggest as better fitted to carry out his object. What was being done at the present time? They were told that the Rule Committee were preparing a new set of Rules, but the late Master of the Rolls had asserted that every fresh body of Rules cost litigants some two millions before its interpretation was complete. The Rules which had been made since 1870 constituted a huge volume, which would surprise the House if he had brought it with him. And yet it was said that it was necessary to make all those Rules in order to simplify and cheapen our legal procedure, while, in fact, they merely multiplied the difficulties of our legal system. Our legal procedure ought to be simplified by a body of men consisting, not only of judges and barristers, but of members of the lower branch of the profession, and of members of our great commercial bodies. In conclusion, he begged to move the Motion which stood upon the Paper in his name. ["Hear, hear!"]

Mr. Atherley-Jones.

MR. AUGUSTUS WARR (Liverpool, East Toxteth), in seconding the Motion, said that the subject was one which certainly deserved consideration and discussion by that House. Although he did not know that the machinery of a Royal Commission was the best for conducting the inquiry which the hon. and learned Gentleman opposite asked for, still he thought that an inquiry of some kind ought to be instituted into the question. He shared with the hon. and learned Gentleman the opinion that the time had come when the country was entitled to have an inquiry into the working of its judicial system, in order to ascertain whether it did or did not conform to the requirements of the day, and if it did not, what change ought to be introduced into it. Some hon. Members would remember the state of things that existed before the Judicature Acts were passed, and would wonder how it had been allowed to endure for so long. The truth was that the old system, with its old-fashioned system of pleading, and its numerous pitfalls, and the mystery which surrounded it, had become entirely out of harmony with common sense, and was intolerable. And yet, it was simplicity itself compared with some of the things before the procedure of the Courts were altered by the Common Law Procedure Acts and by, he thought, simultaneous changes in Chancery proceedings. And so again, a time had come round when changes must be introduced into the present system, if it was to harmonise with the views of the people. It was almost inevitable that legal procedure would always, he believed, be in advance of public opinion. Until periodical investigations such as were secured by some process of inquiry, similar to a legal commission or committee, could take place, reforms practically could only emanate from Her Majesty's Judges, who were not, necessarily, in close touch with the views of the public for whose security and benefit those Courts were supposed to exist. It would be the greatest presumption on his part, and very very far from his desire to speak with anything but unfeigned respect of Her Majesty's Judges. He was certain that it was the desire of the present occupants of the Bench, and especially of those of them who had been accustomed to practise at the Bar in recent years, to do everything in their power to devise methods for the simplification of procedure, for the avoidance of delay, and for the abolition of useless expense. [" Hear, hear! "] But it was evident that they could only act within the limits of the law, and, above all, they could not add to their number. They had reason to be grateful to them for what they had done. They had introduced two of the most useful changes that had been made in procedure, at all events within the last twenty years. He meant the originating summons and the practice introduced in the Admiralty Division, and since adopted in the Commercial Courts. Under these systems, the procedure was in strict accordance with common sense. It was encumbered with no useless steps, and the result was that its adoption had been attended with complete success. It was capable of great development. [" Hear, hear! "] There was no reason why the principle of an originating summons should not be applied to any case in which the construction of a will or of any contract was involved, and there was no reason why the procedure of the Commercial Court should not be widely extended. [" Hear, hear! "] These were improvements which, it would be safe to predict, would certainly result from any form of inquiry. Then, again, there was the Assize system. They in Lancashire had urged for years that that system was utterly out of harmony with the needs of the times. Every commercial body in Lancashire had said so over and over again, but no real change was made, or could be made without legislation, and they should look for legislation as a result of inquiry. They had been made aware that this question had been the subject of deliberation by Her Majesty's Judges. Unfortunately, they were not permitted to have the advantage of reading the expression of their Lordships' opinion, as he learnt in answer to a question which he addressed to the Attorney General in this House. He could well believe that the Judges found it difficult to propose changes, which would give Lancashire what she claimed without infringing upon the privileges of other places, and he could well believe that their views would have been different if they had been considering the disposition of the time, not of their own numebr, but of an increased number of Judges. They had evidence of the goodwill of one of their number (Mr. Justice Kennedy), a member of the Bench whom they in Lancashire had every reason to respect and admire—[" hear, hear! "] —in the fact that he had allowed himself to be constituted what he might call the Lancashire Judge for a period which they hoped was not destined soon to expire. That advance, however grateful they might be for it, did not bring the administration of justice into harmony with the needs of Lancashire, and left the Assize system still in existence, though they believed it to be obsolete. [" Hear, hear! "] Then, again, the County Court system, to which the Mover had referred, was capable of infinite improvement, good though it was. They wanted to see the County Courts made part and parcel of the Supreme Court of Judicature, so that the system might be harmonious throughout, and this, he thought, could result only from an inquiry. The subject before the House was not one which, from its nature, could ever command great popular enthusiasm, or be a popular topic on election platforms, but it was nevertheless a subject which very vitally affected the interests of the public for whom the administration of justice should be not only absolutely pure—which it was and always would be throughout the Queen's dominions—["hear, hear!"]—but also be unattended with delay and expense, and in harmony with the views of the times in which they lived. ["Hear, hear!"]

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL said he agreed with his hon. Friend that the aspect of the House did not encourage the thought that great interest was taken in this matter in the House; at the same time he realised that a great amount of interest was taken in it outside the House. ["Hear, hear!"] He might say at once that it was not possible for him to accede to the prayer, if he might call it so, of the Motion that a Royal Commission should be appointed to deal with the matter. He did not in any way wish it to be supposed that he thought there was not ample room for inquiry; but, in his opinion, a Royal Commission would be about the worst way of proceeding that could possibly be devised. ["Hear, hear!"] They were not dealing with a single question or a single class of questions, but with a number of different questions, which had to be considered from different points of view. The effect of appointing a Royal Commission would be to hold the matter up, it might be for years, certainly for a considerable time; and, so far as the administration of the law was concerned, no very practical results had come from Royal Commissions in the past. ["Hear, hear!"] His hon. and learned Friend the Member for Durham had travelled over a great deal of ground, not too much by any means, but he was not sure that it would not have been better if he had confined himself to certain points he had raised in order that hon. Members might have better understood the bearings of the question and the difficulties the hon. Member had to cope with. He was bound to say that he thought his hon. and learned Friend had introduced matters somewhat foreign to the matter immediately before the House, and had rather encumbered the question with criticisms on parts of the system which, in his opinion, were not open to the attacks he had made upon them. What he had prominently in his mind was the attack made upon the expense of some parts of the system. It seemed to him that they had nothing to do with the expenses incurred in connection with the actual working of the Judicature Acts, and the particular instances the hon. Member had taken did not deserve the somewhat forcible remarks he made upon them. ["Hear, hear!"] The hon. Member started with criticising the constitution of the Privy Council and the appointment of the Lords of Appeal, and he deprecated the expenditure of £24,000 a year which their appointment entailed. He did not hesitate to say that no better reform had been carried out of late years than the establishment of the four Lords of Appeal who sat in the Privy Council and the House of Lords. It was the constant complaint in years gone by that the judicial strength of the House of Lords consisted of the Lord Chancellor and the ex-Chancellors who might be sitting there. Of course from time to time distinguished Judges were created Peers, but it had been a great source of weakness in the House of Lords that there were no Judges there who had been solely trained as lawyers. But that was not by any means the only reason which led to the appointment of the four Lords of Appeal. His hon. and learned Friend the Member for Durham had passed very lightly over the question of appeals from the Colonial and Indian Courts. Formerly there were constant complaints from the colonies, from Canada, and Australia, of the weakness of the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council, and that was the case, notwithstanding the fact that there were available for service on the Judicial Committee a good many learned lawyers who were not available for service in the House of Lords. But the members of the Judicial Committee were often Judges who already had judicial duties to perform, or Judges who had done their work and served their time. Consequently there was not formerly a body of men who could be relied upon to sit at all times upon this tribunal and to strengthen it. His hon. and learned Friend talked about 50 or 60 appeals at a cost of £24,000 a year, and said that the Lords of Appeal only sat

50 days in the 12 months. By some error his hon. and learned Friend had been misled into making an inaccurate statement. The whole number of days on which the Lords of Appeal sat in the House of Lords and the Privy Council would be found to be far more than 50—probably 150 or 160.

MR. ATHERLEY-JONES explained that what he had said was that the Lords of Appeal heard some 50 cases only. He did not say that they only sat on 50 occasions.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL did not think that the statement that they heard only 50 cases would be borne out by the statistics; but even if it were, that would not be an unsatisfactory state of things, having regard to the character of the judgments delivered in the House of Lords. It was absolutely necessary that the highest Court of Appeal should be constituted of men of the highest reputation as lawyers, so that their judgments should command universal respect. The judgments of the House of Lords laid down legal principles and developed, so to speak, our code of law. They formed the foundation of decisions in the United States and in Australia and Canada, and were cited with approval in Continental Courts. Remembering that the Lords of Appeal had to sit in the House of Lords and on the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council in regular rota, he did not think that their remuneration was at all excessive. The next subject referred to by his hon. and learned Friend had only a very remote connection, if any, with the Judicature Acts. That subject was the constitution of the Railway Commission, and his hon and learned Friend considered it a scandal and abuse that there should be two Railway Commissioners, receiving £3,000 apiece. He had been conversant with the work of this Court ever since its establishment, and it was his opinion that it was not just to measure the work of the Commissioners simply by what was done in court. They had a great deal of work to do in connection with traffic arrangements and in connection with applications that were never heard of in court. But he agreed that the cases that came before the Commissioners for trial would be equally well tried before a Judge and expert assessors appointed *ad hoc.* The reason why that system had never been adopted was on account of the pressing and increasing demand from commercial litigants that there should be permanent members of the tribunal constituting its popular and commercial element. He was by no means sure that the traders had been wise in making that demand, but it was impossible to connect any failure on the part of the tribunal to transact work with any faults in the Judicature Acts, with which the Railway Commissioners' Court had nothing to do. The Court was established by special Act in 1873, and re-established in 1889. Dealing next with the Court of Appeal, the hon. and learned Member said that the sum of £31,000 was a great deal for that Court. There were six Judges in the Court, and the sum was £31,000 instead of £30,000, because one of them was now also Master of the Rolls. There were two Appeal Courts sitting continuously during the judicial year. That imposed a severe strain on six Judges. The late Lord Bowen attended on many days when he was not in a fit state to do so; possibly his life might have been spared had he not been so strictly conscientious, and at the present time Judges often went to the Court, although they were in bad health, so strong was their determination to get through the work. His hon. and learned Friend did not suggest that the Judges in the Queen's Bench Division were paid too highly. They received £5,000 a year apiece, and could anyone maintain that the Lords Justices of the Court of Appeal, which stood next in importance to the House of Lords, ought to receive less than ordinary Judges? His view was, that the price the country paid for the services of the Lords Justices was certainly not too much, having regard to their position and the work they had to do. In fact, he was disposed to think that some day or other they might rightly be given higher remuneration. The hon. and learned Member said that there had been several days in recent months when the Court had not sat. That might have been the case in the last few months, but he knew that the learned Judges were making every effort to keep abreast of their work, and if they had found it practicable to sit on fewer days, he was satisfied that they had not allowed their work to get into arrear in consequence. It was a matter for congratulation that the arrears were fewer than system. It was the circuit system which enabled Judges to go to Lancashire more frequently than to other parts of the United Kingdom, while at the same time the causes were tried by High Court Judges with a direct appeal to the Court of Appeal. Only in the possible development of that system, he thought, were they likely to satisfy the demands of large centres such as Leeds, Bristol, and other places. [" Hear, hear! "] Before a Royal Commission could come to a conclusion upon the various grievances dealt with in the speeches of the Mover and Seconder they would be at work for two or three years, and they would produce a Report which might itself be obsolete, having regard to the length of time over which their inquiry had extended. The method of remedying existing defects by the tribunal of Judges might not be altogether an ideal one, but he was satisfied it was far better than a Royal Commission; and, while he joined in the hope that there might be prompt inquiry and a speedy improvement into some of these matters, he submitted that the purpose would not be served if the House were to accede to the Motion.

Sir FRANK LOCKWOOD cordially agreed with the Attorney General with regard to the undesirability of dealing with the matters in question by such a cumbersome piece of machinery as a Royal Commission. The facts were not in dispute. What was the good, then, of subjecting very intricate legal machinery to a long, exhaustive, and probably useless inquiry by Royal Commission? There was no matter upon which the House of Commons had a better right to express criticism, or to exercise its judgment upon than the administration of justice, and they might depend upon it that in calling attention to the necessity for reform time was not being thrown away. Those who were responsible for our legal machinery could not be said to be perfect, and this Debate would probably do them good as well as anybody else. [*A laugh.*] He hoped it would not be supposed it was the Judges he was speaking of—[*laughter*]—although perhaps it might be said that even they would be the better for a little prodding. ["Hear, hear!"] Take the criticisms upon the circuit system. Frequently it happened that the Court was called upon to sit for an unconscionable number of hours. He had himself defended a man for murder at 12 o'clock at night. That was not good form either for him or the Crown. [*Laughter.*] Who was responsible for that? It was the most ridiculous system with regard to the detention of jurors on trial for felony. This was done out of mercy to the jurors. Judges hesitated to keep those men away from their homes all night, and rather than do so they would sit late in order to finish a case. He should like to see the counsel who would have the hardihood to object to sit late in these circumstances. [*Laughter.*] The criticisms which had been made were in the main criticisms upon administration. Take, again, that most important question to all lawyers—in which he admitted, however, clients had some secondary interest—the question of costs. [*Laughter.*] He quite agreed with the Attorney General in making costs an indemnity to the successful litigant. He had heard of one of Her Majesty's Judges—not now on the Bench—who was excusing the present system, and when it was pointed out to him how hard it was that the successful litigant should have to pay in respect of his successful litigation, said, with a reminiscence of the sports of bygone days, " Well, you see, even the winning cock loses a few feathers." [*Laughter.*] He happened to know that the present Lord Chief Justice of England was strongly for making costs an indemnity. Of course lawyers were all for making the Courts as popular as possible—in other words, for increase of business—[*laughter*]—for that was what his hon. and learned Friend suggested. He did not see that a Royal Commission was needed to determine that point. He did not quite agree that the dealing with costs in the manner suggested by the Attorney General could be done by rule, though it might very well be done by legislation; and he thought the Attorney General might possibly introduce a clause to that effect in one of his Bills dealing with proceedings in the High Court of Justice. Then with regard to the Circuit system, did his hon. and learned Friend propose to abolish it? He only knew that he should be sorry to advocate any such proposal in his constituency. [" Hear, hear! " *and laughter.*] He believed there was a strong feeling in the country in favour of serious legal questions being tried by Judges of the High Court of Justice. [" Hear, hear! "] It would be monstrous to suppose that all such cases should be brought up to London, and if they could not bring up those local cases to London, then the Judges must go down to the locality to try them. As to the arrangement of the time at the disposal of the Judges, his hon. and learned Friend said that witnesses might be brought up to London in a special jury case, and the next day the learned Judge concerned might announce that he had to do duty at the Old Bailey. He felt perfectly sure that if his hon. and learned Friend could bring any such instance to the knowledge of the Lord Chief Justice he would make every effort to prevent such a thing occurring again. With all deference to his hon. and learned Friend he did not think that such a circumstance had happened in the Courts lately. Under the direction of the Lord Chief Justice great pains had been taken to prevent such things happening. Generally speaking, the subject was one on which they were all agreed, and he did not think his hon. and learned Friend, on reflection, would come to the conclusion that in this matter, the facts being ascertained and criticised, a Royal Commission would be a serviceable mode of dealing with the difficulties and anomalies to which he had properly and most effectively drawn the attention of the House. [" Hear, hear! "] Therefore he would suggest to his hon. and learned Friend whether he should not be content with having drawn attention to the subject and with the discussion he had elicited. The hon. and learned Member had certainly rendered a service to the country by directing the notice of Parliament to matters which were, unquestionably, of great public interest. [*Cheers.*]

*Mr. W. F. LAWRENCE (Liverpool, Abercombie) thought the hon. Member for Durham was entitled to the thanks of the House for having brought forward this subject, which was a matter that came home to a great many suitors. He was sorry that the Attorney General dealt so lightly with what Lancashire thought was a very serious grievance. He endorsed all that his colleague, the hon. Member for the Toxteth Division had said as to the strong local feeling in Liverpool and Manchester with regard to the time now occupied in hearing of commercial cases. The Attorney General thought he gave them some consolation in saying that, in future, there would be a summons for direction as to the venue where a case was to be tried, but the result would be that the grievance of Lancashire would be increased. Their grievance at present was that their cases were so congested in number that an adequate time was not given to each. In Liverpool, in 1894, 144 cases occupied 56 days in consideration, whereas in London these cases would have ocsupied 75 days of the Courts. Therefore, a Lancashire case had only two-thirds of the time given to a case in London. If cases were to be sent back from London to Lancashire, then there would be more hasty consideration at the hands of the Judges. The House would be surprised to hear that it had been known that new cases had been undertaken in Liverpool, sometimes after six o'clock in the evening. Such a state of things was altogether preposterous. [" Hear, hear! "] In London the Judges sat about five hours a day, whereas in Lancashire they sat six or seven hours a day. He submitted that they could not get proper consideration for their cases so long as that was the case. Another grievance arising from the foregoing circumstances was that there was no fixed time for the meeting or rising of the local Courts, and that additional expense was sometimes thereby caused to the suitors, who often had to wait about the Courts uselessly for a long time. He did not entirely associate himself with the opinion of the hon. Member for the Toxteth Division that the Circuit system was obsolete, but undoubtedly it required amendation. As to the Attorney General's argument about the feeling that would be raised if the Circuit system was taken away from the old towns, he would remind him of what was done with the Parliamentary representation of old towns, and would submit that they should consider, not only the feelings of a small community, which had the privilege of the visits of Her Majesty's Judges, but also the legitimate claims of places which had become large centres of business. [" Hear, hear! "] In Liverpool at one Assize the Court sat until past seven o'clock on eleven days, and at another until past nine o'clock on nine days. Hon. Members would see from these facts that it was not merely from a desire to have a Judge to themselves that Liverpool felt so strongly on this question, nor was it from a desire to emulate London, but that there was a real need for this legal business to be transacted in a proper way. [" Hear, hear ! "] He assured the Attorney General that he did not speak on this subject in any way from a mere professional point of view. [" Hear, hear ! "] He spoke for the commercial men of Liverpool, for the Chamber of Commerce, and for the Corporation, all of whom felt that their interests were prejudiced and expense needlessly incurred by a necessary reform being so long delayed.

Sir HENRY FOWLER (Wolverhampton) said he thought there was one branch of the subject presented by the hon. and learned Member for Durham which had not received the attention it deserved, and which lay at the root of many of the reforms he had suggested. He referred to the present condition of the County Courts, and to the necessity for a wide extension of their jurisdiction, and of very drastic reform in a great deal of their forms of procedure. The hon. Member who had last spoken had mentioned the opinion of the Liverpool Chamber of Commerce on this point of the extension of the powers of the County Courts, and he believed commercial men generally were in favour of such a reform. In Scotland, where the administration of justice was far in advance of that in England, a much better system prevailed, and he believed that properly qualified Judges of the County Courts in England were quite capable of dealing with many of the cases now dealt with at Assizes. [" Hear, hear ! "] The County Courts ought to be something higher and better than mere debt-collecting machines. [" Hear, hear ! "] The number of County Court Judges at present might be less numerous. What was wanted in those Courts were men of a high class, with better remuneration and a wider jurisdiction. Reference had been made to the number of days Judges had sat in the year—one Judge had not sat more than 100 days, and others only 70 or 80 days—but power was given that help should be rendered by one Judge to another. He did not think any practical good had resulted from that, simply because the clause had really not been put into force. He should very much demur to the appointment of a Royal Commission. He did not think that the appointment of Royal Commissions, at all events as they were at present constituted, were a very encouraging means of procedure. Royal Commissions used to be bodies of a judicial character—men with unpledged minds hearing evidence and coming to what they thought was a sound conclusion. Royal Commissions nowadays had degenerated into a gathering together of a number of advocates on both sides. Interests were supposed to be represented and not the public—[" hear, hear ! "]—facts were not to be ascertained, but theories were to be proved, and he should be very sorry to let loose the administration of justice in this country among a body of that description. The precedent had not been encouraging. He did not think he was exaggerating when he said that the result of the Judicature Acts, which were the product of a Royal Commission, had been to enormously increase the cost of litigation in this country. The practical question was whether they could do anything to utilise and to better employ the great machinery which their High Court gave them. [" Hear, hear ! "] He thought there was a great waste of power in the appropriation of time. He was not going to quarrel with the local sentiment to which the hon. Member for Liverpool had alluded, but he did not think it was necessary to waste all the time that was wasted in what was called the opening of commissions and the other paraphernalia which characterised Circuit life. [" Hear, hear ! "] There was another point—he knew he was not treading on very dangerous ground—and that was, Was it not possible that rather too much time was devoted to vacations? [" Hear, hear ! "] He certainly thought the Courts of Justice in this country should not be closed for something like 12 or 13 weeks. He thought a readjustment could be made without entrenching on the rest which, of all men, the Judges were entitled to, or on the recreation and rest which the members of that most laborious profession, the Bar, were entitled to have, and, at the same time, without shutting the doors of the Courts of Justice in the face of the whole community. He was under the impression until that Debate that the hours of sitting of the Courts had been very much abbreviated.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: They have in London.

*SIR H. FOWLER said he would not express his own opinion on this point, but he would venture to tell the House what a very distinguished Member of that House, who now occupied a high judicial position in this country, once told him. "If," he said,

> "the Courts of Justice sat at the same hour at which they sat when I was called to the Bar, and rose at the same hour, and if they did not have such very long adjournments in the middle of the day, it would be equivalent to two additional Judges."

["Hear, hear!"] All these were minor questions, but he thought that if the attention of Parliament were drawn to them perhaps the attention of other high dignitaries might be drawn to the fact that judicial time was public property, and that the public were entitled to have a just use made of that judicial time. ["Hear, hear!"] He spoke with very great respect of the Lord Chancellor; but he also thought that he might assist the wide feeling for improvement in the administration of justice in this country, in facilitating its progress and in lowering its cost, by means of Rules, if his Lordship and the Rule Committee would devote their time, their attention, and their determination to those Rules. ["Hear, hear!"]

MR. C. J. MONK (Gloucester) agreed that County Court jurisdiction might be advantageously extended, even beyond the limit suggested by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Wolverhampton. He thought a remedy for the congested state of business in the country might be found in a revision of the County Court Circuits, and probably by the appointment of what he might call a superior class of Judges in those circuits. They would relieve the Judges of the High Court, and would render unnecessary their absence from London. It was a matter which would require very considerable attention, and would necessitate legislation. He had brought in a Bill with regard to County Court jurisdiction, and he hoped that during the present Session an opportunity would be afforded of considering that Bill and of sending it to the Standing Committee on Law.

MR. ATHERLEY-JONES said he did not desire to press his Motion to a Division. He thought the Debate had been a satisfactory one, and he would ask leave to withdraw the Motion.

Motion, by leave, withdrawn.

PEASANT FREEHOLDERS (WALES).

MR. J. LLOYD MORGAN (Carmarthen, W.) rose to call attention to the serious effects of the long period of agricultural depression, so far as it affected peasant freeholders in Wales; and to move,

> "That this House is of opinion that the distressed condition of the peasant and small occupying freeholders in Wales is such as to call for the earliest attention of the Government, and that it is desirable that State loans, subject to a low rate of interest, should be granted to such of the said freeholders as purchased their own holdings with money borrowed on the security of their land to enable them to redeem existing mortgages in respect of which a higher rate of interest is payable than such freeholders are able to pay in the present state of agriculture."

He said that the peasant freeholders were described in the Report of the Royal Commission dealing with the matter as a class "who are on the verge of financial ruin," and, in the minority Report, as being "in a condition which is positively disastrous." Under these circumstances he felt it his duty to bring the matter before the House in the belief that the Government might see their way to give some relief to this class without doing any injury to the taxpayers or prejudicing their interests in any respect. The Report of the Commissioners, so far as this question was concerned, was a unanimous one. Indeed, so much impressed were they with the strength of the case put forward on behalf of this class, and so struck were they with the grievances under which these men were suffering and with the hardships they had gone through, that he thought he was right in saying that at one point in their proceedings the Commissioners considered whether or not an interim Report should be published for the purpose of asking the Government of that time to render immediate relief to the small occupying freeholders in Wales. The Commissioners reported that the "freeholders are now in a most precarious position, and they have nothing short of ruin staring them in the face," while in another part of their Report they said, "in the west counties of South Wales their position is most precarious, and the problem of their future is a very difficult one." They therefore recommended that assistance should be granted to them by means of State loans at a low rate of interest.

With regard to the question of interest, he would not suggest any more than the Commission had suggested, that money should be granted for the relief of these small freeholders of Wales except upon terms not prejudicial to taxpayers. All he suggested was that loans should be granted at the lowest rate of interest at which the Treasury could lend without any loss to the State. The Report suggested that this relief should be granted to a limited class, to the class who were owners of their freeholds, farming them themselves. He would not go into the details of the scheme the Commissioners suggested, nor would he suggest an alternative scheme in detail; he would only deal generally with the main features of the case. The principle of establishing small occupying freeholders had in Ireland been tried with success, so much so that one Act had followed another in rather rapid succession for the benefit of this class of peasant proprietors in Ireland. Not only had it been applied to Ireland, the principle had also been adopted in this country by the passing of the Small Holdings Act, which established the principle that it is desirable, even in England and Wales, to facilitate the acquisition of small holdings. It was true the Act had been very little, if at all, availed of, but the principle remained established, the failure of the Act being accounted for by the somewhat cumbrous nature of its provisions, and the difficulty of applying them in many cases. The passing of the Act, however, established the principle, and the Report of the Select Holdings Committee declared that the very reference of the question to the Committee assumed the desirability of extending the class of small cultivating owners in this country. Another principle was laid down in the Report of the Committee, that those who were to be first assisted should be those who had done something to help themselves. The object of Governments then in the past had been to establish this very class in England and Wales, and what he suggested by the Motion was that even so the present Government should continue that policy in Wales, extending assistance to the class whose very existence was at stake. Upon this point the present Colonial Secretary, writing to Mr. Marchant Williams, the Secretary of the Welsh Liberal Unionist Association, on April 23 1895, said:—

> "I am not competent to speak dogmatically on the Land Question; but if I might venture an individual opinion it would be that the only permanent and satisfactory road to a better state of things is to be found in an extension of the Land Purchase Act, by which landlords and tenants may agree to make the cultivators the owners upon terms enabling them to support themselves comfortably in their holdings."

The Commissioners had recommended that assistance should be given to a limited class in Wales, and he would, therefore, trouble the House for a few moments in considering the cases which had brought about the difficulties of this class and the condition of affairs which called for reform. Their difficulties were to be attributed to the land hunger which existed in Wales. He would not deal exhaustively with this, the question of land hunger, because hon. Gentlemen opposite representing Welsh constituencies would agree that this land hunger existed. ["Hear, hear!"] It was impossible for an Englishman, unacquainted with the state of agriculture in Wales, to really appreciate what this land hunger meant—this rush for farms, this tremendous bidding at auctions where land was for sale—a state of things that a British landowner would envy if he had had any Welsh experience. This land hunger had led tenants to purchase their holdings at ruinous prices. The reasons which induced this eagerness arose out of the feeling of tenants that if they lost the occupation of their farm, if they did not buy the farm, they would find great difficulty in getting another farm equally suitable on any land at all. Ever present with them was a sense of the insecurity of their tenure. This might be said to be a controversial point, and he would not go into it; but, whatever might be said about it and the causes that had brought it about, it could not be denied that a feeling existed in Wales that tenancies in the past were uncertain. There was a further inducement to tenants to buy their holdings in the fact that they had expended money on the land, they had lived on the land for many years, and improved it much, and if they did not secure the result of this they would have to incur the same expense again. When they bought, prices were high, and in many instances the tenants bought improvements they had themselves carried out on the land. A further inducement to purchase was the feeling that they were handing on the value of their labour to their children, and there was the sentiment strong in Celtic people which a farmer described as a passionate fondness for the familiar features of the farm, the parish, and its surroundings. The land hunger was more pronounced in Cardigan than in any other county; the ratio of freeholders to tenant farmers there was 21 to 78; and in the parish of Penrhyn there were 102 farmer freeholders, and 90 of these had bought their farms during the last 12 years. As a witness said, it would have been much better for them had they not done so, because their interest or mortgages was more than the rent they had previously paid. Owing to the insatiable desire for land in Wales, the prices paid had been ruinously high, and farmers had paid such a price that they found it impossible to keep up the payment of the interest on their mortgages. The Commissioners felt the importance of the question, and they sent out private circulars asking for information on the question of prices paid for land, and from the replies received they selected 100 as examples. Out of these they found that five farmers had bought at 20 years' purchase, 46 at from 20 to 30 years' purchase, 12 at from 40 to 50 years' purchase, and 14 at prices varying from 50 to 100 years' purchase. ["Hear, hear!"] The tenants who had bought these farms had, in most cases, not sufficient capital to complete the purchase, and consequently had to borrow. Sometimes they could pay a half, and in other instances they had to mortgage to the extent of two-thirds of the property. The interest varied from 4 to 4½ per cent., and occasionally rose to 5 per cent. The tenant purchasers therefore found themselves in this position: they that bought the land at a very high price, a large portion of which they had raised on mortgage, and in many cases they found that for the amount they had had to borrow they were paying interest equal to the rent they had previously paid. The whole difficulty then had arisen out of this land hunger, and those who were in the worse position were the farmers who had bought during the last 25 years. The farmers who had bought before that period had passed through an interval of good times, had taken the best advantage of those times, and were now in comparatively easy circumstances. The class who had bought later were in a position worse than that of the tenant farmers, their condition being described by witnesses as "badly off," as "dire necessity," and "straitened in circumstances because of the pressure of mortgage loans." In the year 1888 a letter appeared in *The Times* which well described the condition of this class of cultivators. The letter was from a gentleman who went as a Commissioner from *The Times* to report on the state of agriculture in Wales. He said of Cardigan that the shadow of the mortgagee hung over the land, and that the difficulties of the men who had bought their freeholds ten years before had increased year by year, until payment was becoming impossible, and the end could not be far off. There was no doubt that between 1887 and 1894 there was an increase of 1 per cent. in the class of farming owners in Wales; but that slight increase was attributable not to the fact that the small freeholders had become more thriving in those years, but to the fact that the land hunger continued to exist during that time, and existed to the present day. The increase had taken place principally in counties like Anglesea and Carnarvon, where very large sales of property had occurred in recent years, whilst the decrease was to be accounted for by the fact that large numbers of the small freeholders had at length found the burden they had to bear was more than they could carry. An experiment had been tried in Wales by the Ecclesiastical Commissioners which threw some light on the question as to how a scheme to assist this class of tenants would work in the Principality. The Ecclesiastical Commissioners commenced in 1885 the sale of farms by means of deferred payments to the tenants. Up to 1895 they had sold 9,500 acres of agricultural land, the price realised being £153,000. The sales were by auction, 15 per cent. of the purchase money had to be paid up, the other 85 per cent. remaining on the land as a terminable mortgage, payable in 30 years. Mr. Bock Porter, the Secretary to the Ecclesiastical Commissioners, gave evidence before the Land Commission in regard to the working of the scheme. He stated that there had been no difficulty with the tenants, and that in the whole of the ten years there had not been a single defaulter. During a period of the greatest agricultural depression every one of the tenants paid his instalments and interest with the promptest regularity, and the experiment, Mr. Bock Porter said, had been completely and absolutely justified. Mr. Morgan Richardson, a solicitor, land agent, and land owner in Wales, who had practically made this question his own in some respects, and who had had the widest possible experience of this class of people, said that where they had been enabled to purchase their farms they had paid the interest with regularity even in the very worst of times. That showed that if the Government could establish a system of loans by which this class of farmers could be assisted in Wales, they would receive payment of the instalments promptly and regularly. Whilst the Welsh Land Commissioners differed on many other points, they came to a unanimous conclusion on the question that some scheme in the direction suggested by this Motion should be adopted. At present many of the small freeholders had mortgages on their farms on which they were paying interest of 4 and 4½ per cent., varying according to the character of the security. These freeholders were an industrious class, who, as a rule, paid the mortgage interest punctually, but their position was most unsatisfactory. Having to pay this high rate of interest they were unable to reduce the principal, and they lived in constant terror of having the amount of the mortgage called in. This scheme of assistance by the State would put an end to the uncertainty and insecurity which at present weighed so heavily upon the Welsh peasant owner. He hoped the Government would give this question not only their serious and sympathetic, but also their favourable consideration. He was quite certain if they did they would be helping a most deserving class of people, who year in and year out worked from early morn till late at night, calling their children and their wives to their assistance, but who yet, in spite of all their efforts, were in a state which could only be described as lamentable. He begged to move the Resolution.

*MR. REES DAVIES (Pembrokeshire) seconded the Motion. Those hon. Members who represented such large numbers of small freeholders in Wales asked the Government to adopt some principle of State loans to small freeholders, and if they could get a definite declaration that the system which had worked so well in Ireland would, in the near future, be adopted in Wales, they should have obtained the object they had in view. The Welsh Land Commission had clearly established two things. In the first place they had established the fact that there were genuine grievances in Wales in regard to land tenure which ought to be remedied, and in the second place they had established the right of Wales to separate treatment, for, although there might be hardships of a similar character in England, the Commission were unanimously agreed as to Wales. The Commissioners had arrived at the unanimous conclusion that some scheme of the kind indicated in the Motion was desirable. His hon. Friend had described the insatiable land hunger in Wales, or, as the Commissioners termed it, the sacred attachment to the ancestral home. The Welsh peasant freeholder preferred to give a large sum to purchase his farm rather than be deprived of the place where his father, grandfather, and perhaps his great-grandfather, had lived before him. He might be allowed to quote the following passage on this subject from the report of the Welsh Land Commission, which exactly expressed the condition of things—

> "Speaking broadly we are inclined to think that in the majority of cases the depression with which we have dealt above has affected them from an economic point of view quite as much as the land owning and tenant farming classes. But we have had forcibly brought to our notice in the course of our inquiry the fact that a large percentage of the occupying freeholders are persons who, or whose immediate ancestors have been, tenant farmers, and especially that during the time of the agricultural prosperity in the sixties and in the seventies many tenant farmers purchased their holdings at prices which were probably even then high, but which, owing to the subsequent depression, have proved to be ruinously excessive. It was stated, and we believe with accuracy, that in many cases the purchase money equivalent to fifty years' annual value was given for a farm holding by the tenant who was in possession at the time of the sale. Such cases were perhaps exceptional, but it is perfectly true to say that very high prices—prices quite out of relation to the economic value of the land, considered as

an investment—were given by many of those who are now occupying freeholdings in Wales, who were impelled by an intense desire to remain in possession of the holdings on which they had been brought up, and with which the life of their families had been associated for generations and even centuries."

This quotation clearly showed the state of things in Wales. One district of the county of Pembroke consisted largely of small freeholders. In many cases the farms were bought at high prices in prosperous times after the General Election of 1868, when there had been a great deal of irritation between landlord and tenant in Wales, and many unjust evictions. The Report of the Commission showed that many of the freeholders bought their farms when prices were high, that they had struggled for years under great difficulties, and were obliged to buy their farms to save themselves from unjust eviction, and in some cases were compelled to buy the improvements on their farms. A man was in a different position under a mortgagee from what he was under an ordinary landlord. There were in Wales many excellent local landlords, who lived among their tenants and met them in bad times with reductions and remissions of rent. The mortgagee was often a trustee, and no abatement of the high rate of interest could be made by him, because it was not in his power to do so. Mr. Griffith Jones, formerly a solicitor, but now a barrister, in his evidence before the Land Commission, said that in Cardiganshire the small freeholders had greatly increased in numbers of recent years, and he would tell the House what he said:—

"He estimated that the proportion of small owners to occupiers was 'at any rate one to every three.' There is one district about five miles by six miles occupied almost exclusively by small freeholders. Witness had acted professionally (as solicitor) in the purchase of many of these holdings, and the purchasing price had invariably reached thirty years' purchase, often 35 years or more on the rack rent. The usual course was that the purchaser found one-third or one-fourth, and borrowed the remainder at 4 per cent., with the result that he stood at a higher rent than if he were only a tenant."

He was not going into details, or suggest a scheme, but the Report of the Land Commission recommended that a State loan should be granted in the case of farms not more than 150 acres in extent. For himself, he did not agree in that view. Those who represented Welsh constituencies did not wish so much for any definite declaration by the Government on the subject as the recognition of the principle itself. There were many struggling freeholders in his constituency whose farms were over 150 acres, and he should be sorry to see State loans restricted to farms under that extent. He wished to draw the Chancellor of the Exchequer's attention to a letter, embodying a suggestion of practical utility, which appeared in the *Economist* newspaper on 9th January last. It was headed—"Post Office Savings Bank: Interest on Deposits," and read as follows:—

"Sir,—Rumours are abroad to the effect that the Chancellor of the Exchequer is considering how much longer the Post Office can continue to pay 2½ per cent. as interest on money deposited with it. When this question of the rate of interest allowed by the Post Office to depositors comes up for discussion, two points only are generally raised—first, that banks do not like the competition of the Post Office for customers' money at such a rate as 2½ per cent.; secondly, that the public exchequer loses by the transaction, but as this loss is a small one and the 2½ per cent. interest is supposed to encourage thrift, it is regarded as a matter of no great concern to the public. The net result of these two considerations is that little inclination is felt on the part of the public to disturb the existing arrangements. There is, however, a third aspect which is left out of sight, which has a very considerable effect indeed upon the public convenience, and of which the public take apparently no note. The balance sheets of banks show that on the average quite half the money deposited at the bank is loaned out again locally to be employed in business of all kinds. Now the Post Office deposits are reckoned to amount to some £120,000,000 or more. If the Post Office acted like other banks, one-half of this vast amount would be let out again locally to promote business of all kinds. If we could only get a Return published of the amount of money deposited by each county in the Post Office Savings' Bank on, say, January 1st in each year, we should know, by halving that amount, what each district loses by the withdrawal of these large amounts by a bank which does nothing to encourage local trade. This is a matter of the greatest public importance not only to borrowers, but to the infinite number of people who would benefit in countless ways by the business carried on with this capital. If we had a compulsory public registration of land, and the Post Office advanced half their deposits on well-secured mortgages, something would be done to prevent the absolute withdrawal of large sums of money from local industries, but the Post Office will probably not care to trouble itself about any such undertaking. If we could only suppose for a moment other banks acting on the same principle as the Post Office, and while receiving money on deposit, declining all advances, local business would soon come to a deadlock. The wonder is that the public have not long ago seen through the evil of the present large absorption of local capital by the Post Office, and insisted upon a reduction of the rate of interest for the sake of local industry.—I am, yours faithfully, E."

He did not know what the Post Office deposits in the different counties amounted to. He would move for a Return on the subject, which he hoped the Chancellor of the Exchequer would grant him. He submitted that the suggestion contained in the letter he had read was well worth consideration—that these local deposits should be applied for local purposes—and it appeared from what he read that the Post Office could well afford to lend at a low rate—say, 3 per cent., or, at the most, 3½. The claims of Welsh peasant freeholders was not a matter of Party. It would be supported by hon. Members opposite. They who represented a large number of freeholders put the matter before the Government as one which Conservative and Unionist candidates at the last Election declared strongly in favour of. He did not think there was a Liberal, Conservative, or Unionist candidate seeking the suffrage of any agricultural constituency at the last Election who did not prominently favour those claims. He hoped the Government would make a declaration in favour of helping them and saving them from the absolute ruin with which for a long time they had been face to face.

Mr. POWLETT MILBANK (Radnor), in supporting the Motion, said he knew the small freeholders of Radnorshire intimately. They were thrifty and industrious men, and the reason of their difficulty was they had to pay higher interest than their land enabled them to pay. Their position, although they were freeholders, was worse than that of an ordinary tenant or labourer. Much of their land they bought 25 years ago, when agricultural prosperity was great. The tenant farmers had been met generously by their landlords in reductions and remissions of rent, the repair of buildings, and in other ways, but these unfortunate freeholders had had no help of that kind.

Mr. Rees Davies.

There was no class of men in Wales more deserving of support than these peasant freeholders, and he hoped the Government, if they possibly could, would see their way to advance them loans at the present price of money. This was not a Party question, for Members from Wales on both sides of the House were absolutely united on it.

Mr. VAUGHAN-DAVIES (Cardigan) said he was delighted to hear the remarks of the hon. Member for Radnorshire. This was no Party question. He himself did not speak as a Party man on that occasion, for in his county amongst these freeholders he found Conservatives and Liberals. It was not a question of Party politics, but a question of the necessity of the people. He had received a letter from a district which would be known to many in the House—the district of Penrhyn—which stated that a tenant farmer who, 25 years ago, bought his farm and became a freeholder, was now actually a pauper. Why was this? They had heard that the land hunger in Wales was the cause of it; but that was not the only cause. In Cardiganshire, where large estates had been sold, the tenant farmer occupied the same farm on which his father and grandfather had lived for years. Under these circumstances a man could not go to an auction and see the farm sold over his head without a struggle to try and keep it in his own hands. That was partly the reason why such large sums had been given in his county for farms—from 50 up to even 70 years' purchase having been given. There was the case of a farmer who, after buying his farm, for which he had paid a rent of £50 a year, had to pay £105 a year in interest on the money and do the repairs. That was an impossible state of affairs. The real cause, however, was the curious position of the tenant farmers in Wales. The English tenant farmer, if turned out of his holding, could go and try to make a living in England, Scotland, Ireland, America, Canada, or any other part of the world where English was spoken, but of these men 90 per cent. could not speak English, and therefore they were tied to their country as were no other tenant farmers. That was the secret of their giving such high prices for the land in Wales. Another trouble was the sweeping number of notices to quit after an election.

He could not help thinking that the Government could meet them in the same spirit as had been done in the case of Ireland, where large sums had been lent at 3½ per cent. [Mr. W. LONG shook his head.] The right hon. Gentleman shook his head, but it was the case that sums of money had been lent to the tenant farmers in Ireland at that percentage. They were simply asking that what had been done before should be done again; if it was not, these freeholders would end their days in the workhouse.

*THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF AGRICULTURE (Mr. WALTER LONG, Liverpool, West Derby) said he was sure nobody who had spoken sympathised more than the Government did with the condition in which agriculturists in many parts of the country found themselves. No doubt that position had become particularly hard in the case of occupying owners, and the small freeholders, who had to bear the losses both of owner and occupier, had probably felt the depression of agriculture and the consequent decrease in their properties more than any other class of agriculturists. He would point out, however, that some of the speeches which had been made were not altogether in support of the precise Motion that was upon the Paper. The hon. Gentleman who had just spoken had misinterpreted what he intended to convey by shaking his head when it was asserted that similar assistance had been given to the Irish tenants; what he had intended to indicate was, that in the case of Ireland, as also in regard to the Small Holdings Act which had been quoted, the assistance of the State had been given to the tenant to enable him to become the owner of the soil instead of being the occupier—in other words, turning the tenant into an occupier. But, as he understood this Motion, the recommendation made to the House was that money should be lent by the State at a low rate of interest, to enable, not the occupiers to become owners, but to enable the burdened owners to pay off existing mortgages, which it was admitted they had entered into, in many cases, with their eyes open, giving, as they had done, a much higher price than the property was worth even at the time when they bought it. In consequence of the present depression in agriculture, moreover, the value of the property had been greatly depreciated. The Welsh Land Commission had reported in favour of a limited application of this proposal to lend money, but he did not understand that there was any such limit in the Motion before the House. The hon. Gentleman who moved this Motion did not confine himself definitely to the recommendations of the Royal Commission, but left it open to them to embody generally those recommendations. The Seconder of the Motion, on the other hand, said that any such limitations as those imposed in the recommendations of the Royal Commission found no favour with him. If the Government undertook to lend money upon easy terms to occupying owners to enable them to redeem their mortgages it would not be the hon. Member for Pembrokeshire alone who would ask that the limit should be extended. They would find representatives, not only of Welsh constituencies, but of constituencies in every part of the United Kingdom, making a like request, and proving, as they could undoubtedly prove, that the condition of things in England were similar to those in Wales. He admitted there was a great and strong desire amongst the Welsh farmers to continue to live on their farms and amongst their native surroundings. Generally speaking, that desire might not be so universal in England, but he asserted that on the part of the freeholders in England there had been as close and warm attachment to their land as was to be found in any other part of the United Kingdom, and many of them had bought their properties when land was much more valuable than it was now, and had encumbered themselves with heavy mortgages, with the result that to-day their position was as serious as that of any freeholder in Wales. Whatever the cause of the present condition of things in Wales might be—whether it was land hunger or the fact that many of the men could only speak Welsh—it was not the cause they had to consider, but the result, and whether it was desirable, and, if desirable, possible to deal with the state of affairs. He submitted that to lend men money to discharge their mortgages or to transfer their mortgages from one holder to another, the other being the State, was not a system which could be recommended as a sound one or one which the

State could wisely adopt. The Ecclesiastical Commissioners, to whom reference had been made, had offered occupiers the opportunity of becoming the owners of their holdings by the payment of so much down and the rest by deferred payments spread over a series of years, with the provision of a sinking fund with which to redeem the capital. That was a businesslike proposal. He would always be prepared to look with consideration upon a proposal to enable occupiers to become owners when there was evidence that they desired so to do; but he did not notice any strong desire on the part of occupiers anywhere to become the owners of their land as things were at present. There was an impression, which was not limited to England, that land was not altogether a desirable possession at the present moment, and he was afraid there was some foundation for it. If the present proposal were adopted, the principle embodied in it could not possibly be confined to Wales. Before the Commission on Agricultural Depression abundant evidence was given by Mr. Clare Sewell Read, Mr. Everett, and others, which showed that every word which could be said in respect to occupiers in Wales could with truth be said in regard to occupiers in other parts of the United Kingdom. What did this proposal mean? Did it mean that they were only going to transfer the mortgage from the individual who now held it to the State, who was to hold it on the same terms as it was held now, or did it mean that they were to transfer the mortgage to the State and that the State was to lend money to the freeholder on such terms that he could not only pay the interest, but also redeem the debt at the end of a certain period?

*MR. REES DAVIES: The Commission mention 30, 40, or 50 years.

*MR. WALTER LONG said he was aware what the Commission said, but he desired to know what hon. Members meant by the Resolution. The Resolution did not on the face of it mean that mortgages should be redeemed by annual payments. But if that was the meaning what would be the result? The wish was to give these poor men, who were suffering severely, present relief. Would they be able to give the men present relief? He found that under the Housing of the Working Classes Act money had never been lent for so long a period of time as 50 years at less than 3½ per cent. interest. If they added to that rate of interest the necessary sinking fund, they would find that for every £100 the State might be willing to lend the tenant would have to pay £4 5s. in place of the interest he was now paying. That was not all. There would be considerable cost attending the transfer of the mortgage. They would have to have the properties certified and examined. In the case of the purchases from the Ecclesiastical Commissioners, or of those under the Irish Land Act, or of those proposed to be carried out under the Small Holdings Act, the State lent money to the individual with which he was to be able to buy his property at the present value and at the present price. But what the State was asked to do in this instance was to enable men to redeem obligations incurred many years ago at the price at which the land was then bought. He did not wonder that hon. Gentlemen made Motions like this, because no one knew better than he how bitter was the cry which came from many agriculturists. He knew that every word which had been said as to the industrious, hard-working lives of those people was perfectly true, and he did not wonder that hon. Members from Wales, knowing the hard struggle it was for those people to live, should make this appeal on their behalf. But he asked the House not to be led into adopting this Motion by a natural and proper feeling of sympathy with a large and deserving class in distress. The Motion if adopted could not possibly be limited to this particular class of freeholders in Wales alone. It must be extended to the freeholders of the whole country. Any attempt to limit its application to this particular class of freeholders in Wales would be swept away by the force of the representations which would be made to Parliament of sufferings just as keen on the part of freeholders, large and small, throughout England. If they gave this assistance to small freeholders in Wales on the ground that their land-hunger had overcome their prudence, they would have to extend it to all freeholders. Therefore, while the Government made no complaint of the bringing forward of this Motion—for there were excuses for it, and it had been moved in a moderate and temperate manner—they must ask the House to reject it, because it would not have the effect of relieving the burdens of the class it sought to help, because it would be impossible to limit it to that class, and because it would entail an enormous liability on the State.

Mr. BRYN ROBERTS (Carnarvonshire, Eifion) said the right hon. Gentleman had argued that the Irish case was a case of the Government having turned an occupying tenantry into owners, whereas the Motion proposed to assist landholders who were already owners to pay off their mortgages, which, in the opinion of the right hon. Gentleman was a totally different matter. The distinction the right hon. Gentleman had drawn between the two cases—the Welsh and the Irish—was totally fallacious.

Attention was here called to the fact that there were not forty Members present. The House was thereupon counted, and a quorum having been found,

Mr. BRYN ROBERTS said the Motion was not to assist small freeholders, as the right hon. Gentleman supposed, but to assist only such freeholders as had already purchased their own holdings.

*Mr. WALTER LONG: I am quite aware of that fact, but I pointed out that, whatever your intention might be, it would be quite impossible to maintain that restriction.

Mr. BRYN ROBERTS said the only difference between the Welsh case and the Irish case was that the Welsh farmers had, unlike the Irish farmers, helped themselves in the first instance by purchasing their own holdings, and surely they were not on that account the less deserving of assistance now that they found themselves unable to adhere to the original terms of purchase. The right hon. Gentleman declared that if the case were admitted it would not be possible to confine it to Wales. But the principle had been admitted in Ireland; it would be impossible to confine it to Ireland, and it must be extended to Wales. The intention was that the advances from the State should be repayable, principal and interest, in a specified term; and the right hon. Gentleman had argued that in that case the burden of the tenants would not be alleviated because they would have to repay at the rate of 4½ per cent. In the case of Ireland the advance was repayable, principal and interest, at the rate of 4 per cent. for forty years. But at the time that advance was made Consols were below par, and now that Consols were at £112, the money could be advanced to the Welsh at a lower rate of interest. The right hon. Gentleman also said that in Ireland the land was bought at the depressed price, whereas the proposal in the case of Wales was that the tenants were to be helped to purchase at the high price, or to relieve themselves of their mortgages at the high price. He ventured to say that in no case did a mortgage amount to more than three-quarters of its value. They were therefore not asking the Government to advance the full price that was got from the land twelve or fourteen years ago, when land was at a very high value; but only three-quarters of that price, which would not be more than the present value of the land in the market. The only questions that remained were—did the necessity for this transaction exist in Wales? and would it be a safe investment for the State? The necessity was proved by the evidence given before the Land Commission, and that it would be safe for the Government to advance the money would be admitted by everyone who knew that the Welsh farmers, like their mountain sheep, could make a living in circumstances that would mean starvation to anybody else.

On the return of Mr. Speaker, after the usual interval,

General LAURIE (Pembroke and Haverfordwest) said that he was sorry that he should have intervened in the Debate so as to have prevented the House from coming to an immediate decision upon this Motion, but the interest he took in this question must be his excuse for having done so. No doubt, the answer to the Motion that had been given by the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Board of Agriculture was most conclusive, from his point of view; but he thought that there was one point to which he was bound to refer. It was admitted that, in many cases, the position of the Welsh freeholder was almost desperate, and that unless he received substantial and speedy assistance he would be unable to continue to be a freeholder, and must fall back upon the position of a tenant of the land he now owned. That would be the inevitable result if those who held mortgages on these freeholds were to foreclose and sell the land. It had been stated on the part of the Government that it was a principle of public policy that public money could not be used for the purpose of perpetuating the race of freeholders who could not manage to hold their own. But was that contention well founded? During the last 20 years there had been a new departure in this matter, and public money had been used over and over again for the purpose of enabling tenants to become freeholders. The acquisition of their holdings by the Irish tenants had been facilitated by the use of public money, which had also been applied in the case of the Scotch crofters and of the tenants in certain parts of England. He wanted to know why what had been done in the case of Ireland, Scotland and England, could not be done in the case of Wales? Surely it was as important to prevent freeholders from becoming tenants as it was to enable tenants to become freeholders. He admitted that the use of public money for these purposes was a new departure; but still that was the order of the day. For these reasons he should feel bound to support the proposal which was embodied in the Motion. ["Hear, hear!"]

Mr. THOMAS ELLIS (Merionethshire) said, in the first place, he must express his deep regret that the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Board of Agriculture, speaking on behalf of Her Majesty's Government, should have felt himself bound to meet this Motion by a direct negative. In the case of tenants

General Laurie.

whose families had occupied holdings for generations, and had improved the waste land until it was now good land, it was not to be wondered at that they tried to keep a tight grip on their holdings and their homes. Within the last 25 or 35 years large numbers of Welsh tenants had been evicted. When these estates came into the market and the holders had lost the security they had in the honour of their landlords, they did their utmost to secure their homes and their improvements, and it was too subtle a distinction for the right hon. Gentleman to draw between assenting to State loans for farms that were being or were about to be purchased, and refusing absolutely to sanction any State loans in order to ease the burden which lay upon these hard-worked peasant freeholders. ["Hear, hear!"] The first argument of the right hon. Gentleman was that an hon. Friend of his had said that he was unwilling to assent to certain limitations which the Commissioners had laid down. That was not sufficient to take away the responsibility of the Government for refusing to deal in any shape or form with the unanimous recommendations of the Royal Commission.

*Mr. WALTER LONG said that what he had said had been that it would be impossible for the Government to maintain these limitations. The opinion of the Government was that the case of freeholders in England was as grave as the case of freeholders in Wales, and he said the Government did not see any justification for making any difference between the freeholders in Wales and the freeholders in many parts of England.

Mr. THOMAS ELLIS said that at any rate the right hon. Gentleman could not say that it was impossible to set up limitations. Limitations were constantly laid down in Bills brought before the House, as, for instance, in the Small Holdings Act of 1892. As to the other shelter the right hon. Gentleman endeavoured to get from the case of the freeholders in England, the freeholders in Wales had stated their case before a Royal Commission, and every one of the Members of that Commission signed a recommendation to the Government to ease their burdens. The peasant freeholders in Wales had petitioned the House years and years ago, and every representative of Wales sitting on either side of the House had that night backed the recommendation of the Commissioners. ["Hear, hear!"] He therefore ventured to say that a clear case had been made out for dealing with peasant freeholders in Wales, and so far as he knew, not a single hon. Member had got up to advocate any such case on behalf of England as was now advocated on behalf of Wales. The distressed freeholders in England had presented no petition to the House, and no Royal Commission had made any recommendation on their behalf. To the clear case that had been made out the right hon. Gentleman only gave a blank and decided negative, and he could only express his deep regret that, coming to the House and speaking for the Government was all that the right hon. Gentleman could do.

MR W. T. HOWELL (Denbigh Boroughs) regretted that in a discussion of this kind the last speaker should have introduced something of the bitter element by referring to events very long past—he meant those disputes between landlords and tenants which had something political in them. ["Hear, hear!"] Those disputes were dead, and he thought it would be better for Wales if all recollection of them were buried. There was one fallacy which underlay what had been said so far concerning the small freeholders in Wales and elsewhere. Speakers had ignored the fact that, after all, a freeholder who was under a heavy mortgage was in effect a tenant, though he happened to be tenant to a mortgagee instead of a superior landlord. The difficulty was this, that years ago they charged their land with heavy mortgages. In many cases they were anxious to buy land they were farming, and had not sufficient capital to buy it, and so borrowed at high rates of interest at a time when agricultural depression began to be a burden on farmers. They thought the depression was only temporary, and that they would be able to repay the money in good years. Their expectations had unfortunately been wrong. They now came before Parliament to ask for special aid on the ground that they represented an industry which the country could not afford to allow to go to rack and ruin. They said that they had an exceptional case. He agreed with that position, but he must say that, when he stood in a Parliament which was supposed to represent all sections in the country, it was impossible for him to say that because the small freeholder who had charged his land happened to hold land in Wales, he was to be preferred to the small freeholder in exactly similar circumstances throughout the English counties. ["Hear, hear!"] Even if limitations were enforced, the opinion of Members of the House must first be obtained as to what those limitations were to be on which such a gigantic scheme as was proposed was to be carried out. If the Chancellor of the Exchequer said he could carry out a scheme of such magnitude, it would be an undoubted boon to the freeholders throughout the country; but until he was informed that it was possible financially to carry out such a scheme, he was afraid the Motion of his hon. Friend could not result in much good. An attempt was made in the Resolution to establish the position that there was something different in the Land Question in Wales from the Land Question in England. [*Opposition cheers.*] He knew hon. Gentlemen opposite held that opinion, and wished to add one more to the orthodox ten commandments, the commandment "Be selfish. ["No, no!"] Get everything you can for Wales and do not give it to others who have just as good a claim to it." Although he sympathised with the small freeholders in England and Wales he could not admit that there was an essential difference between the Welsh and the English Land Question. ["Hear, hear!"]

MR. ELLIS GRIFFITH (Anglesey) said that the hon. Member who had just sat down represented a Welsh borough. He presumed that the hon. Member would vote against the Resolution, but would hon. Members who represented Welsh counties do so? ["Hear, hear!"] He denied that the supporters of this Motion were selfish in this matter. They wanted this reform for Wales, but if evidence were adduced showing that England needed a similar reform they would not oppose the demand. In Wales the matter was pressing. There had been great sales of landed estates, and when they took place the tenants were in this dilemma: they had to buy their farms, paying for their improvements over again, or they had to part with their farms and with their improvements. In a great many cases they purchased, paying for their own improvements, and thus putting into the landlords' pockets money to which they were not entitled. Their position now was very precarious, and they came to that House and said, "You have for a great number of years omitted to reform the Land Laws of this country, and under those laws we have been put in a position of great stress, and only a new law can put us fairly right." They asked that in order to improve their position they might be allowed to borrow money in the manner and for the purposes set out in the Resolution. In his opinion their demand was just, and he trusted that the House would accede to it.

MAJOR WYNDHAM-QUIN (Glamorgan, S.), as the representative of a Welsh agricultural district, supported the Motion that had been brought forward. [*Opposition cheers.*] At the same time he was fully alive to the fact that what was due to the peasant freeholders in Wales was also due to the small freeholders in England. ["Hear, hear!"] The inquiries of the Land Commission, however, had been confined to the Principality, and therefore Welsh Members were justified in limiting their proposals to the case of the freeholders of that part of the country which they represented. Large advances of public money had been made to Irish tenants to assist them in times of distress, and he could not understand why a similar benefit should not be conferred on small freeholders and tenants in Great Britain. There was no difference of principle between assisting financially a freeholder who had bought his land and assisting a tenant to purchase his holding. In helping the small Welsh freeholders the Government would be assisting a loyal, industrious, and law-abiding portion of the community.

MR. HERBERT ROBERTS (Denbighshire, W.) said that the question before the House was regarded as urgent and pressing in Wales. He represented an important agricultural constituency in North Wales, and he could say truly that great interest was taken in this subject by his constituents. The number of small freeholders in Denbighshire was decreasing he was sorry to say. One of his constituents who had given evidence before the Royal Commission, said that he had purchased his farm in two lots, in 1873 and 1880, and that since then he had enjoyed greater liberty of cultivation, and had spent £1,000 on improvements. He had however found it extremely difficult to make the farm pay, although he worked as hard as a man could. That was a typical case. One fact that differentiated the case of the small freeholders of Wales from that of small freeholders of England was that the number of the former was not as large as the number in England. In Wales there were only 424 to each county, but to each English county there were 1,203. Then the area of ground held in England by these freeholders was 14 per cent., whilst in Wales it was only 11 per cent. Reference had already been made to what occurred in 1868, after the historic elections of those days. Notices to quit were showered upon the farmers, many of whom were thus forced to buy their holdings on unfair conditions, and they had suffered in consequence from that time up to the present. He did not agree with the hon. Member opposite, who said "We must leave the past to bury its dead." They could not do so. Large numbers of the inhabitants of Wales remembered too vividly the cruel events of that period. The Royal Commission had recommended powerfully the adoption of the principle of the Motion, and that evening, with the exception of the hon. Member opposite, the whole representatives of Wales in Parliament were in favour of the proposal. In these circumstances he trusted that the House would accept the Resolution.

*Mr. STANLEY LEIGHTON (Shropshire, Oswestry) said he had heard something from hon. Gentlemen about the insatiable hunger for land. The other day he offered for sale in small portions a small estate of his in Wales, but he did not get a single offer. [*Laughter.*] It was all humbug; this land hunger did not exist. He should like to find those persons who were willing to give 50, 60, 70, and 80 years' purchase for land. It was admitted that this Motion would not, if translated into an Act of Parliament, increase by one the existing number of freeholders in Wales. Hon. Members were asking for assistance on behalf of a certain small section of the people out of the pockets of the artisans, cottagers, and tenant farmers of the whole country. How magnanimous! but how far from an economical method of dealing with a financial difficulty! If hon. Gentlemen could do something for the freeholders by relieving them a little of their taxation and by placing them more on an equality with those whose income came from other sources, then they would do some real good to the freeholders in Wales and England. Why did not hon. Gentlemen who professed to be so anxious to help the people of Wales try to relieve them from the inequalities of local taxation? The Radical representatives of Wales did nothing in this respect; they hindered rather than helped the agricultural interest in the Principality. When it was claimed that the State should come to the rescue of those who had made bad bargains, he reminded hon. Members that there was once a certain young man who bought a gross of green spectacles. [*Laughter and* "That is fiction."] Ought the State to have come to his rescue? If it came to the rescue of one set of people who made bad bargains, ought it not to come to the rescue of all? Wales had suffered less from agricultural depression than any other part of the United Kingdom. An hon. Member said that the end of the mortgaged freeholder was not far off. What did this mean? Simply this: that a freeholder who had bought his land for £100 would have to sell it for £50. His place would be filled by another freeholder, with this difference—that the new man would be unmortgaged. This Resolution might be described as one to indemnify mortgagees and endow moneylenders. Why should the State interfere in order to pay back money lent on a bad security and to pull the mortgagee out of his difficulty? From the economic point of view the State ought not to interfere in a case like this. Though he wished to see as many people become freeholders as possible, he did not wish to see the State come forward and, by use of the taxes, buy their estates for them, or pay their bad debts. He would rather urge hon. Members opposite to help their Welsh fellow-countrymen by endeavouring to teach them the language of the world and the language of commerce—English.

*The CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER (Sir Michael Hicks Beach, Bristol, W.) said he could not accept the speech of the hon. Member (Mr. T. Ellis) as representative of that which would have been made by a Welsh Chancellor of the Exchequer had he taken part in this Debate. And he was convinced that if the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Monmouthshire had happened to have been in his place he would hardly have re-echoed the eloquent sentiments of the hon. Gentleman. He was anxious to put this matter before the House from a point of view which had been neglected—that of the taxpayers of the country. Personally, he thought there was much in this Motion with which he could sympathise. All of them desired to maintain the freeholders, and especially the small freeholders, of the country. He was too well acquainted with many cases where mortgages had compelled, not only small, but large freeholders to part with old family estates, large or small, not to sympathise with the desire that some help should be given to persons in these circumstances. But he was obliged to consider the matter from the point of view in which it must present itself to the taxpayers. What was the position? What was asked by the Motion was not akin to anything that had been done for Ireland. What had been done for Ireland was to pass Act after Act in order, if possible, to substitute a system of small ownership for a system of landlord and tenant. ["Hear, hear!"] Throughout that legislation this had been always required; a valuation of the property to be transferred from landlord to tenant at the time of the transfer by a responsible Department on behalf of the State, so as to secure that the tenant did not give too large a sum for the property which he was purchasing. That was entirely different from the system now proposed. The House was asked to sanction the principle that mortgages of property which had been already purchased, whether by their former tenants or by persons entirely unconnected with those properties, should be redeemed by an advance from the State—in other words, at the expense of the taxpayers. That was a principle which had been, he thought, very wisely refused in advances made for public purposes by the Public Works Loan Commissioners. That body made advances for every kind of work almost that could be suggested, but it was one of their rules never to make advances to pay off old debts. And for this obvious reason, that if the old debt had been incurred, and it was advisable for the person incurring it to come to the State to pay it off, the probability, nay, almost the certainty, was that the value of the property on which the debt had been incurred had depreciated, and therefore nobody else would lend money upon it. That was the very case which hon. Members had put. They said the condition of the freeholders in Wales was so bad, that, in spite of their industry, their honesty, and all their good qualities, they were reduced to such a position that they could not maintain their farms, that they would be sold up and their farms transferred to other persons unless the taxpayers stepped in to help them. The property had depreciated in value since its purchase, and it was part of the case that the purchase was made at a higher value than the property was worth even in prosperous times. In his opinion, the result of any such proposal as this would simply be that the taxpayers would find themselves mortgagees of all the worst properties in the country, while those properties which had increased in value and whose owners were able to borrow on good terms in the public market would take very good care never to come to Government at all. ["Hear, hear!"] He trusted the House of Commons would not initiate a principle which, it seemed to him, would have the greatest possible danger for the taxpayers in the future. Because there was nothing more true than what had been said by more than one speaker—that Parliament could not adopt this principle and confine it solely to Wales. There might be—he knew there was—a very strong feeling of nationality on the part of hon. Members from Wales. They might contend, and possibly with some truth, that the circumstances of owners and occupiers of land in Wales were in some measure different from those in most parts of England; but of this he was quite sure, that there were parts of England where the depreciation in land had been far greater than in Wales, and if there were a case for the aid of the State to small landowners in Wales, there was a much stronger case on behalf of the landowners in the east and south of England, where the value of land had depreciated 50 per cent., or even more, in some cases. Then it had been admitted that if Parliament once initiated this principle they could not confine it to small landowners only. The hon. Member who seconded the Motion said that 150 acres, the limit recommended by the Royal Commission, could not, in his opinion, be adhered to. No limit of acreage could possibly be adhered to, because the value of 50 acres in one part of the country might be quite as much as that of 1,000 acres in another part. Therefore they would be compelled, if they took any limit, to take a limit of value and not of acreage. But how were they going to adhere to a limit of value? Why was the owner of 500 acres, worth, perhaps, £5,000, not to be as much entitled to assistance in this way as the owner of five or ten acres? He was bound to say that some of the hardest and most painful cases that had come under his notice—and he had had many applications for State assistance of this kind—had come from owners of the larger estates—estates which had been in certain families for many generations, and whose owners, owing to the present depreciation in the value of land, had found themselves in the position of being obliged to part with old family property. What must be the answer in such cases? He was afraid only this—that it was better, hard though it might seem, in the public interest, that the property should be sold and vested in a person who could afford to manage and farm it properly than that it should remain in the hands of an owner encumbered with heavy mortgages and who, therefore, was not in a position to do justice to it at all. ["Hear, hear!"] This was not a Motion in accordance with the Irish Land Acts, to increase the number of owners of land in Wales or anywhere else. Rather it would only prevent an encumbered owner from parting with his estate in favour of some other owner who was able to do more justice to it, and, therefore, to do more good to the country at large. And for this the State and the taxpayers were asked to undertake a burden which, if once accepted, must be increased until it would become a burden far too great to be reasonably borne. He trusted the House would pause, in the interest of the taxpayers of this country, before it accepted the principle embodied in the Motion, for he was convinced that if once accepted and acted upon for Wales, it must be extended to the rest of the United Kingdom. [*Cheers.*]

The House divided:—Ayes, 43; Noes, 102.—(Division List—No. 46—appended).

AYES.

Arch, Joseph
Brigg, John
Caldwell, James
Davies, M.Vaughan- (Cardigan)
Davitt, Michael
Dillon, John
Donelan, Captain A.
Ellis, Thos. Edw. (Merionethsh.)
Evans, Samuel T. (Glamorgan)
Flynn, James Christopher
Gilhooly, James
Griffith, Ellis J.
Holburn, J. G.
Jameson, Major J. Eustace
Jones, David Brynmor (Swansea)
Jones, William (Carnarvonshire)
Kilbride, Denis
Langley, Batty
Laurie, Lieut.-General
Lewis, John Herbert
Macaleese, Daniel
McGhee, Richard
McKenna, Reginald
McLeod, John
Milbank, Powlett Charles John
Morley, Charles (Breconshire)
O'Brien, Patrick (Kilkenny)
Owen, Thomas
Pickersgill, Edward Hare
Price, Robert John
Provand, Andrew Dryburgh
Roberts, John Bryn (Eifion)
Roberts, John H. (Denbighs.)
Samuel, J. (Stockton-on-Tees)
Smith, Samuel (Flint)
Sullivan, Donal (Westmeath)
Thomas, Alfred (Glamorgan E.)
Wedderburn, Sir William
Whittaker, Thomas Palmer
Wilson, Henry J. (York, W.R.)
Wilson, John (Govan)
Wyndham-Quin, Major W. H.
Yoxall, James Henry

TELLERS FOR THE AYES, Mr. Lloyd Morgan and Mr. Rees-Davies.

NOES.

Acland-Hood, Capt. Sir A. F.
Arrol, Sir William
Ascroft, Robert
Atkinson, Rt. Hon. John
Balcarres, Lord
Balfour, Rt. Hon. A.J. (Manch'r)
Balfour, Gerald William (Leeds)
Bathurst, Hon. Allen Benjamin
Beach, Rt. Hon. Sir M. H. (Bristol)
Begg, Ferdinand Faithfull
Bhownaggree, M. M.
Blundell, Colonel Henry
Brassey, Albert
Brodrick, Rt. Hon. St. John
Cavendish, V.C.W. (Derbyshire)
Chaloner, Captain R. G. W.
Chamberlain, Rt. Hon. J. (Birm.)
Charrington, Spencer
Cochrane, Hon. Thos. H. A. E.
Coghill, Douglas Harry
Colomb, Sir John Charles Ready
Cook, Fred. Lucas (Lambeth)
Corbett, A. Cameron (Glasgow)
Cross, Herb. Shepherd (Bolton)

Curzon, Viscount (Bucks)
Darling, Charles John
Douglas, Rt. Hon. A. Akers-
Doxford, William Theodore
Duncombe, Hon. Hubert V.
Dyke, Rt. Hon. Sir William Hart
Edwards, Gen. Sir James Bevan
Fellowes, Hon. Ailwyn Edward
Fielden, Thomas
Finch, George H.
Fisher, William Hayes
Flower, Ernest
Folkestone, Viscount
Gibbs, Hn. A. G. H. (City of Lond.)
Giles, Charles Tyrrell
Gilliat, John Saunders
Gordon, John Edward
Gorst, Rt. Hon. Sir John Eldon
Goschen, Rt. Hon. G. J. (St. Grgs.)
Gray, Ernest (West Ham)
Greene, W. Raymond- (Cambs)
Gull, Sir Cameron
Hanbury, Rt. Hon. Robert Wm.
Haslett, Sir James Horner
Heath, James
Heaton, John Henniker
Hill, Rt. Hn. Lord Arthur (Down)
Howell, William Tudor
Hudson, George Bickersteth
Hutchinson, Capt. G. W. Grice-
Johnston, William (Belfast)
Kemp, George
Knowles, Lees
Leighton, Stanley
Long, Rt. Hn. Walter (Liverpool)
Lorne, Marquess of
Lowles, John
Loyd, Archie Kirkman
Lyttelton, Hon. Alfred
Macartney, W. G. Ellison
Macdona, John Cumming
McCalmont, H. L. B. (Cambs)
McKillop, James
Mellor, Colonel (Lancashire)
Meysey-Thompson, Sir H. M.
Milward, Colonel Victor
Monk, Charles James
Murray, Rt. Hn. A. Graham (Bute
Parkes, Ebenezer
Pollock, Harry Frederick
Powell, Sir Francis Sharp
Pryce-Jones, Edward
Purvis, Robert
Rankin, James
Richardson, Thomas
Ridley, Rt. Hon. Sir Matthew W.
Round, James
Russell, Gen. F. S. (Cheltenham)
Russell, T. W. (Tyrone)
Seton-Karr, Henry
Sinclair, Louis (Romford)
Smith, Abel H. (Christchurch)
Stanley, Lord (Lancs.)
Sutherland, Sir Thomas
Taylor, Francis
Tollemache, Henry James
Tomlinson, Wm. Edw. Murray
Tritton, Charles Ernest
Valentia, Viscount
Wanklyn, James Leslie
Webster, Sir R. E. (Isle of W.)
Welby, Lieut.-Col. A. C. E.
Wharton, John Loyd
Williams, Colonel R. (Dorset)
Willoughby de Eresby, Lord
Willox, John Archibald
Wodehouse, Edmond R. (Bath.)
Wolff, Gustav Wilhelm

TELLERS FOR THE NOES, Sir William Walrond and Mr. Anstruther.

STATUTE LAW REVISION BILLS.

Lords Message [2nd February], relating to the appointment of a Joint Committee on Statute Law Revision Bills, considered.

Ordered, That a Select Committee of Seven Members be appointed to join with the Committee appointed by the Lords (as mentioned in their Lordships' Message of the 2nd February) to consider all Statute Law Revision Bills and Consolidation Bills of the present Session.

Message to the Lords to acquaint them therewith.

Committee nominated of :— Mr. William Ambrose, Sir Edward Clarke, Mr. Samuel Evans, Mr. T. M. Healy, Mr. Hobhouse, Sir Robert Reid, and the Solicitor General.—(*Sir William Walrond*).

PETROLEUM.

Select Committee appointed to inquire into and report upon the sufficiency of the Law relating to the keeping, selling, using, and conveying of Petroleum and other Inflammable Liquids; and the precaution to be adopted for the prevention of accidents with Petroleum Lamps.

The Committee was accordingly nominated of :—Sir Thomas Carmichael, Mr. Jesse Collings, Mr. Alexander Cross, Mr. Fortescue Flannery, Sir Edward Hill, Mr. Wootton Isaacson, Mr. Kenyon, Mr. McKillop, Mr. Mundella, Mr. Pollock, Mr. Harold Reckitt, Mr. Compton Rickett, Sir Benjamin Stone, Mr. Tully, and Mr. Ure.

Ordered, That the Committee have power to send for persons, papers, and records.

Ordered, That Three be the quorum. —(*Sir William Walrond.*)

INDUSTRIAL AND PROVIDENT AND INCORPORATED BUILDING SOCIETIES (PURCHASE OF FEE SIMPLE) BILL.

MR. H. J. WILSON (York, W.R., Holmfirth) rose to move the Second Reading of this Bill.

Notice taken that 40 Members were not present; House counted, and 40 Members not being present,

House adjourned at a Quarter past Ten o'clock till To-morrow.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

Wednesday, 24th February 1897.

STATUTE LAW REVISION BILLS, &c.

Ordered, That Three be the quorum of the Committee appointed to join with the Committee appointed by the Lords to consider all Statute Law Revision Bills and Consolidation Bills of the present Session.—(*Sir William Walrond.*)

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

BURIALS BILL.

*MR. ROBERT CAMERON (Durham, Houghton-le-Spring) moved "That this Bill be now Read a Second time." He felt that, in this matter, there was a grievance in the country that ought to be remedied, and this Bill proposed a remedy. In this Bill Dissenters were simply seeking to share what he considered the equal rights of free citizens in a free country. Hon. Gentlemen opposite sometimes thought it was the dissatisfied and discontented Nonconformist who was always fighting for imaginary wrongs. In his opinion the root of the controversy was very different from that. It was simply, not because they were Nonconformists in the main, but because they were Englishmen, and Englishmen would not submit to unjust extortions and be always kept in unequal positions, and would not always submit to unfair treatment in any department of the activities of citizenship. He considered, therefore, that the Nonconformist or anyone else, seeking redress in this matter, was only discharging a duty of citizenship. This question had been repeatedly brought before the House with varying results; but in the last Session but one, a Bill dealing with the subject was carried by a majority of 110. Behind it all lay the desire, not of Nonconformists only, but of those who conducted and managed their Burial Boards, and who found themselves always at a loss to which of the two or three Acts of Parliament dealing with the subject they should apply. In 1880 there was a great step taken in advance on this question. Then Nonconformists got conceded to them a great privilege—the right to be buried in consecrated ground. For his own part, he always regretted that these concessions had to be wrung from the clergy. They ought to be generously given as simple matters of justice. Since that date a more liberal spirit had arisen. Five or six Bishops, some gone, some living, had expressed themselves in favour of abolishing consecration now that they had got cemeteries, and were not restricted to burials in churchyards. But the clergy thought, and perhaps not unnaturally, that in consecrated ground they ought to possess all their old privileges. This Bill proposed that the rite of consecration should confer no privilege or disability or obligation, but that it should be purely and simply a religious rite. He trusted hon. Gentlemen opposite would see that that demand was not an unreasonable one, seeing that so many Bishops themselves felt it was just, and that many of them refused to consecrate and dedicated instead. Clause 2 provided that a cemetery or part of a cemetery might be consecrated by the Church of England, or by any other church or denomination. Clause 3 gave power to the burial authority to provide buildings for the performance of burial services, and, whether consecrated or not, they could be available to all the people. This question of the consecration of chapels had led to a great deal of bitter contention in different parts of the country. He thought no one could see these two chapels in a burial ground, frowning at each other, without feeling that our religion was not represented by them, but dishonoured by them. This Bill would obviate that, for it would allow one chapel, and that chapel to be used by all parties. He thought it was little short of a scandal that they could not co-operate in the solemn services over the dead. It was not only the clergy that suffered from this exclusive spirit, but Christianity itself largely suffered in the eyes of the people. Clause 4 provided that the Bishop's authority should not be required for the plan of any building or as to the fitness of any tomb, monument, or monumental inscription. He thought that was a very just and necessary provision. The plans of buildings, tombs, and so forth, should surely be in the hands of a responsible secular authority—the authority the people had elected to carry the work out. Clause 5 dealt with the burial of paupers or lunatics in consecrated ground; and Clause 6 reserved existing rights to perform duties and receive fees. Subject to this, however, the right of any minister, incumbent, parish clerk, sexton, or other person holding a parochial office to perform any duties or to receive any fees in respect of any burial or any purpose in connection with the use of a public burial ground should absolutely cease after the commencement of the Act. This provision, in his opinion, would remove one of the chief sources of annoyance and objection, and one of the chief reasons why funerals were made so expensive. There was also a provision enabling the burial authority to make arrangements for the payment of fees by agreement with those entitled to receive them. There were further Amendments of the old Act, which he considered of great importance. These proposed to lengthen the time during the day in which a funeral might take place; that shorter notice might be given that a funeral was to take place; and that, when notice was given of a change in the time at which a burial was to take place, it might take place on Sunday, Good Friday, or Christmas Day. He thought this would be a great convenience to the working classes, for on such days they did not lose a day's labour, and would be able to have around them their friends to administer the comfort and consolation customary on such occasions. There were also Amendments abolishing those small distinctions which belonged to other times and not to their day. The Bill left the fees as they were at present, though this was a very sore question in the country. Burial Boards felt it as well as other people. The Select Committee had reported very summarily and drastically on the necessity of abolishing those fees. He might mention that the Vicar of Hampstead had received £700 a year for the last ten years from fees, while the Vicar of Weston-super-Mare had received over £11,000 for interments. When he read this Return for the first time he was not surprised at the strong objection of clergymen and others to Disestablishment and Disendowment. During the five years ending 30th September 1892, the inhabitants of the City of London paid £2,632; of Islington, £2,038; of Lambeth, £1,496; of Paddington, £2,889. Brompton Cemetery yielded to the clergy the large sum of £8,092; and for only 717 interments in the Metropolitan cemeteries the clergy received no less than about £27,000, or about £5,400 a year. And what services were rendered in return? None! None at all!! One sect, and one sect only had this advantage, simply because the law allowed it, and he denounced this as a wrong against fairness and freedom. Dissenting ministers had been tempted with the same fees for interments in unconsecrated ground. When funerals on unconsecrated ground increased because the fees were less, Burial Boards had illegally offered equal fees on the unconsecrated to those on the consecrated side, but for his part he would be ashamed of any Nonconformist minister who would take them. What he would like in a matter of this kind, and he really thought it would be the proper and Christian method under the circumstances would be that the friends of the deceased should make a voluntary or freewill offering to mark their respect for the minister who conducted the service, to show their belief in him as guide and friend. To exact a fee by law was one thing, to receive a free gift of love and respect from the community was quite another thing. The fundamental mistake the Church made was to exact these fees as a legal charge. Not by such compulsory powers did the Church gain credit and influence, the Church lost more than it gained in the moral and Christian respect of the community at large. He thought he need not go further into this question, and would only remind the House of what Bishops of the Church of England had said in relation to the subject; and, in citing these authorities, he might be allowed to say he held them in high personal respect, he had read some of their writings, and perhaps knew as much of them as did many of those who were opposing the Bill. First he quoted the late Archbishop Tait, a name respected all over the Christian world, and especially respected in the schools of this country and among its schoolmasters. Speaking in Debate in 1880, the late Archbishop Tait, referring to a cemetery with two chapels, said it was

"A proclamation to the whole world of the differences between the Church and Dissenters, and he should not regret if the instances of that proclamation were not multiplied."

Then the present Archbishop of Canterbury—and, surely, here again was a man who was held in respect by hon. Gentlemen opposite—had pronounced on this subject in very definite language. In referring to probable alterations in the Burial Laws, Archbishop Temple said:—

"It would be necessary in providing for the future to do away with the distinction between consecrated and unconsecrated ground. It would not be possible in future to compel the erection in cemeteries of separate chapels for the services of the Church of England. Nor could he say it would be desirable. The very existence of the two chapels in a cemetery was a scandal and a reproach."

The late Bishop of Manchester, Dr. Fraser, whom he had had the honour of meeting more than once on platforms and elsewhere, a man of sterling character, and an honour to the Church, when consecrating a cemetery at Accrington, said:—

"There is only one thing that gives me pain, and that is when I look round this cemetery and see three chapels standing there, which are so many witnesses that Christian people are not all of one mind; that the distinctions which part them in life are, unhappily, continued after death."

On another occasion Bishop Fraser said:—

"I do hope the day will come when Churchmen, Nonconformists, and Roman Catholics may at last agree to use the same building set apart for the holy purpose of reading a service over the dead."

The late Bishop of Ely expressed views to the same effect, and he performed the ceremony of dedication, instead of consecrating cemeteries. The same might be said of others he could name. He thought he need say no more. He commended the Bill as a Measure for allaying the contention on this subject between the Church and Dissent, and as a clear guide to burial authorities throughout the country. It would save ratepayers a large amount of money, and he did not know how it would in any way injure anybody, except that it would destroy a monopoly that never should have been allowed to exist, a monopoly that was discreditable to any church or chapel participating in it. He moved that the Bill be now read a Second time.

*MR. CARVELL WILLIAMS (Notts, Mansfield) hoped the House would not be led to draw an erroneous inference from the two facts that he happened to be one of the promoters of the Bill, and that the hon. Member for the Tunbridge Division (Mr. Griffith-Boscawen) had given notice to move the rejection of the Bill. He differed fundamentally from the hon. Member on the question of Disestablishment; but this Bill raised no such issue as that, and was strictly limited in its object. It might be discussed, and ought to be discussed, quite outside the wider question of Disestablishment. In the Debate which took place two years ago the hon. Member for the Hyde Division (Mr. J. W. Sidebotham), in a speech of remarkable frankness, made an important admission. He said, and truly said,

"that it was the greatest mistake in the world to suppose that Churchmen were not as much interested as Nonconformists in the settlement of this question."

The hon. Member went even further than that, for he contended that the privileges granted to the clergy under the existing law

"were not wanted, nor even valued by those who possessed them, and there was no reason why they should not be removed by law."

He could state dozens of facts showing that dissatisfaction with the existing law was not confined to Nonconformists, but was shared by a large number of Churchmen; but he would mention only two. Before the late Home Secretary went out of office he was waited upon by a deputation from various Burial Boards throughout the country, to complain of the excessive fees paid to clergymen and others for burials in the consecrated parts of cemeteries; which fees the deputation declared were unjust, because no service was rendered in return. He had nothing whatever to do with that deputation, and was not previously aware of the arrangement. It was introduced by a Conservative Member of Parliament, and that fact sufficiently indicated its non-party and non-denominational character. The second fact was yet more striking. Such was the antipathy in some parts of the country to the present law in regard to consecration, that Burial Boards, or Parish Councils, had actually entered into agreement with local Churchmen, clergy, and the Bishop of the diocese to contract themselves out of the Burial Acts, and by legal agreement the clergy waived their claim to rights and fees under those Acts. The only objection he had to this contracting out was that it was merely a makeshift arrangement, and it did not bind the successors to the present incumbents and others, so that troubles might arise hereafter. But such arrangements served to show how great was the dislike to the existing system, and how it was regarded even by those who might be supposed to be among its defenders. The promoters of the Bill had approached this subject, this in some respects painful subject, in a strictly practical spirit, and with a sincere desire to put an end, so far as the law could do it, to all contention in connection with the sacred duty of the interment of the dead. It would be a mistake on the part of opponents of the Bill to suppose that any provisions they found in it were dictated by a desire to wound the feelings of Churchmen, or to do injury to the Church of England. There was not a single provision in the Bill that could not be justified by the experience of several years past, as being necessary to remedy some existing and admitted grievance, or remove some defect in the existing law. It was only because the authors of the Bill had wished to be comprehensive and to do their work thoroughly that some of the objections were taken. ["Hear, hear!"] He did not think he could give a better proof of the *bona fides* of the authors of the Bill than by calling attention to the alterations which had been made since the Bill was introduced in 1895. This was not precisely the same Bill. ["Hear, hear!"] It differed from the Bill of 1895, because the authors had taken into careful consideration the objections urged against certain provisions in that Bill. For instance, it was strongly objected to the Bill of 1895 that it gave compulsory powers to burial authorities for the purchase of land for cemeteries. Such powers they believed were greatly needed, but they belonged really to a much larger question, the land question, and were not necessary to the burials question, and so it had not been deemed desirable to press that provision on the present occasion. Another objection was raised to the prohibition of all distinguishing marks between the consecrated and unconsecrated parts of cemeteries. That was a matter which might be safely left to local feeling, and therefore that provision had disappeared from the present Bill. Then strong objection was taken to the proposal that the expenses of consecration should not be defrayed out of public funds. It had been thought not worth while to urge that point against objection, and so that provision had been omitted. He referred to these facts to make good his statement that the authors of the Bill had tried to display that "sweet reasonableness" of which the late Matthew Arnold was a distinguished apostle. He did not know whether it was too much to hope that the opposition to the Bill would not be based on the same extraordinary misconceptions, and the same forgetfulness of existing facts, as characterised the Debate of 1895. The greatest offender in that respect was a right hon. and learned Gentleman no longer a Member of the House; he had been promoted to another place—the then Mr. Matthews, at one time Home Secretary. He actually spoke of the Bill as depriving the members of the Church of England of the possibility of having funeral rites in new cemeteries in accordance with their convictions; while there was not a line in the Bill to justify such a statement. He also spoke of consecrated chapels being open for Mahommedan and Pagan services, and the noble Lord the Member for Rochester added "infidel or atheistic;" both of them forgetting that the Burials Act, 1880, expressly provided that all services in consecrated ground and chapels should be "orderly and Christian;" so that infidel services were altogether prohibited. Then another hon. and learned Gentleman, of whose services the House had not yet been deprived, the present Attorney General, asked how clergymen could regard with equanimity burial services wholly unconnected with their Church; he also forgetting that that was the principle on which the Burials Act of 1880 was based, and was not one of the provisions of the Bill. The hon. Member for Preston (Mr. Tomlinson) objected to burial services while services were proceeding in church; not knowing apparently that that was prohibited by the Act of 1880. He also imagined that the regulation of burial fees was one of the duties of the Home Office; whereas the Home Secretary had no more power to interfere with the clerical fees than anybody else; and finally, Mr. Matthews made the egregious double mistake of saying that the consecrated chapels in cemeteries were built out of the funds of the Church, which no longer would have the use of them. He recalled those blunders by way of warning to those Gentlemen opposite who apparently continued to offer implacable opposition to the Bill. For this was one of the statements which, according to *The Times*, was to be found in a paper containing objections to the Bill. The Bill, they were told, proposed, among other things, "to throw open all existing consecrated burial grounds and mortuary chapels (besides those consecrated after the passing of the Bill) to all persons alike, including non-Christians." If all that was meant by that was, that all persons would have the right of burial in parochial burial places, and in consecrated ground, that was no more than existed under the present law, and in churchyards as well as cemeteries. If, however, it meant that the Bill would authorise non-Christian services, the statement could only be described as absolutely untrue. One of the objections which would be taken to the Bill was, that it made consecration dependent on the will of Burial Boards, instead of being compulsory, as it now was. But had those who took that objection forgotten that that was the principle on which what was known as "Marten's Act" was based? Under that Act sanitary authorities were left absolutely at liberty to have consecration or no consecration, to have what chapels they liked, or no chapels at all. That Act also completely ignored the parochial clergy, and gave them no claim whatever to fees. If the opponents of the Church Establishment had drafted that Act it could hardly have been more drastic. Well, but who brought in, and who passed, that Act? Not those who sat on that side of the House. Mr. Marten was a Conservative Member and a Churchman. It was supported by all his Party. It passed the House of Lords, and was assented to by the Bishops. In this Bill they were adopting the very principle which the Church Party of 1879 deliberately adopted, and if that principle now excited indignation, the indignation should be directed to the right quarter, and not be used to excite prejudice against this Bill. Those who wished to pass it wanted to give the same powers to all burial authorities as Marten's Act gave to sanitary authorities. The Local Government Act unfortunately did not include the Act among the Acts which might be adopted by Parish Councils; and the members of those new, and often very vigorous, bodies strongly objected to be bound by the rigorous provisions of the Burial Acts. They were living under two sets of contradictory burial laws, administered by two different Government Departments. One system was, to a large extent, based on principles of liberty and justice; while the other system violated both; and he challenged the party which carried Marten's Act to give good and sufficient reasons why the principles which they maintained in 1879 should not be reaffirmed 18 years later. If asked what were the cardinal principles of the Measure, he replied that they were two. The first was the principle of local option. That, as he had shown, was a principle already adopted by the Legislature. Several members of the Episcopal Bench, instead of being shocked at the fact, had cheerfully acquiesced in both Marten's Act and the Act of 1880. It was not for him to say whether the Bishops were right or wrong in not attaching the same supreme degree of importance to consecration as some other Churchmen did. He wished to call attention to the mode in which the question was dealt with in this Bill. Instead of denying to Churchmen the right to have cemeteries consecrated, it facilitated consecration by removing existing objections to consecration. How did it do that? Why, simply by stripping consecration of its present legal and financial accidents, and placing it on the footing of a religious rite only. It was a mistake to suppose that the supporters of this Bill wished to deprive members of the Church of England of any comfort or satisfaction which they might derive from consecration. They objected only to the exclusive rights, the legal privileges, and the claim to unjust exactions which now attach to consecration. Take those away, and there was no reason why every cemetery should not be consecrated, aye, every yard of it; because the fact of consecration would not injure a single inhabitant. The Attorney General, when this Measure was last before the House, made a very significant reference to the question of fees. He said that there was very little about fees in the Bill, and very little had been said about them in the Debate. Then he made the admission that, as to the mode of levying fees, perhaps some Churchmen might desire to see a change as much as any Dissenters. He would like to know what the grievance was, and see if a remedy could be proposed on broad and general lines. He (the speaker) was very glad to find that that was a point on which the hon. and learned Gentleman had an open mind; and he would explain what was the grievance complained of by the promoters of this Bill. The Established clergy were entitled to receive, by ancient custom, fees of various kinds in connection with parochial churchyards. It was not proposed to deal with them by the Bill, much as they needed dealing with. But when a churchyard was closed, and a cemetery provided at the expense of the ratepayers, then the same fees which were payable in the churchyard were made payable in the consecrated part of the cemetery—fees to the incumbent, fees to the clerk, fees to the sexton—for all time. In some cases these fees were so high as to be very burdensome to bereaved relatives. In some places the aggregate of these fees was so large as to practically involve a loss to the parish which had provided the cemetery. The Vicar of Hampstead had received no less than £10,500 from a cemetery on which there had been a loss to the inhabitants of £15,000. He asked the House to pass the Measure without further delay, because, as churchyards were in many places rapidly filling up, the necessity for new burial places was constantly increasing. The creation of new District Councils and of Parish Councils had placed power, in regard to burial matters, in new hands, and the new bodies were much more hostile to the existing law than were the old Burial Boards. Several Burial Boards had refused to apply to the Bishops to consecrate any part of their cemeteries, and it had been necessary to apply to the Courts for a mandamus to compel them to do so; so that consecration and litigation had been associated in the most incongruous fashion. That fact led him to make an appeal to the present Home Secretary and to the Government. He was sure that this process of mandamasing Burial Boards must be as disagreeable to him as it was to his predecessor. Both could plead that they were simply carrying out the law; but, if the law were objectionable, would it not be better to amend than to enforce it? This Government had professed great anxiety to promote social reforms. Well, here was a question which surely could be treated on social and non-political grounds. In 1877 Mr. Disraeli's Administration made a courageous effort to consolidate the Burial Laws; but when the House of Lords adopted an Amendment embodying the principle afterwards adopted in the Act of 1880, the courage of the Government failed them and they abandoned the Measure. If this Government would undertake the task of first amending, and then consolidating, the Burial Acts he could promise them a large measure of support from outside. He also ventured to make an appeal in another quarter. The hon. Member who was going to move the rejection of the Bill and those associated with him sincerely desired to promote the reform of the Church to which they were attached. He asked them if they were likely to promote their object by resisting other changes, which were in harmony with the spirit of the times, and which were desired by multitudes of Churchmen no less than by Nonconformists? The Church of England had in past times lost much of natural sympathy and support by maintaining unjust privileges, and no less unjust exactions. Now, if ever, was the time when it should display a broader and more equitable spirit; that it might secure the respect, if not the adhesion, of all classes of the community.

*Mr. GRIFFITH-BOSCAWEN (Kent, Tunbridge) moved to leave out the word "now," and at the end of the question to add the words "upon this day six months." He said he would not approach this subject in any sectarian or party spirit. He entirely agreed that on that side of the House they ought, as far as they could, to try and remove the legitimate grievances in religious matters of hon. Members opposite just as they looked to them to help them in the reforms in the Church which they desired. He opposed this Bill because really only a small part of it was devoted to the removal of any grievances, the greater part being devoted to a sort of guerilla warfare against the Church of England. The hon. Member who had just spoken said no question of Disestablishment was raised. He admitted that the question of Disestablishment was not raised directly, but the greater part of the Bill was devoted to a series of most unwarrantable, unjustifiable, and petty attacks on the rights of the Church of England. ["Hear, hear!"] He admitted that parishioners and ratepayers in general had a grievance with regard to mortuary fees in cemeteries. If the Bill had confined itself to remedying this grievance he should not have opposed it. But that grievance was greatly over-rated. It was all very well to say "Why" should the incumbent receive these fees when no services are rendered. But these fees took the place of the fees for interments in churchyards which were compulsorily closed, and were, therefore, part of the endowment of the parish, and to take this away without compensation would be practically a measure of disendowment. Nonconformists were allowed to be buried in consecrated ground, but they need not be, and if they were so buried it was only reasonable that they should pay the fees. Now he would examine some of the attacks which the Bill made on the Church of England. In the first place it proposed that consecration should not take place in any burial ground in future without the consent of the Burial Board.

*MR. CARVELL WILLIAMS: It is the case now.

*MR. GRIFFITH-BOSCAWEN said he was aware of that in the case of Marten's Act, but the principle was a bad one, and he did not see why that bad principle in a Sanitary Act should be extended to the case of all Burial Boards. Let the House think what the result would be. Churchmen had a feeling that they would like to be buried in consecrated ground, and why should they not be? ["Hear, hear!"] Was it to be left to Burial Boards to decide whether they should be buried in consecrated ground or not? If Churchmen happened to be in a minority on the Burial Board the result would be that funerals of Church people could not take place in consecrated ground. Let the House consider the inequality. By the Burials Act of 1880 Nonconformists could be buried in the parish churchyards with Nonconformist rites. Why, in the name of religious equality, put disabilities on the Churchmen which it was sought to remove in the case of Nonconformists? Then the Bill would make consecrated grounds open to everybody, and cemetery chapels, which had been built at the expense of the Church of England. Clause 3 of the Bill practically abrogated the provision that there should be "a Christian and orderly service." So Jews, Turks, and infidels could use the consecrated ground of the Church of England.

*MR. CARVELL WILLIAMS: So they can now.

*MR. GRIFFITH-BOSCAWEN: Certainly not. But they would be thrown absolutely open in the future, and how Christian and orderly services could be guaranteed he did not know.

*MR. CARVELL WILLIAMS said that Section 6 of the Burials Act of 1880 said that

> "the burial may be with such Christian and orderly religious service at the grave as such person shall think fit."

*MR. GRIFFITH-BOSCAWEN said he was not a lawyer, but he thought any Court of Law would say that the words in the Bill abrogated that clause. If they did not, Jews, Turks, or infidels could be buried in consecrated ground with the use of the Christian service. He could imagine nothing more illogical or incongruous. The Bill excluded the Bishops from having any control over plans, buildings, or inscriptions. It was not a matter of great importance, but it was one to which Church-people attached value, and he regarded the proposal in the Bill as a gratuitous attack on the Church of England, and not a remedy of any grievance. The object of the second part of the Bill was "to remove difficulties and doubts arising out of the operation of the Act of 1880." He was much surprised that it should be necessary to remove any doubts or difficulties, because when the right hon. Member for Denbighshire moved the Second Reading of the Bill of 1880, he said,

> "I rise to move the Second Reading of a Bill which I trust will have closed one of the most painful and long controversies that have harassed this House."

Yet here was the right hon. Member again, 15 years after, with his name on the back of the present Bill to remove difficulties and doubts. But he himself contended that it did not remove doubts or difficulties, but created a great many. Lord Llandaff stated that during the six years he was at the Home Office he was only cognisant of three or four discreditable scenes such as had been referred to. When these scenes took place, it was because the clergy would not obey the law; but did the hon. Member and his Friends think they were going to get the clergy to obey the law by creating fresh illegalities? They proposed to reduce the time of the notice that must be given to the incumbent from 48 to 24 hours, but the 48 hours' limit was rightly put in by the Lord Chancellor of a Liberal Government in the House of Lords, and he had never heard a single complaint against it. The suggestion that the bell was to be tolled was a step to enable hon. Members to get from the churchyard to the church. One of the worst provisions in the Bill was that these funerals were as a matter of right to take place on Sundays, Christmas Days, and Good Fridays, although, with the consent of all parties, that was expressly prohibited in the Act of 1880. In cases where the incumbent signified that it would be inconvenient to have the funeral at the time suggested, it might take place on these days, and the bell might be tolled and a Nonconformist funeral might be going on in the churchyard at the same time that there was a service in the church. [" Hear, hear! "] Hon. Members talked about disliking these scenes, and they all did, but he thought a quicker method for creating such objectionable scenes than this could not be devised. He submitted that it would raise every sort of passion, and create every sort of scene, and he therefore asked the House to reject the Bill. Then they proposed to take away from the clergyman his right of control of the churchyard, which was a most unreasonable interference with the rights of the incumbent. The real fact was that the Act of 1880 had proved almost a dead letter. [" Hear, hear! "] It was born of a manufactured grievance, and now they wanted to tinker it up. When the right hon. Baronet brought in his Bill he said there were no less than 600,000 Nonconformists in Wales alone affected by the grievance. But in 1889 in the Diocese of St. Asaph there were 3,618 funerals performed by the clergy, and only 251 under his Act. If they took the five years from 1885 to 1890 they would find that out of 208 parishes in that diocese, in 18 only two of these funerals took place, in 30 only one, and in 94 none took place at all. The statistics showed therefore that the grievance was practically non-existent. Perhaps the worst clause in the whole Bill was Clause 11, which, it seemed to him, meant that an incumbent holding Church property, such as glebe land in the parish, might not make an addition to the churchyard, or that if he did it would become a public burial ground—[" hear, hear! "]—although the churchyard might be overcrowded. He thought that was a piece of the most intolerable tyranny ever proposed. [" Hear, hear! "] They were attempting to subject the Church of England to a disability that no man would dream of subjecting any other body to. They on that side of the House did not wish to stop the remedying of any real religious grievance. If hon. Members had a grievance about fees let them bring in a short Bill about fees, and they would not oppose it. But this Bill was a series of mean, petty, and unwarranted attacks on the Church of England, and he therefore asked the House to reject it. He begged to move his Amendment.

*MR. J. G. TALBOT (Oxford University) seconded the Amendment. He did so on two grounds: first, that the Bill was a needless stirring up of strife; and, secondly, that it sprang from a failure to apprehend the religious position of other people. He had been engaged for a great many years in these burial controversies, and they were amongst the most melancholy of his recollections. He regretted that the right hon. Member for East Denbighshire was not able to be present, but if he had been present he should have appealed to him in a manner in which he could hardly appeal to other hon. Members, for the right hon. Member had the credit—great, no doubt, from his point of view—of having settled this question. But if the question had been settled in 1880 it surely ought not to be raked up again in the time of the same generation which settled it. It seemed to him that there ought to be some sort of finality—at any rate, a modified finality, if he might use the expression—on a subject of this kind, and that the time of Parliament should not be perpetually occupied with these questions. Of course, no great question on which men's minds were deeply agitated could be settled entirely to the satisfaction of both sides, and it was notorious that the settlement of 1880 was very painful to many on that side of the House. But they took their defeat like men, and he earnestly appealed to the House not to upset that settlement. His second point against the Bill, which he considered the more serious, was the evidence it afforded of the failure of its supporters to appreciate the religious convictions of other people. ["Hear, hear!"] It was assumed by hon. Gentlemen opposite that while Nonconformists had consciences, Church-people had none—[*laughter and* "hear, hear!"]—and that while the most scrupulous respect was to be paid to the grievances of the Nonconformists, that while they had only to state a grievance to have it removed, if such removal inflicted a hardship on the consciences of Church-people, that grievance was to be entirely ignored. That was not fair play, to put the matter on no higher ground. ["Hear, hear!"] If two sides disputed a question, and if one side, while insisting on having all their scruples attended to, refused to pay the slightest regard to the scruples of the other side, it was hopeless to expect a satisfactory settlement of the dispute. ["Hear, hear!"] Take the question of consecrated ground. It was a matter of conscience to a great many people to have consecrated ground in which to bury their dead; and if an Act of Parliament were passed declaring that there should be throughout the country districts in which there could be no consecrated ground for burials, it would put upon the conscience of Church-people the same kind of grievance as was alleged to be put upon Nonconformists if they were not provided with ground in which to bury their dead according to their own rites. ["Hear, hear!"] The Church of England, being the Established Church of the country, was the established exponent of Christianity to this land. Its services might be supposed to be in a sense the services of the whole nation. [*Opposition cheers.*] Then why should they not consider the spirit of those services with respect? And if they did not consider them with respect they struck a serious blow at the consciences and convictions of a great number of people. ["Hear, hear!"] He would not say that if the Bill were passed every dissenting funeral would be conducted in the churchyards on Sundays in such a manner as to make them most offensive to the feelings of Church-people. But he did say that there were Nonconformists in this country—he did not mean religious Nonconformists, for Nonconformists were not all religious any more than all Church-people were religious—who would not scruple so to arrange matters that the funeral would take place at the beginning or at the end of the Church services, and so interefere with those services as to be an offence to the consciences of Churchmen. He, therefore, asked the House not to pass the Bill—first, because it was not a case for Parliamentary interference at all, the matter having been settled within the memory of them all; and, secondly, because it would tend to further embitter religious controversies which they all deplored, and which it should be their object to soothe rather than to inflame.

*Mr. R. W. PERKS (Lincolnshire, Louth) said he regretted that the ignoble task of seconding the rejection of this Bill should have fallen to the lot of the Member for a distinguished University, which in bygone years had so often played such a conspicuous part in the assertion of the religious and civil rights of this country. ["Hear, hear!"] The hon. Gentleman had spoken of what he had called "modified finality in legislation." But he would point out that the House had been for several Sessions engaged in amending the land laws of Ireland and the educational laws of this country, which, according to the hon. Gentleman, should have been laid aside altogether and not interfered with, on this theory of Parliamentary settlement. He would remind the hon. Gentleman also that when the Burial Act of 1880 passed through the House of Commons, and went up to the House of Lords, the Liberal Lord Chancellor, Lord Selborne, stated, on behalf of the Government of the day, that the Measure was imperfect, and required rectification in some important particulars. The hon. Gentleman asked what was the object of Clause 11. It was to prevent a colourable evasion of the Act of 1880. It had been found in many parts of the country that the clergy, anxious to maintain their spiritual authority, such as it was, over the churchyards, but more anxious to retain their emoluments in the shape of fees, and in order to defeat the Act of 1880, which gave Nonconformist ministers the right to go into a parochial churchyard and conduct their services, had been in the habit of taking bits of glebeland or buying other pieces of land and adding them to the churchyards, and vesting them in trustees, and thus preventing Nonconformists from conducting their services in those parts of the parochial churchyards. It was gratifying to the supporters of the Bill to find that the duty of stating the views of the Government had been relegated to the right hon. Gentleman the Under Secretary of the Home Office, who had often expressed sympathy with the objects of the Bill. The right hon. Gentleman was the one man who in Committee on the Burials Act of 1880 objected to the provision which required Christian and orderly services in the consecrated portions of churchyards and cemeteries, and who moved an Amendment to exclude from the Bill that very clause which hon. Gentlemen opposite regarded as their palladium and chief protection. ["Hear, hear!"] The right hon. Gentleman then said:—

> "No Burials Bill could be satisfactory which deprived any section of the community of their civil rights on account of their religious opinions."

The right hon. Gentleman further claimed that

> "Jews, Atheists, Theists, Positivists, Secularists, and all who did not choose to call themselves by the name of Christian"

should have the right of conducting their services in those churchyards and cemeteries without any religious service; and he wound up by declaring:—

> "As Nonconformists who had not forgotten their own trials, they objected to co-operate with their former persecutors"

—the hon. Gentlemen who now sat behind the right hon. Gentleman—"in the prosecution of classes not included in the scope of the Bill."

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE HOME DEPARTMENT (Mr. JESSE COLLINGS, Birmingham, Bordesley): All dealing with the civil rights of individuals.

*MR. PERKS said it dealt with the rights of Jews, Atheists, Theists, Positivists, Secularists, to conduct funeral services in the consecrated portions of churchyards and graveyards without this restriction, that they must be "Christian and orderly." He thought, therefore, they could rely on the right hon. Gentleman to support this Measure, and not to do as he had done last Wednesday, when he opposed a Bill for the benefit of the working classes in the teeth of his former declarations. The supporters of the Bill did not object to the consecration of cemeteries; they acknowledged that it would be an anomaly if provision were not made for those desiring to be buried in consecrated ground. He had heard the noble Lord, the Member for Rochester, express great admiration for Wesley. ["Hear, hear!" from VISCOUNT CRANBORNE.] The Wesleyan Church had declared over and over again in favour of this Bill. Wesley attached no importance to the ceremony of consecration.

*MR. TALBOT: I do not quite trust that statement.

*MR. PERKS said that he would read Wesley's own words:—

> "I never wished that any Bishop should consecrate any chapel or burial ground of mine. Indeed, I should not dare to suffer it, as I am clearly persuaded that the thing is wrong in itself, being not authorised by any law of God or law of the land. In consequence of which I conceive that the clerk or sexton might as well consecrate the church or churchyard as the Bishop. With regard to the churchyard, I know not who could answer this plain question. 'You say this is consecrated ground so many feet broad and so many feet long. Pray how deep is the consecrated ground?' 'Deep! What does that signify?' A great deal, for if my grave is dug too deep I may happen to get out of the consecrated ground, and who can tell what unhappy consequences may follow from this. . . . I take the whole practice to be a mere relic of Romish superstition."

He admitted that great importance was attached to consecration by many persons; for instance, he knew of a man who would have been cremated but for the fact that the funeral urn could not be consecrated. But there was nothing in the Bill to prevent the consecration of a portion of the cemetery.

MR. GRIFFITH-BOSCAWEN: The Board may or may not permit the consecration.

*MR. PERKS said that it would be a fair Amendment of the Bill to provide that a portion of the cemetery should be consecrated, if a certain proportion of the inhabitants demanded it. But that should not carry with it the obligation to pay large fees to clergy for services not rendered. Cases of intolerable hardship were much more frequent in the rural districts than hon. Gentlemen opposite supposed. They were almost of daily occurrence. In the Division which he represented a late Chairman of an important Parish Council was buried in an obscure portion of the graveyard, because his friends insisted on a Nonconformist service. There were cases where the bell could not be tolled, where extra fees to the extent of 10s. were imposed on Nonconformists, where the use of the bier or the services of the sexton were denied. Some years ago, at a place called Martin, in Lincolnshire, the mourners at a Nonconformist funeral had to lower the coffin into the grave themselves, because the sexton was not there. Complaint was made to the Bishop of Lincoln, who said that, while he should have advised the sexton to be present, the law of the land did not require his presence. If the Church of England were to prosper as a spiritual force, it would not be by the perpetuation of these acts of petty tyranny, but by such a moderate Amendment of the law as would enable the rural communities to live in harmony.

*SIR FRANCIS POWELL (Wigan) said that this was not the first time he had addressed the House on this subject. He found that he had submitted observations to the House no less than 25 years since, when one of the Members for Yorkshire. Hon. Members seemed to forget that the Acts of 1870 and 1880 were both the work of Liberal Governments, and that the latter Measure was the end of a long and bitter controversy. It was hoped that these melancholy Debates would be ended by the Bill introduced by Lord Selborne, and supported by the Archbishop of Canterbury and the majority of the Bishops in 1880. Mr. John Bright said, with respect to that Bill,

> "I think the time has come when we ought to close the door upon this controversy and settle it at once and for ever."

It was therefore very disappointing to find the whole question reopened at this day. But the settlement of 1880 had not been in vain. Remembering the Debates of those days, he could not help contrasting the position then and now. At that time the Nonconformists had grievances; and in 1872 he spoke in disapproval of the continuance of the law which gave rise to those grievances. There was now a very different state of affairs. The contrast between the grievances which were brought forward then and the allegation of grievances now was, indeed, amazing. At that time there was a complaint as to the want of burial grounds, and in 1879 Sir A. Marten introduced a Bill dealing with the subject. That Bill was spoken of with contempt, and in the year 1880 they were told that that legislation was dead. He found, however, on referring to the Local Government Board's Report of last year that the loans under that Act had reached £576,855 and was yearly increasing, £37,134 having been borrowed during the year to which the Report relates. He wished to refer briefly to one or two of the complaints made by the Mover of the Second Reading. The hon. Member referred to the hours, and said they were now so short that there was often hurry and confusion. In his opinion, the hours were sufficient. In conducting these sad ceremonials there was, in all classes of life, often a great want of punctuality, and he believed that some restriction of hours which would cause greater regularity would be a gain rather than a loss to the community. The hon. Member spoke of the convenience to the working classes it would be to have burials on Sunday. The hon. Gentleman entirely forgot the comfort of the congregation whose parish church he wished to use. He did not know anything more calculated to give pain to Nonconformists and Church-people alike, and to cause that friction which they all desired to remove, than having a burial service on the Sunday about the time that the services in the church were being conducted. He shrank from even the contemplation of the difficulties which must arise, and which would increase rather than diminish, where there was a kindly feeling between the two classes of the community. The same remark applied to Good

Friday and Christmas Day. The Mover of the Second Reading spoke of those days being holidays. They might be holidays in one sense, but they were sacred days to members of the Church of England, and they were exactly the days when the members of that Church would least desire to have such services as were proposed celebrated in the churchyard. The hon. Gentleman referred to the use of the bell. He was surprised that the hon. Member, who was, he believed, in favour of the Disestablishment and Disendowment of the Church, should desire to use the bell. He hoped the hon. Gentleman's desire to use the bell would create a wish in him to preserve the Church some portions of whose ceremonials he regarded as of value to the community. He admitted the question of fees required attention, but he did not follow with any sympathy the criticism as to a £5 fee for a railing round a grave. Personally, he would substitute for a fee entire prohibition. He knew nothing more unseemly in a churchyard, and in graveyards belonging to Burial Boards, than these hideous railings round tombs. But if he objected to dealing with the question of fees as the hon. Member proposed, it was partly because he could not separate such a suggestion from the general attack upon the Church of England. As regarded the consecration of chapels, he felt that hon. Members opposite had not paid sufficient regard to the sentiments of Churchmen. He had no doubt there were some Churchmen who attached little importance to consecration; and, if he were cross-examined, he should be obliged to confess he belonged to that number. But he was bound to have regard for the feelings of others, and he knew perfectly well that appreciation of consecration was not confined to the highest and wealthiest classes. Turning again to the clauses of the Bill, he confessed he did not understand the meaning of the first clause. Was it intended that the parish churchyard should, on the passing of this Bill, cease to be the parochial burial ground? It certainly appeared to him that, under the words of the clause, the parish churchyard would entirely disappear. He trusted that before the Debate closed they would have a definition of the language of the clause, which to him was wholly unintelligible. Clause 4 took away from the bishop any power in respect to inscriptions and the fitness of monuments. A burial ground was a sacred place, and it appeared to him that nothing could be more in accord with the desire of those who had regard for sacred things than that some high ecclesiastical official should have a veto upon monumental inscriptions. Even under the present regulations there were many inscriptions which jarred upon one's sentiments, and he believed that some revision by the bishop would be a great advantage, not to one class of the community only, but to all. Under clause 10 the authorities were forbidden to assign particular parts of the churchyard to particular persons. He had received a letter from a vicar of a large parish in Yorkshire, in which the writer said that any clergyman who was so mean as to set apart any portion of the churchyard for particular burials deserved reproof. He was sure the condemnation which such conduct would receive would be sufficient to prevent such an occurrence. He did not say there were not in the Church of England a stray fanatic or two—[*a laugh*]—but to visit on the Church as a whole the errors of a few was a signal injustice which could not do good to any cause. He could not agree with what had been said as to the prohibition of dedication of land by public bodies to the purposes of a churchyard. He was greatly surprised that such proposals as were contained in the Bill should have been made in this Bill by the friends of religious liberty; but he found here, as often happened, that religious liberty and political tryranny went hand in hand. The Act of 1880 had not been in vain in its healing effect. That Act removed grievances; it satisfied sentiments which they revered. It was intended to close the controversy. This Bill removed no grievances; it satisfied no sentiment. It closed no old controversy, but opened a new one. It was said that no attack on the Church was meant, but he could not separate the Bill from those who proposed it. In the Bill dealing with the Welsh dioceses the clauses relating to burials were not the most fortunate, and did much to destroy the Bill. This Bill was an attack on all dioceses, English as well as Welsh, and one which could not succeed. [" Hear, hear! "]

Sir Francis Powell.

*MR. JOHN BRIGG (Yorks, W.R., Keighley) said that, while admitting a good deal of what had fallen from the hon. Member who represented Wigan to be full of good purpose and good intentions, and he was sure no one would give the hon. Gentleman more credit than he did for his distinguished efforts on behalf of what he thought to be right in the interest of the Church of England; he did not agree with all he had said, neither could he agree with much that had been said by the Member for Oxford University, who had put it distinctly to the House that there ought to be finality in this matter; at any rate, a modified finality, and had suggested that they should wait for another generation for any alteration in the law. That might be all very well for a Gentleman who represented a University, the associations of which had a tendency to cause people to lead a sleepy life, and think they might live long; but he and those for whom he spoke felt that the world was moving far too quickly for them to wait all that time for the Amendments they desired. It was absolutely necessary they should move with the times in which they lived. As a full explanation of the Bill had already been given he did not think it necessary to go into details; but he would say that the conditions under which the Burials Act was at present worked were full of great difficulty. In a place with which he was connected the clergy, for the sake of peace and quietness, had been quite willing to forego their fees in order that the Act might be carried out without ill feeling. That was, no doubt, generous conduct on their part, but as it could not be known how long the present Vicar would live, it was not thought desirable to adopt a compromise of that kind. There was undoubtedly great need of alteration, and of getting rid of the wrangling which now took place at funerals. ["Hear, hear!"] There was nothing in the Bill to interfere with religious sentiment. Only the legal position was to be changed. All that was asked was that the clergy should not be allowed to interfere and demand fees for services which they themselves did not render. The difficulties which arose in this way were often being thought of. The sayings and doings at weddings and funerals were neither forgiven nor forgotten. He could tell the House of a case in Keighley in which for the last seven years a lively contest had been carried on as to the consecration of a burial ground. In 1889 the Vestry empowered the Burial Board to purchase adjoining land to add to the unconsecrated part of the churchyard. The contest had been continued ever since, and at every vestry meeting there had been unseemly gatherings in the churchyard; and mobs of persons, standing or seated on the gravestones, were gathered for the purpose of electing to the Burial Board only members who held unconsecrated views. Eventually, the Home Office stopped the opening, and asked for plans showing the division of consecrated and unconsecrated ground. That, of course, caused more disturbance, and a division of parishes subsequently took place which caused still further trouble, and the Burial Board, fearing legal proceedings, sold to the Corporation under Marten's Act, the whole of the ground they had bought, and the purchase was approved by the Vestry, the Town Council, and the Local Government Board. No further difficulty was expected after this, but the matter was still unsettled. The Burial Board would continue to manage the old part of the ground, and as the old part was filled up it would cease to exist, and the two authorities would be merged into one. There was no objection on the part of the supporters of this Bill to consecration itself; the objection was to the legal position which consecration entitled members of the Church to take up. The power of an incumbent to exact fees for burials in his churchyard was oppressive in many cases. A case had been brought under his notice of a young girl who died away from home, and whose last wish was that she might be buried in the village churchyard where members of her family had been laid to rest, and where she, as a child, had played. But the clergyman raised objections on the ground that the girl was not a parishioner; and he claimed a very high fee for allowing the interment. In this case the relatives of the girl came forward and paid a very substantial sum, in order that the girl's last wish might be fulfilled. The question of consecration did not affect himself personally, for, owing to circumstances over which he had no control, he would not be buried in a churchyard. A former member of his family had quarrelled with the parish clergyman, and had given instructions that he should not be buried in the churchyard, and he was buried under a tree in a field; and that was where he should himself be buried. One of the elders of his family was once imprisoned in York Castle for six months for having kept away from church. It was high time that a change was made and more power given to the people. Behind demands for reforms such as this Bill would effect, members of the Church Party fancied they saw the ghost of Disestablishment stalking. He believed that if they could get rid of that apprehension many Members on the other side of the House would vote for Bills like the one now under discussion.

Mr. J. W. SIDEBOTHAM (Cheshire, Hyde) said that he had voted for the Second Reading of the Bill of 1895 because he approved its principle, although he disliked intensely many of its provisions. He could still more readily give his support to the present Bill, because many of the most objectionable features of its predecessor had been omitted from it or had undergone modification. The Bill was not, however, without imperfections, but these, he maintained, could be removed in Committee. The law respecting the consecration of cemeteries was in an exceedingly unsatisfactory state, and questions arose which caused keen religious controversies, resulting in bitterness and enmity. Under Marten's Act, which gave the local sanitary authority power over burial grounds, that authority could permit consecration or refuse to permit it, could build chapels, and make its own regulations about fees; but immediately it allowed a portion of the ground to be consecrated it lost its control over it; another authority stepped in, a Church of England chaplain was appointed; his salary had to be paid, the register of burials had to be kept by him, and a number of other consequences followed, including the chaplain's right to fees. All this was wrong, and they could not be surprised that, in these circumstances, local authority after local authority refused to permit any portion of their burial ground to be consecrated. That state of things constituted a serious injustice to Church-people, who were compelled to contribute their share towards the purchase of the ground, but who could not use it, because it was not consecrated. The special rights and privileges that accrued to clergymen of the Church of England when consecration took place ought to be done away with. He said so two years ago, and he then received a number of letters from clergymen approving the position which he took up. One clergyman wrote to him, saying:—

> "Your speech was very clear and proportionately valuable. With its principles I agree thoroughly."

Another said:—

> "With your speech, as you may expect from our former talks, I thoroughly sympathise and agree."

A third said:—

> "I most thoroughly agree with all you say. It seems to me perfectly idiotic that the present state of affairs should be allowed to continue. It is Church-people far more than Nonconformists who are already, and will be more and more, the sufferers from the existing state of affairs. Personally I feel inclined to say let us have legislation at any cost."

When the Bishop of Chester, in October last, was about to consecrate a portion of a cemetery in the district of Hyde he voluntarily abandoned the claim to special rights and privileges for the clergy of his church. The following was an extract from the deed of consecration:

> "Whereas the Mayor, Aldermen, and Burgesses of the Borough of Hyde . . . have acquired certain lands . . . and are desirous that a portion of the said cemetery shall be consecrated for the burial of the dead according to the rites and usages of the Church of England . . . that it has been agreed between the said Mayor, Aldermen, and Burgesses, and the Incumbents of the several ecclesiastical parishes or districts comprised in the said Borough, with our approval, that the salary of the chaplain appointed to officiate in the consecrated part of the cemetery shall be nominal, namely £1 per annum, and that such chaplain shall permit the clergy of each of the several parishes or districts aforesaid to officiate at any interment if the representative of the deceased so desire, and to receive upon each such interment such fees as shall from time time be fixed by the Mayor, Aldermen, and Burgesses, or their successors, and shall permit any Nonconformist minister, being duly invited or authorised, to officiate at any interment in the consecrated portion of such cemetery, to receive upon each such interment such fees as aforesaid:—that it has been agreed that the Register of Burials shall be kept by the Registrar of the said cemetery . . . and that the fees in the consecrated portion of the said cemetery shall be the same as in the unconsecrated portions thereof."

It would be noticed that the Bishop gave up the chaplains and the salary of the chaplains, the fees and the registers, and the cost of consecration borne by the Church. It might be urged that if this arrangement could be carried out in Hyde it might be carried out in other places; but he knew what years and years of controversy had preceded the settlement in Hyde, and he wished to save other districts from the bitterness, controversy, and ill-feeling which had been created in the district he represented. All Bishops, moreover, might not be so wise or broad-minded, and local authorities might be more exacting than the local authority of Hyde. This was a question the House ought to take up and settle, carrying it out of the region of controversy altogether. The Church would do well to embrace the opportunity of settling the question, and the House would do a good day's work if it accepted, not in its details, but in its main and broad principle, the Measure now before it. [" Hear, hear!"]

*MR. R. PURVIS (Peterborough) said he had among his constituents a large number of Nonconformists who, in common with himself, desired to live in peace and harmony with their neighbours on the points raised by the Bill. The Mover of the Bill raised a great many questions as to the doings of an ancient Bishop of Exeter and old unhappy far-off things and troubles long ago; but when it was seen that the effect of this Bill would be to allow funerals in the churchyard to be carried out on such days as Christmas Day and Good Friday he believed that the House would come to the conclusion that the liberty sought for by a certain section of the community was to take liberty with their neighbours. The Act of 1880 was more or less a practical settlement of this question, and it seemed to him that this Bill was a mere fanning of the flame of religious controversy and the breaking out of that old disgraceful human failing—a desire on the part of religious bodies to show their hate of each other for the love of God. The throwing open of consecrated ground in the circumstances claimed appeared as if there was a desire to climb over the wall instead of going in by the gate. It should be remembered that the burial fees were part and parcel of the endowment of the Church, and the Bill sought to take away from the incumbent the control of the churchyard. Some one must have the control of the churchyard, and while we had an Established National Church he suggested that the best person to have the practical control of the churchyard was and must be the Incumbent. [" Hear, hear!"] This Bill sought to disturb the peace between Nonconformists and members of the Church of England. As far as he could gather, the real religious Nonconformists did not seek the change, but rather the Nonconformists who, in endeavouring to make what was supposed to be an improvement in the relations between them and the Church of England, sought in reality to cloak under this Measure political aims of the very worst kind. [" No, no!"]

*MR. W. WOODALL (Hanley) said that the hon. Member had been re-echoing the fears and apprehensions uttered during the discussions of 1880, and which had long been proved to be groundless, but which were honestly entertained by the opponents of the Bill of that day. The hon. Member for Wigan spoke of that Measure as having been generally accepted as a solution of the whole question, and as ensuring a permanent settlement involving peace between all parties. The hon. Member should, however, remember that the whole conduct of that Bill was marked by a spirit of compromise, and that they carried on their Debates under the shadow of threatened opposition in another place, a threat which was continually held over the House by those in charge of the Bill at that time. It was said that this Bill was promoted, not by Nonconformists generally, but by those who desired to cloak under religious Nonconformity political aims. This was an old charge. No one could be ignorant of the fact that the public and local life of the country was very much stirred under a sense of the injustice and inequality of the existing law. Why should this be? One could not help feeling that if hon. Members opposite addressed themselves to the question in a spirit of charitable equity, and with a desire to promote kindliness of feeling between those who differed on points of religious faith in different communities, a very great end would be achieved. What were the main points asked for? That in grounds provided by the general community out of public funds, where there was a division of cemetery ground, and where consecration was desired, consecration should be allowed; but the religious advantage that might be supposed, according to the sentiments of Churchmen, to attach to consecration, should not carry with it any pecuniary advantage to any class of the community such as might be supposed to attach to the vested rights of the clergy of the parish. By all means let this ground be marked out in the severest manner desired, but do not attach to it a privilege on the one hand and a penalty on the other. He raised the question of chapels in 1880, and it was only in deference to the apprehension and the strong opposition against the Bill, that his right hon. Friend in charge of the Measure was induced to refuse the insertion of the right to erect a single chapel for the use of all denominations in grounds provided at the general expense of the community. But hon. Members must be aware that in many parts of the country single chapels had been provided, in some cases with the consent of the Bishops and by general agreement; and, speaking from his own experience in Burslem, this arrangement had been accepted as convenient and as representing the general equity of the situation.

*VISCOUNT CRANBORNE (Rochester): Is the chapel consecrated?

*MR. WOODALL: No; had it been consecrated it could only have been used by the adherents of one Church, and that was the main point of this Bill. Concede everything asked for—consecration, dedication—but only do not let that religious rite exclude from equal privileges the members of other communities. He thought it might fairly be said that since the passing of the Act of 1880 there had been no case of any kind of scandal, except where, from the obstinacy or illiberality of Churchmen, such regrettable incidents had been provoked. He joined in the general expression of the hope that this Bill would be read a Second time, and that the House might go into Committee with a sincere desire to reconcile differences, and to avoid those scandals that were a great reflection on their common Christianity. ["Hear, hear!"]

*VISCOUNT CRANBORNE said those who were opposed to the Second Reading of this Bill, as he was, were placed in one respect in great difficulty, because undoubtedly there was a sentiment, a very honourable sentiment, prevailing in all parts of the House that in the presence of death, as far as possible, all minor questions should be laid aside. [*Opposition cheers.*] He for one had no sympathy whatever with that violent exercise of legal rights which had occasionally, but only very seldom, been seen in the case of certain clergymen of the Church of England. [*Opposition cheers.*] He had no sympathy whatever with such abuse of their legal position in order to outrage the feelings of Nonconformists in connection with the burial of deceased persons belonging to that faith. He resented very much the impression which had got abroad by the excesses of certain individuals among the ministry of the Church of England that they were a tyrannical or despotic Church. They were far from having those sentiments, and he should do his best, as he had done in the past, to restrain the outrageous conduct of certain rather rare individuals in their ministry in that respect. While he felt all that, he was not inclined to vote for this Bill, which in many respects was absolutely uncalled for. The mere fact that the present law was not perfect—and he was not concerned to say it was perfect—was not a reason for voting for the changes proposed in this Bill, almost every one of the clauses of which would require to be vitally amended. Hon. Gentlemen opposite said, for example, that they had respected vested interests, that they had saved the rights of existing incumbents. Yes; they had saved the rights of existing incumbents, but not the existing rights of the Church. The rights of the present incumbents were very important, no doubt, but the rights of the Church as a whole were far more important, and though it might be very well to provide that as long as a present incumbent lived he should enjoy the fees to which he was entitled, still the rights now vested in the Church of England would continue long after the present incumbent had ceased to be. They could not accept any alteration of the law which would deprive the Church as a whole of the enjoyment of those rights which she enjoyed under the existing law. Under Clause 11 an incumbent was forbidden to grant or be instrumental in granting for the purpose of a churchyard parts of the property belonging to the church which might be more fitted for a churchyard than any other property which could be pitched upon. Even though the churchyard was full, or approaching fullness, and there might be a strong desire among the parishioners to have the churchyard enlarged so that they might continue to be laid under the shadow of the ancient church like their forefathers before them, yet that was prevented by this clause. And not merely was a clergyman prevented, but any corporation, such as a town council, was prevented from granting or selling land belonging to the municipality to be devoted to interment in accordance with the Prayer Book of the Church of England. Anything more unfair was never incorporated in an Act of Parliament. The main principle of the Bill, according to the memorandum of the promoters, was that consecration should carry with it no legal consequences whatever. He did not say that consecration was essential, but it was not a question merely of what was essential. Surely it would be admitted that in the eyes of Churchmen there was a holy sentiment attached to the fact of consecration analogous with the particular class of sentiments which Nonconformists themselves valued. He would ask hon. Gentlemen, therefore, to have some regard to Churchmen's sensibilities in this matter just as he, on his side, respected those of Nonconformists. The Bill did in fact outrage Churchmen's sentiments, and it was principally for that very reason that he asked the House to reject the Second Reading. As had been pointed out, under the Act of 1880 the services conducted in the churchyard or in a consecrated building had to be Christian and orderly. But there was no limitation in this Bill—none whatever.

*Mr. CARVELL WILLIAMS: The Act of 1880 is not repealed, and therefore remains law.

*Viscount CRANBORNE retorted that it did not remain law in defiance of an Act of Parliament which succeeded it and which was absolutely inconsistent with the tenour of the Act. There was no such limitation, and therefore it would be perfectly possible under this Bill for a Mahomedan or any other person to carry on any kind of service in consecrated ground or in a consecrated building in the burial ground as defined by this Bill. Such a provision was perfectly monstrous and outrageous. [" Hear, hear ! "] The only thing that could be said in behalf of the provision was that it was consistent. From the non-Christian point of view there was no logical reason why the conditions of consecration under the present law should not be departed from altogether. [" Hear, hear ! "] Let them once depart from the line with respect to consecration and there would be no logical reason for stopping anywhere; indeed, it would be possible to have services in the churchyards however impious and revolting. [*Opposition cries of* " No, no ! "] But under the provisions of the Bill it would be so. [*Opposition cries of* " No ! "] Hon. Gentlemen opposite might not have intended it, but what he had stated would certainly be the effect of the Bill. [" Hear, hear ! "] He contended, therefore, that it was impossible to depart from the broad and simple line established in respect to consecration. [" Hear, hear ! "] The buildings had been consecrated for a particular purpose —for funerals carried on according to the rites of the Church of England—[" hear, hear ! "]—and the question was not whether those buildings should be consecrated or not, but whether, being consecrated, they should afterwards be desecrated. [" Hear, hear ! "] He could not agree with the hon. Member for the Hyde Division in believing that a good deal of the friction now attending the appointment of the burial or local authorities would be avoided if this Bill was passed. Those who controlled the Burial Boards would be free to allow consecration or not, and surely there could be no means more certain of insuring friction than to leave such a matter to the discretion of an elected local authority. [" Hear,

hear!"] The fact was that Nonconformists were not quite consistent in this matter of consecration. He understood the hon. Member who introduced the Motion to say that even some Nonconformists desired that they should be buried in consecrated ground. That being so, it would appear that many Nonconformists appreciated consecration as well as the Members of the Church. ["Hear, hear!"] Yet the object of the Bill was to destroy as much as possible the distinctive nature of consecration, for the meaning of Clause 1, read with the Schedule—which repealed certain Acts or portions of Acts—was to destroy any marking line between what was the consecrated portion of a burial ground and what was not. But was that consistent with the knowledge that even some Nonconformists wished to be buried in consecrated ground? ["Hear, hear!"] As to Clause 4, which provided that the ecclesiastical authorities should no longer have control over the tombs and monuments and monumental inscriptions in any portion of the public burial ground, if a portion of a burial ground was consecrated, surely the monuments erected in it should have some relation to the sacred sentiment with which the act of consecration was associated —["hear, hear!"]—and, if so, there must be some ecclesiastical authority—some authority devoted to religion—whose business it should be to decide what was proper in such cases. The Bishop was the chief minister of the Church, and the duty should rest with him. ["Hear, hear!"]

MR. HERBERT LEWIS (Flint Boroughs): What about the Bishop of Lincoln and the Wesleyan minister?

*VISCOUNT CRANBORNE presumed that the hon. Member referred to a case in a quotation that had been read, in which it was shown that the incumbent was inclined to be tyrannical, but that the Bishop said the clergyman ought not to have behaved as he did, and that he regretted he had not the legal power to compel him to act differently.

*MR. PERKS: The reference was to a former Bishop of Lincoln, who refused to allow the word "reverend" to be placed on the tombstone before the name of a Wesleyan minister. ["Hear, hear!"]

*VISCOUNT CRANBORNE said he had no doubt there was the proper legal remedy available for any offence of which the Bishop was guilty. He did not believe the Bishops were at all likely to use their powers over monuments unwisely, or with undue severity, but as long as a portion of the burial ground was set apart as consecrated there must necessarily be some ecclesiastical authority to control those matters. He therefore held, in respect to all the matters to which he had referred, that the Bill was a thoroughly bad Bill. If the Measure went to a Commitee every clause of it would have to be amended—vitally amended. It would be necessary for Churchmen to negative the very principle on which the Bill was put forward —that there should be no distinction between consecrated and non-consecrated ground. Therefore, those on that side of the House who were opposed to the Bill had no course open to them but to ask the House to reject it. Still, he could not say that the present state of the law was perfect, and if a Measure had been brought forward dealing with some of the minor matters included in the present Bill —such as the question of fees, access to churchyards, and so on—it would have been met and considered by him and his hon. Friends in a very different spirit. But in regard to a Bill which was bad in principle and in all its provisions they had no choice but to urge the House not to assent to its Second Reading. [*Cheers.*]

MR. LLOYD-GEORGE (Carnarvon Boroughs) said the invariable attitude of the noble Lord towards Measures introduced to remedy the grievances of Dissenters was to sympathise with the Nonconformists, to express a desire to see their grievances remedied, and then to declare that he must oppose the Measure before the House because it was a bad one. ["Hear, hear!" *and laughter.*] That had again been the course of the noble Lord on the present occasion. Now, the Bill was opposed on the ground that it was an attack on the rights and the sentiments of the Church of England, but he denied that the Bill involved an attack on either. With regard to the question of fees, he would remind the House that the fees were paid as remuneration for services rendered. If the services of the clergyman of the Church of England were brought into requisition those services should be paid for, but surely if the clergyman was not called upon to render any service he ought not to be paid. ["Hear, hear!"] Then it must be borne in mind that the consecrated ground as well as other ground was bought at the expense of the ratepayers of the locality; and why should the clergyman be entitled to charge fees in respect of every burial that took place in one part of the burial ground whether he officiated or not? ["Hear, hear!"] As to Clause 11, which had been strongly objected to, he maintained that it had been grossly misrepresented. It simply provided that if they were going to make an addition to a burial place or churchyard out of glebe land, it should not be a private burial ground for one denomination only. It was parochial property, held by a gentleman who was a trustee for the parishioners, and the clause said that they were not to be allowed, out of parochial property, to use a plot of land for the benefit of one sect and one sect alone. ["Hear, hear!"] The noble Lord the Member for Rochester knew perfectly well that that clause was intended to meet a grievance which was a very substantial one. He knew a special case in point, where an addition was promised, in the first instance, towards a parochial burial ground before the Act of 1880. Unfortunately the deed was not prepared before the Act. A few years after the Act was passed the title deeds were prepared, and it was then found that there was an express condition that what was promised for the whole of the parishioners before the Act was to be used exclusively for the benefit of the members of the Church of England. This clause was to prevent what was practically a fraud on the parishioners being perpetrated again in the same way. The Bill was also objected to by the noble Lord on the ground of sentiment, and he said that the Church of England were entitled to consecrate a portion of the churchyard if they wished to do so. The members of the Church of England were perfectly entitled to do this, but what they objected to, in the first place, was the consecration being done at the expense of the whole community when it was not in the interests of the whole community; and, in the second place, to a part of the churchyard being set on one side, by means of that consecration, for the benefit of one sect absolutely and exclusively. If Churchmen wished to consecrate the whole of the churchyard he did not believe that Nonconformists in any parish in the kingdom would object, but they did object to consecration being made the means and instrument of vesting the property in one part of the churchyard, which belonged to the whole parish, in one sect and one sect alone. ["Hear, hear!"] That was really the whole point of their objection to consecration. This Bill would create no grievance in this respect so far as the Church of England was concerned. The noble Lord said that if Clause 3 of the Bill were carried in its present form the result would be that Mahomedans might use the chapels which were erected in the burial grounds. He did not accept the noble Lord's interpretation, but, even so, they were all absolutely agreed that, whether the section bore that construction or not, what was intended was that the service must be a Christian one. It simply wanted the addition of a couple of words at the end of the section and the whole thing would be placed absolutely right. There was no desire to desecrate the churchyards. All they wished was to give the same rights to Nonconformists as to Churchmen in these burial grounds. The noble Lord wanted to create a property in a corner of the churchyard for one sect only. The noble Lord said: "Let us build walls, let us consecrate, let us give a vested interest in the form of fees, let us create an absolute property which will be a source of profit and remuneration to a particular sect of the community, and let us do that at the expense of the general body of the ratepayers." That was perfectly unfair as between one denomination and another. ["Hear, hear."] The noble Lord kept perfectly clear of the last part of the Bill, and he was not surprised that he did so. The only thing he said was that he deprecated the action of certain clergymen who insisted on their legal rights under the Act of 1880. But what was the good of expressing a general denunciation of extreme and violent acts of clergymen when, according to the noble Lord himself, they were acting well within their legal rights. What they wanted to do was to make these ridiculous and violent and unfair claims on the part of the clergy which outraged the feelings of Nonconformists illegal. The noble Lord admitted that he had no sympathy with this conduct. Well, then, why didn't he help them to alter the law of the land and make what he regarded as unfair illegal as well?

*MR. W. E. M. TOMLINSON (Preston) said that however much Members on that side of the House might desire to allow this Bill to be Read a Second time, with a possible view in Committee of taking out a great deal that was in it and of putting in a great deal that was not in at present, and thereby, in some way, to bring about a state of peace in reference to these matters, that desire was not advanced by such speeches as the House had just listened to. It was obvious from the speeches of the hon. Member for Carnarvon and of other hon. Members opposite, that Clause 11 was regarded as a very essential clause of the Bill, and that being so it did appear to him that those who took that view really did not understand fair treatment of those who did not happen to agree with them. The clause, in his opinion, would inflict gross injustice on every corporate body, and not exclusively those connected with the Church of England. How anyone who desired to deal fairly as between the Church of England and other bodies, and yet said it was not an injustice and a hardship that for all future time the Church of England should be deprived of the power of adding any land to the churchyard which might happen to come from a corporate body or glebe, passed his comprehension. If such a clause were left in the Bill, it appeared to him that the Measure, so far from tending to peace and quiet, would only stir up strife and ill-will. He did not think any of them would not wish to see the law as to fees, whether burial or other kind of fees, carefully considered, but he did not think any good result arose out of discussing that subject upon a Bill merely brought in by a private Member. The question of fees was a very large one. It involved matters on which the direction of the Home Office, or whatever other Department might be concerned, was eminently desirable, and he did not himself see sufficient prospect of being able to work out an arrangement with regard to fees to make it worth while attempting to go into Committee on this Bill. When he first looked at the Bill he did not do so in a hostile spirit, but with every desire to consider whether it was a Bill to which a Second reading might fairly be given. If the desires and intentions expressed by some of the supporters of the Bill had been found embodied in the Bill itself then he would not have been disinclined to reserve his objections to certain points for Committee. But it was, in its main features, so objectionable, it showed so little conception of the fair and just position of the Church of England and its members, that he should certainly vote for the rejection of the Bill.

*SIR HENRY FOWLER (Wolverhampton, E.) thought the Debate had been very unsatisfactory as a subsequent edition of the Debate of the Act of 1880. Every objection raised during the afternoon had been urged with great force and persistence in the Debate of 1880; he had heard no criticism that had not been then used, and with predictions of the lamentable and evil results, good order, and the interests of the Church that would follow such legislation as was then proposed. The anxiety displayed on that occasion was even greater than that evinced this afternoon, and yet he did not think that anyone would now insist that the Act of 1880 had rendered any disservice to Christianity or the Church of England. He had heard a very distinguished bishop, speaking at the Church Congress, caution his clerical auditors not to be too much alarmed at modern legislation, and he mentioned that he had regarded this Act with very great apprehension and dissatisfaction, but that all the fears he had then entertained vanished with the actual working of the Act, and no injury to the Church was done. If the House could approach the subject in the spirit of the hon. Member for Hyde, then a practical compromise might be arrived at on many points raised by the Bill. ["Hear, hear!"] He reminded the House of the point at which legislation had arrived. The day was too far advanced, and we had got far beyond the points raised by the hon. Member for Peterborough. The law was as it had been for many generations, that every parishioner had the right of burial in the churchyard of the parish where he died, and the right to be buried in consecrated ground. That right involved, of course, the user of consecrated ground by the minister with the services and the protection of which the noble Lord spoke with so much appreciation with reference to such burial. But the Legislature stepped in and said: No, that does not meet the case of those who wish to be buried in consecrated ground and with orderly and Christian services in accordance with the rites of their own community; and, so far, exclusive control for purposes of burial passed from the Church of England. ["Hear!"] What an hon. Member called climbing over the wall and cloaking under this Bill the claims of Nonconformists were arguments which were all demolished and pulverised before the Act of 1880 passed and both Houses sanctioned legislation to remedy admitted grievances. That was not a perfect Measure, and no Measure was perfect on its first inception; experience had to be brought to bear, and experience had shown that certain grievances remained—grievances of an administrative character, and grievances of what the noble Lord had called a sentimental character, and in the form of the present Bill a request was made to Parliament to remedy these grievances. It was not the occasion to raise upon a Bill, which was emphatically a detailed Bill to remove grievances, any great question of disestablishment or any theological questions of consecration or non-consecration. What were the administrative grievances? He could not put them better than they had been put in the speech of the hon. Member for Hyde. Of course, our churchyards are rapidly filling up, and in or near towns additional ground was not added to churchyards, but, instead, cemeteries were provided. The state of the law in regard to cemeteries was most chaotic and unsatisfactory. There were private cemetery companies—which he would like to see abolished—there were Burial Boards in certain old districts formed before recent modifications of the Public Health Act, and there was Marten's Act and the amendment of the Act passed in 1879, vesting in local authorities all the powers of Burial Boards with regard to the construction of cemeteries, giving those authorities certain option in regard to consecration. As the hon. Member for Hyde had pointed out, unsatisfactory results followed from having two authorities in burial grounds, the one controlling one part, the other controlling another part of a cemetery; and there were further grievances which had been pointed out by the hon. Member for Carnarvon, and the question of what the noble Lord had called the right of the Church of England, though it was a question of creating new rights, not of existing rights. A local board, acting, no doubt, in harmony with the feelings of those over whom it exercised jurisdiction, decided to provide consecrated ground, but upon the consecration of the ground according to the rites of the Church of England there arose certain pecuniary conditions, a salary had to be assigned for a chaplain, and certain fees were required to be paid.

*Viscount CRANBORNE said that, as far as fees were concerned, he had expressly drawn a distinction between existing burial grounds and burial grounds created after the Act.

*Sir H. FOWLER said this was a Bill of detail, and a great many of the objections of the noble Lord were powerful so far as details were concerned, but would be most unjust reasons for throwing out the Bill altogether. The hon. Member opposite quoted a case at Hyde, and he remembered a similar case in Cheshire, under the jurisdiction of the Bishop of Chester, which came before him when he held the office of President of the Local Government Board. A clergyman, very sensibly, wanted to resign the rights he had in regard to fees for burials in consecrated ground. But the Local Government Board was obliged to decide that, although the clergyman might surrender his fees, that would in no way bind his successor, so that the grievance could only be remedied for the lifetime of that incumbent. This grievance the Bill sought to remedy. The noble Lord had pointed out grave evils he thought would result from several clauses of the Bill. He had raised a point upon which it must be admitted the Bill was not clearly drawn in reference to the third Clause. A very astute mind could construe that clause as the noble Lord had construed it, but he did not think the intention of the promoters or the legal construction agreed with the interpretation of the noble Lord. The third Clause practically repealed, so far as burial grounds were concerned, a portion of the Act of 1880, and the noble Lord apprehended that this would render possible Mahomedan or infidel services on consecrated ground. But if the noble Lord would look at the clause again he would see, perhaps, that his apprehensions were unfounded. Burial authorities might provide a building for the performance of burial services in any public burial ground, and this was to be available for all persons attending the funeral. But if the noble Lord would turn to the clause on the construction of the Act he would find that this Act was, so far as was consistent with the tenor thereof, to be construed as one with the Burials Acts, 1852 to 1885. That was, that the Burials Act of 1880, which sanctioned this user of consecrated ground, yet provided that there should be orderly and Christian services. He was not an authority on the law of the case, but, bringing his mind to bear on the construction of the Bill, he believed that the Burials Act of 1880 would apply to this provision in Clause 3. Be that so or not, three or four words would make that intention clear, and there was really no difference as to what should be the effect. Then he came to another question, which he regarded as of more practical importance, and though it had a sentimental character, it had throughout the country created a great deal of bitter feeling. The noble Lord said there were certain portions of the Bill to which he had no objection. He denounced "the outrageous conduct of certain clergymen" of the Church of England, and, with perfect truth, he said those guilty of such conduct were few in number. ["Hear!"] Yes, but what consolation was it to the victims of such outrageous conduct to be told that they were few in number? A poor man takes the body of his child to the burial ground, and he finds it—he might almost say—thrown like a dog into a portion of the ground used for rubbish, because the Church of England will not allow the burial in consecrated ground. What consolation is it to that poor father to be told there is not many men in England would do as that clergyman has done? ["Hear, hear!"] The cases were limited, but why not prevent any single case of the kind? That was the object of the clause. ["Hear, hear!"] There were certain other matters of detail to mention; one hon. Member talked about "climbing over the wall," but let him refer to Subsection 2 of Clause 10, and there he would find provision for going through the gate, and which would put an end to such scenes as the breaking down a wall, because entrance by the gate was refused. Why should Dissenters, because they lived in a parish and were compelled to be buried in the churchyard—where they had a right to be buried, and to have the service conducted by their own minister—solely because they were Dissenters, be deprived of the ceremony of the tolling of the bell and the use of the various appliances of funerals which were there?

["Hear, hear!"] He knew that the laity of the Church of England in that House, the great bulk of the clergy, and the Episcopal Bench, repudiated that sort of behaviour; and why, he asked, should they not render it illegal once and for ever? ["Hear, hear!"] The noble Lord opposite objected to Clause 11, but he considered it dealt with a real and practical evil. It was intended to prevent the evasion of the Burial Act of 1880 by conveying, adjacent to a churchyard, and as part of it, a piece of land to be used as a burial ground to which the Act was not intended to apply. He believed that high legal authority had advised that that device would not succeed. There could be no doubt it ought to be prevented from succeeding, and surely there could be no objection to saying that, where additional land was added to a churchyard, that new additional land should be subjected to the same conditions as the existing churchyard, and that a Nonconformist should have the right to be buried there, and for a minister of his own denomination to conduct the burial service. ["Hear, hear!"] The noble Lord had said that a great many Nonconformists desired to be buried in consecrated ground. Yes; they desired to be buried where their forefathers and relatives were buried, but that was no reason why they should be subjected to any disadvantages. He put it to hon. Members, not in the interests of a political party, but in the interests of Christianity and the Church of England, it was time that these troublesome scandals should be brought to an end. ["Hear, hear!"] No one who remembered the state of things before 1880 could doubt that it was impossible to maintain the then existing conditions, and no one could contend that any injury had resulted from the legislation of 1880, or that there had been anything discreditable to religion or injurious to the Church in consequence of that Act. ["Hear, hear!"] He did not pretend that the Bill was perfect in point of draftsmanship, but he ventured to think it was one to which the House ought to give a Second Reading, and then allow it to be sent to a Committee in order that the various points might be considered. He could assure hon. Members opposite that no one on his side of the House desired to commit any injustice or do anything that was offensive to the Church of England. All they claimed was that in the most solemn period of life, when persons were mourning the loss of their dead, they should not labour under the grievances which had been shown to exist. They had tried to state the case temperately and fairly, and they asked the House, as representing both Churchmen and Nonconformists, to remove those grievances and make Amendments in the administration of the law which they believed would be beneficial to the whole community, and tend to the allaying and not the exciting of sectarian controversy. [*Cheers.*]

*THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE HOME DEPARTMENT (Sir MATTHEW WHITE RIDLEY, Lancashire, Blackpool) expressed his anxiety to respond to the appeal of the right hon. Gentleman, and to meet this question in a reasonable spirit. He was perfectly prepared to admit that, on the whole, the Act of 1880 had not worked unsuccessfully, but that there were still some grievances, which had arisen under the operation of that Act or which were not touched by it, that it was very desirable should be considered. He did not think there had been in the carrying out of the Act of 1880, by the clergy of the Church of England, the great number of improper attempts to go against the spirit of the Measure which was sometimes imputed to them out of doors. There had been exceptional instances in which certain clergymen—the fanatics of their party and of the Church —had not acted as could have been wished; but to ask the House by legislation to meet those isolated cases appeared to him to be a mistake. ["Hear, hear!"] If he had been asked to assent to the principle that it was desirable there should be some inquiry into, and some improvement in their Burial Laws, with special reference to the points indicated in the Bill, he should have done so. There were many points which were somewhat difficult to handle under the present law, and which legislation might improve; but when he was asked to vote for the Second Reading of this Bill he was asked to go a great deal further than that, and to vote for the way in which the Bill dealt with the points it raised. The right hon. Gentleman said it was all matter of detail. Very likely it was, but if the only principle upon which they were asked to vote was that there should be a reform of the Burial Laws, then he thought, before the House assented to the Second Reading of a Bill of this sort, it should have some knowledge of the method in which that improvement was to be carried out. The principal argument in support of the Bill centred round the vexed question of consecration. It had been admitted that, whereas there might be differences of opinion as to the value to be attached to consecration, the reverence for it was a feeling which ought to be respected. The Bill proposed to abolish the necessity of compulsory consecration in the provision of new burial grounds. Why had the law provided for this compulsory consecration? Because that burial ground was a substitution for the old parish churchyard, which, by Order in Council, had been closed as inadequate for the burial of parishioners; and what the law had said, with great fairness, was that, if the parishioners were deprived by the closing of the parish churchyard of the right to interment according to the rites to which they were accustomed, and which they valued, then they ought in the new ground to be established under the local authority to have—whatever be the smallness of the minority—compulsorily by law, the same rights of interment as they had in the parish churchyard. ["Hear, hear!"] The Bill proposed to leave the matter entirely in the option of the local authority, so that the rights of the minority to have consecrated ground might be taken away from them by a small majority. That, he submitted, was an objectionable proposal, and it was not surprising there should be strong opposition to it by all hon. Members on his side of the House. ["Hear, hear!"] There was, again, the question of chapels. He should have wished that, in all future burial grounds, arrangements could be made by common consent, and, if necessary, by law, that there should be an adequate mortuary chapel built at the expense of the ratepayers, to which there should be common access and common rights. In the cases where there was no general desire to have a consecrated chapel, he did not think that there should necessarily be one, nor did he see that any member of the Church of England would be injured by its absence. But he did share the feeling of repugnance to the proposal that, when they had a specially-erected mortuary chapel in the consecrated portion of the burial ground, into that mortuary chapel, although there was another provided by law in the unconsecrated part, there should be, as proposed by Clause 3, an absolutely unrestricted right of access by persons who had possibly no religious belief whatever. ["Hear, hear!"] He dared say many of the difficulties which had been alluded to by hon. Members were made on the floor of the House of Commons, for, certainly in the districts with which he was connected he was not sensible of any. When, therefore, clauses were introduced into Bills for the purpose of remedying grievances of which there was very small complaint they had a right to ask that those clauses should be of a more reasonable character. ["Hear, hear!"] As to fees, it could not be denied that there was some grievance. But, while the vested interests of existing persons should be protected, it was unreasonable that when Nonconformists were given the right to be buried in consecrated ground, they should pay not only the legitimate reward of services rendered by a Nonconformist Minister, but also the fees to an incumbent. [*Opposition cheers.*] The

Bill no doubt was well meant, but it greatly irritated members of the Church of England, and attempted to remedy in the most illogical and impracticable manner both alleged grievances and others which he admitted to exist. Clause 1, read in connection with the Schedule, seemed to take away a great deal of the authority which the incumbent and parishioners now exercised over the parochial burial ground, and would prevent a burial authority establishing a cemetery with exclusive right to the Church of England even if desired. Permissive consecration was a matter which required to be carefully considered. Fair-minded men would agree that when a burial ground was being provided, not in addition to but in substitution for an old parish churchyard, there should be some provision under the law for compulsory consecration to preserve the rights even of five or six parishioners who were members of the Church of England.

*SIR H. FOWLER asked whether the objection of the local bodies had not been entirely on the ground of fees.

*SIR MATTHEW WHITE RIDLEY replied that he did not think that was the case. He believed the objection had been on the ground of consecration. But whatever the objection might have been, the Home Office was bound to carry out the law—that when there was a burial ground of that sort a portion of it must be consecrated. As regarded the second part of the Bill, his hon. Friends said the proposals of the Bill were not only ill-conceived, but caused—he did not say intentionally—quite unnecessary irritation to members of the Church of England. There had been few complaints on the subject to which that part of the Bill related since he had been in office. In one or two cases there had been an abuse of the Act of 1880, but to say that abuse of the Act was general or required general amendment of the law admitted of considerable doubt. If voting for the Second Reading of the Bill had meant that something should be done, he should have been inclined to vote for it, and if hon. Members opposite had asked him whether it might not be useful to institute an inquiry into the Act of 1880 he should not have objected. But he was asked to support the Second Reading of a Bill which contained so many unreasonable clauses, and which gave dissatisfaction to many members of the Church of England. Personally he would be obliged to support the Amendment for the rejection of the Bill. His own conviction was that there might be great improvements in the law, but before amendments in the law were made there should be some satisfactory inquiry. The proposals of the Bill were crude and unnecessarily offensive to the Church of England, and for himself personally he should support the Amendment for its rejection. ["Hear, hear!"]

MR. JOHNSON-FERGUSON (Leicester, Loughborough) said he should not have intervened in the Debate, but would have given a silent vote, except for the fact that one of the cases to which allusion had been made occurred in the constituency which he had the honour of representing, and the arrangement by which that difficulty was ended presented perhaps one of the strongest arguments in favour of the passing of this Bill. The difficulty to which he alluded arose in the parish of Barrow-on-Soar, in Leicestershire. The churchyard had been closed by order of the Home Office, and a cemetery had been formed, but the Parish Council declined either to comply with the order of the Home Office or to have one portion of it consecrated, because of the objection which a large majority of the Parish Council felt to the right which it gave the rector of the parish to claim special fees in respect of interments which took place. He need hardly say that the former Home Secretary, in whose term of office this difficulty originally arose, and the present Home Secretary, acted in the most reasonable and courteous manner with respect to the difficulty, and did everything that lay in their power to bring it to a satisfactory and amicable settlement. But it was ultimately brought to a settlement by the intervention of the Bishop of the diocese, the present Bishop of London, who, jointly with the rector of the parish, gave an undertaking that no extra fees should be demanded by the rector where interments did not take place by himself or his curates, and the 48 hours' notice at present required to be given to him when an interment was to take place in the consecrated portion of the cemetery should no longer be demanded. What was the position? On one side they had the law distinctly stating that a portion of the cemetery should be consecrated, and he entirely agreed with every word the Home Secretary had said as to the right of every Churchman to insist that a portion of the cemetery should be consecrated. He himself should be one of the last to support a Bill which could not be amended so as to insure that right to every Churchman in the country. But, on the other side, they had the Bishop of the diocese, the rector of the parish, and the Parish Council deliberately joining together to see if they could not evade the law. Was that a condition of things which they in that House wished to see maintained? Since then another cemetery had been consecrated on precisely the same terms as those arranged in the parish of Barrow-on-Soar, which constituted a distinct evasion of the law. When they saw an astute man of the world like the present Bishop of London coming forward and making an effort like that, which practically amounted to an evasion of the law, it showed that he at least recognised that had the right hon. Gentleman opposite put the law in motion to enforce on the Parish Council the legal consecration of the cemetery, it would have done more harm to the Church than the giving up of the paltry fees. He thought that they ought to bring the law into harmony with what was the public sentiment in a very large number of the districts of the country.

Sir Matthew White Ridley.

MR. HERBERT LEWIS (Flint Boroughs) regretted that the Home Secretary had not seen his way to support the Bill. He thought the right hon. Gentleman should have paid more attention to the weighty utterance of the hon. Member for the Hyde Division of Cheshire, who had had a long and somewhat bitter experience in connection with this matter. Undoubtedly a grievance existed, and they had had Commission after Commission from the other side of the House. The hon. Member for the Tunbridge Division admitted that if the Bill were only shortened in the way he indicated he would be willing to support it. It seemed to him that from the noble Lord the Member for Rochester, the hon. Member for the Tunbridge Division, and the hon. Member for the Hyde Division, they had had an admission that there was a need for this Bill, which, at all events, would justify the House in passing the Second Reading. A similar Measure, though one very much less acceptable he was sure to hon. Gentlemen on the other side, passed that House two years ago by a very large majority. He was pleased to hear the hon. Member for Wigan deliver a paternal benediction on the Bill of 1880, and he hoped that he might live long enough also to pronounce a benediction on this Measure. He hoped this matter would be dealt with with as little bitterness as possible. He earnestly appealed to hon. Gentlemen opposite to give this Bill a Second Reading. They on that side were absolutely in their hands, all that they desired was that the Measure should be discussed point by point in Committee and thoroughly thrashed out. Unquestionably there were a number of questions on which they agreed. He would like to lay emphasis on the fact that they had absolutely no objection to any kind of consecration; all that they objected to were the legal distinctions and unnecessary disqualifications that followed the act of consecration. The right hon. Gentleman the Under Secretary of State for the Home Department in 1880 protested against the Bill of that day being introduced, because it put Nonconformists together with Churchmen inside a sort of pale of favouritism, and excluded a large number of other persons. He had hoped that they might have had a little light and guidance from the right hon. Gentleman on this question. He was sure the House would listen with the greatest interest to what he had to say about those whom he then described as the persecutors of Nonconformists. All that they asked was that those causes of bitterness which had existed in the past should be removed, and that they might have a chance of making this Bill into a workable Bill.

MR. HERBERT ROBERTS (Denbighshire, W.), referring to what had been said by the hon. Member for the Tunbridge Division as to the very few instances of Nonconformist burials that had occurred in the diocese of St. Asaph, said that the real reason why there was a small number of Nonconformist burials in Wales under the Act of 1880 was, not because the people did not desire to take advantage of the Act, but because of the unexampled difficulties placed in their way by a large number of the clergy in Wales. There was the difficulty of the 48 hours' notice, especially in the rural districts, where it was not easy to make rapid arrangements. He knew a number of cases where objection had been taken because of the shortness of the notification. Another objection that was frequently made was that the person to be buried did not live exactly within the borders of the parish to which the churchyard belonged. He cited the case which had occurred in connection with a Nonconformist minister at Barmouth, and said that these cases frequently occurred in Wales. Then there was what he would describe as the cruel method sometimes adopted of deciding the exact spot where a person was to be buried. Perhaps the spot selected might be unsuitable and unattractive, and there was a case where a clergyman had insisted on a person being buried in the suicide portion of the churchyard. The grievances they complained of were real, and they appealed to hon. Members opposite, therefore, to allow the Bill to pass its Second Reading.

Question put, "That the word 'now' stand part of the Question."

The House divided:—Ayes, 150; Noes, 194.—(Division List—No. 47—appended.)

AYES.

Abraham, William (Cork, N.E).
Abraham, William (Rhondda)
Acland, Rt. Hon. A. H. Dyke
Allan, William (Gateshead)
Allen, Wm. (Newc.-under-Lyme
Allison, Robert Andrew
Arch, Joseph
Ashton, Thomas Gair
Asquith, Rt. Hn. Herbert Henry
Atherley-Jones, L.
Austin, Sir John (Yorkshire)
Austin, M. (Limerick, W.)
Baker, Sir John
Barlow, John Emmot
Bayley, Thomas (Derbyshire)
Birrell, Augustine
Bolton, Thomas Dolling
Brigg, John
Brown, Alexander H.
Bryce, Rt. Hon. James
Burns, John
Burt, Thomas
Buxton, Sydney Charles
Caldwell, James
Cameron, Sir Charles (Glasgow)
Campbell-Bannerman, Sir H.
Carmichael, Sir T. D. Gibson-
Causton, Richard Knight
Channing, Francis Allston
Clough, Walter Owen
Colville, John
Condon, Thomas Joseph
Crilly, Daniel
Crombie, John William
Curran, Thomas B. (Donegal)
Dalbiac, Major Philip Hugh
Davies, M. Vaughan- (Cardigan)
Davies, W. Rees (Pembrokesh.)
Davitt, Michael
Denny, Colonel
Dilke, Rt. Hon. Sir Charles
Dillon, John
Dixon, George
Donelan, Captain A.
Doughty, George
Dunn, Sir William
Ellis, Thos. Edw. (Merionethsh.)
Evans, Samuel T. Glamorgan)
Evans, Sir Francis H. (South'ton)
Farquharson, Dr. Robert
Fenwick, Charles
Ferguson, R. C. Munro (Leith)
Flynn, James Christopher
Foster, Sir Walter (Derby Co.)
Fowler, Rt. Hn. Sir Hy. (Wol'tn)
Gilhooly, James
Goddard, Daniel Ford
Gordon, John Edward
Gourley, Sir Edward Temperley
Green, Walford D. (Wednesb'y)
Haldane, Richard Burdon
Harcourt, Rt. Hon. Sir W.
Harwood, George
Haslett, Sir James Horner
Hayne, Rt. Hon. Charles Seale-
Hickman, Sir Alfred
Howard, Joseph
Humphreys-Owen, Arthur C.
Jacoby, James Alfred
Jameson, Major J. Eustace
Johnson-Ferguson, Jabez Edw.
Johnston, William (Belfast)
Jones, David Brynmor (Swansea)
Kitson, Sir James
Labouchere, Henry

Lambert, George
Lawson, Sir Wilfrid (Cumb'land)
Leng, Sir John
Leuty, Thomas Richmond
Lewis, John Herbert
Lloyd-George, David
Lockwood, Sir Frank (York)
Logan, John William
Lough, Thomas
Luttrell, Hugh Fownes
Lyell, Sir Leonard
Macaleese, Daniel
McArthur, William
McEwan, William
M'Hugh, E. (Armagh, S.)
McKillop, James
McLaren, Charles Benjamin
McLeod, John
Mappin, Sir Frederick Thorpe
Mellor, Rt. Hon. J. W. (Yorks.)
Mildmay, Francis Bingham
Montagu, Sir S. (Whitechapel)
Morgan, J. Lloyd (Carmarthen)
Morley, Rt.Hn.John (Montrose)
Mundella, Rt.Hn.Anthony John
Nicol, Donald Ninian
Nussey, Thomas Willans
O'Brien, Patrick (Kilkenny)
Owen, Thomas
Palmer, Sir CharlesM.(Durham)
Paulton, James Mellor
Pease, Joseph A. (Northumb.)
Perks, Robert William
Pickersgill, Edward Hare
Pirie, Captain Duncan Vernon
Power, Patrick Joseph
Price, Robert John
Provand, Andrew Dryburgh
Reid, Sir Robert T.
Rickett, J. Compton
Roberts, John Bryan (Eifion)
Roberts, John H. (Denbighs)
Robson, William Snowdon
Roche, Hon. James (East Kerry)
Russell, T. W. (Tyrone)
Schwann, Charles E.
Shaw, Charles Edw. (Stafford)
Sidebotham, J. W. (Cheshire)
Smith, Samuel (Flint)
Spicer, Albert
Stanhope, Hon. Philip J.
Stevenson, Francis S.
Strachey, Edward
Strauss, Arthur
Sullivan, Donal (Westmeath)
Tanner, Charles Kearns
Tennant, Harold John
Thomas, Abel (Carmarthen, E.)
Thomas, Alfred (Glamorgan, E.)
Wallace, Robert (Edinburgh)
Wallace, Robert (Perth)
Walton, John Lawson
Warner, Thomas Courtenay T.
Wayman, Thomas
Wedderburn, Sir William
Whittaker, Thomas Palmer
Wills, Sir William Henry
Wilson, Frederick W. (Norfolk)
Wilson, Henry J. (York, W.R.)
Wilson, John (Falkirk)
Wilson, John (Govan)
Woodall, William
Woods, Samuel
Yoxall, James Henry

TELLERS FOR THE AYES, Mr. Cameron and Mr. Carvell Williams.

NOES.

Acland-Hood, Capt. Sir A. F.
Aird, John
Allhusen, Augustus Henry Eden
Allsopp, Hon. George
Anstruther, H. T.
Arrol, Sir William
Ascroft, Robert
Ashmead-Bartlett, Sir Ellis
Atkinson, Rt. Hon. John
Baden-Powell, Sir Geo. Smyth
Bagot, Capt. Josceline FitzRoy
Bailey, James (Walworth)
Baird, John George Alexander
Balcarres, Lord
Baldwin, Alfred
Balfour, Rt. Hon. A. J. (Manch'r)
Balfour, Gerald William (Leeds)
Banbury, Frederick George
Barry, A. H. Smith- (Hunts.)
Bartley, George C. T.
Bass, Hamar
Bathurst, Hon. Allen Benjamin
Beach, Rt.Hon.SirM.H.(Bristol)
Beach, W.W. Bramston (Hants.)
Bhownaggree, M. M.
Biddulph, Michael
Bonsor, Henry Cosmo Orme
Boscawen, Arthur Griffith-
Bowles, T. Gibson (King'sLynn)
Brassey, Albert
Brodrick, Rt. Hon. St. John
Brookfield, A. Montagu
Burdett-Coutts, W.
Carson, Edward
Cavendish, R. F. (N. Lancs.)
Cavendish, V.C.W. (Derbyshire)
Cecil, Lord Hugh
Chaloner, Captain R. G. W.
Chaplin, Rt. Hon. Henry
Charrington, Spencer
Clare, Octavius Leigh
Cohen, Benjamin Louis
Colston, Chas. Edw. H. Athole
Compton, Lord Alwyne (Beds.)
Cook, Fred. Lucas (Lambeth)
Cooke, C. W. Radcliffe (Heref'd)
Cranborne, Viscount
Cripps, Charles Alfred
Cross, Herb. Shepherd (Bolton)
Curzon, Rt.Hn.G.N.(Lancs.SW.)
Davenport, W. Bromley-
Dickson-Poynder, Sir John P.
Donkin, Richard Sim
Douglas, Rt. Hon. A. Akers-
Doxford, William Theodore
Duncombe, Hon. Hubert V.
Dyke, Rt. Hn. Sir William Hart
Edwards, Gen. Sir James Bevan
Egerton, Hon. A. de Tatton
Fardell, Thomas George
Fergusson, Rt.Hn.SirJ.(Manc'r)
Field, Admiral (Eastbourne)
Fielden, Thomas
Finch, George H.
Finlay, Sir Robert Bannatyne
Fisher, William Hayes
Fison, Frederick William
FitzGerald, Sir R. U. Penrose
Flower, Ernest
Folkestone, Viscount
Forster, Henry William
Forwood, Rt. Hon.Sir Arthur B.
Foster, Harry S. (Suffolk)
Galloway, William Johnson
Garfit, William
Gibbs, Hn.A.G.H.(Cityof Lond.)
Gibbs, Hon. Vicary (St. Albans)
Giles, Charles Tyrrell
Gilliat, John Saunders
Goldsworthy, Major-General
Gorst, Rt. Hon. Sir John Eldon
Goschen, George J. (Sussex)
Goulding Edward Alfred
Gray, Ernest (West Ham)
Gretton, John
Gull, Sir Cameron
Halsey, Thomas Frederick
Hamilton, Rt. Hon. Lord Geo.
Hanbury, Rt. Hon. Robert Wm.
Hardy, Laurence
Hare, Thomas Leigh
Havelock-Allan, General Sir H.
Heaton, John Henniker
Helder, Augustus
Hermon-Hodge, Robert Trotter
Hill, Rt.Hn.A. Staveley (Staffs.)
Hoare, Samuel (Norwich)
Hobhouse, Henry
Houldsworth, Sir Wm. Henry
Howell, William Tudor
Howorth, Sir Henry Hoyle
Hubbard, Hon. Evelyn
Hutchinson, Capt. G. W. Grice-
Hutton, John (Yorks., N.R.)
Isaacson, Frederick Wootton
Johnstone, John H. (Sussex)
Jolliffe, Hon. H. George
Kennaway, Rt.Hon. Sir John H.
Knowles, Lees
Laurie, Lieut.-General
Lawrence, Wm. F. (Liverpool)
Leigh-Bennett, Henry Currie
Leighton, Stanley
Llewelyn, Sir Dillwyn-(Swnsea)
Loder, Gerald Walter Erskine
Long, Col. CharlesW.(Evesham)
Long, Rt. Hon. Walter (L'pool.)
Lopes, Henry Yarde Buller
Lorne, Marquess of
Lowles, John
Lowther, Rt. Hn. James (Kent)
Lucas-Shadwell, William
Lyttelton, Hon. Alfred
Macartney, W. G. Ellison
Macdona, John Cumming
Maclean, James Mackenzie
McCalmont, Mj.-Gen(Antr'mN)
Malcolm, Ian
Maple, Sir John Blundell

Marks, Henry Hananel
Martin, Richard Biddulph
Massey-Mainwaring, Hon. W. F.
Meysey-Thompson, Sir H. M.
Milward, Colonel Victor
Monckton, Edward Philip
Moon, Edward Robert Pacy
Morrison, Walter
Mount, William George
Mowbray, Rt. Hon. Sir John
Murdoch, Charles Townshend
Murray, Rt. Hn. A. Graham (Bute)
Murray, Col. Wyndham (Bath)
Northcote, Hon. Sir H. Stafford
Orr-Ewing, Charles Lindsay
Penn, John
Plunkett, Hon. Horace Curzon
Priestley, Sir W. Overend (Edin)
Pryce-Jones, Edward
Purvis, Robert
Rasch, Major Frederic Carne
Rentoul, James Alexander
Richards, Henry Charles
Richardson, Thomas
Ridley, Rt. Hon. Sir Matthew W.
Round, James
Russell, Gen. F. S. (Cheltenh'm)
Russell, Sir George (Berkshire)
Samuel, Harry S. (Limehouse)
Saunderson, Col. Edw. James
Savory, Sir Joseph
Sharpe, William Edward T.
Shaw-Stewart, M. H. (Renfrew)
Simeon, Sir Barrington
Smith, Abel (Herts.)
Smith, Abel H. (Christchurch)
Smith, Hon. W. F. D. (Strand)
Stanley, Lord (Lancs.)
Stanley, Edw. Jas. (Somerset)
Stanley, Henry M. (Lambeth)
Stephens, Henry Charles
Sturt, Hon. Humphry Napier
Talbot, Lord E. (Chichester)
Thornton, Percy M.
Tollemache, Henry James
Tomlinson, Wm. Edw. Murray
Tritton, Charles Ernest
Usborne, Thomas
Valentia, Viscount
Vincent, Col. Sir C. E. Howard
Walrond, Sir William Hood
Wanklyn, James Leslie
Warde, Lt.-Col. C. E. (Kent)
Warr, Augustus Frederick
Webster, R. G. (St. Pancras)
Welby, Lieut.-Col. A. C. E.
Wentworth, Bruce C. Vernon
Wharton, John Lloyd
Williams, Colonel R. (Dorset)
Willox, John Archibald
Wortley, Rt. Hon. C. B. Stuart-
Wylie, Alexander
Wyndham, George
Wyndham-Quin, Major W. H.
Wyvill, Marmaduke D'Arcy

Tellers for the Noes, Mr. Talbot and Sir Francis Powell.

Words added; Main Question, as amended, put and agreed to. Second Reading put off for six months.

ARCHDEACONRY OF LONDON (ADDITIONAL ENDOWMENTS) BILL.

Mr. A. GIBBS (Herts, St. Albans) moved, "That this Bill be now read a Second time." He said its object was to remove an inequality which existed in regard to one of the canonries in St. Paul's Cathedral—the Canonry annexed and united to the Archdeaconry of London. The Dean and Chapter desired to increase the salary of the Archdeacon of London in respect of that canonry, which was at present only two-thirds of the ordinary allowance; but that increase would come out of the funds of the Dean and Chapter and would involve no public charge.

Mr. LLOYD-GEORGE said that, after the Bill dealing with the grievances of Dissenters had been rejected, they now came face to face with another Bill dealing with an alleged grievance of the Church of England. As he understood the Bill, its object was to raise the salary of an archdeacon. That might be a good object in itself, but it was not sufficient to commend the Bill to hon. Members on the Opposition side of the House, who were smarting under a grievance inflicted on them by hon. Members on the other side. ["Hear, hear!"]

The hon. Member was speaking at Half-past Five o'clock, when the Debate stood adjourned; Debate to be resumed To-morrow.

ELEMENTARY EDUCATION (PERMISSIVE RATES AID) BILL.

Second Reading deferred till Tuesday, 18th May.

LABOURERS' COTTAGES (IRELAND) BILL.

Second Reading deferred till To-morrow.

LOCAL AUTHORITIES OFFICERS' SUPERANNUATION BILL.

Second Reading deferred till Thursday, 29th April.

LOCOMOTIVES ON HIGHWAYS BILL.

Second Reading deferred till Friday, 5th March.

LICENCES (IRELAND) BILL.

Second Reading deferred till Wednesday next.

COUNTY COUNCILLORS (QUALIFICATION OF WOMEN) (SCOTLAND) BILL.

Second Reading deferred till Friday, 5th March.

RATING OF MACHINERY SUSPENSORY BILL.

Second Reading deferred till Wednesday, 10th March.

ASSISTANT COUNTY SURVEYORS (IRELAND) BILL.

Second Reading deferred till Monday, 8th March.

CEMETERIES RATING BILL.

Second Reading deferred till Wednesday next.

ALIENS BILL.

Second Reading deferred till Wednesday next.

SHOPS (EARLY CLOSING) BILL.

Second Reading deferred till Wednesday next.

SHOPS BILL.

Second Reading deferred till Wednesday next.

WORKING MEN'S DWELLINGS BILL.

Second Reading deferred till Wednesday next.

JUSTICES OF THE PEACE BILL.

Second Reading deferred till Wednesday next.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (COUNTY COUNCIL CLERKS) BILL.

Second Reading deferred till Wednesday next.

SUPPLY.

Committee deferred till Friday.

WAYS AND MEANS.

Committee deferred till Friday.

CORONERS' INQUESTS (RAILWAY FATALITIES) BILL.

Second Reading deferred till Thursday, 11th March.

PRISON MADE GOODS (IMPORTATION) BILL.

Second Reading deferred till Wednesday next.

OCCUPYING TENANTS' ENFRANCHISEMENT (PURCHASE OF FEE SIMPLE) BILL.

Second Reading deferred till Friday, 12th March.

METROPOLITAN AND OTHER POLICE COURTS BILL.

Second Reading deferred till Wednesday next.

EMPLOYERS' LIABILITY (FOREIGN SIHPOWNERS) AMENDMENT. BILL.

Second Reading deferred till Friday.

ESTATES TAIL BILL.

Second Reading deferred till To-morrow.

LICENSING EXEMPTION (HOUSES OF PARLIAMENT) BILL.

Second Reading deferred till To-morrow.

MOTION.

LAND TENURE.

Bill to amend the Law relating to the Tenure of Land, ordered to be brought in byMr. Lambert, Mr. Seale-Hayne, Mr. Channing, Mr. Luttrell, and Mr. Frederick Wilson; presented accordingly, and Read the First time; to be Read a Second time upon Wednesday, 24th March, and to be printed.—[Bill 144.]

House adjourned at Twenty-five minutes before Six o'clock.

HOUSE OF LORDS.

Thursday, 25th February 1897.

STATUTE LAW REVISION BILLS AND CONSOLIDATION BILLS.

Message from the Commons to acquaint this House that they have appointed a Select Committee of seven Members to join with the Select Committee appointed by this House, as mentioned in their Lordships' Message on the 2nd instant, to consider all Statute Law Revision Bills and Consolidation Bills of the present Session.

CRETE (MINISTERIAL STATEMENT).

THE EARL OF **DUNRAVEN**: I desire to ask a question of the noble Marquess at the head of Her Majesty's Government—of which I have given private notice—namely, whether he is in a position to give this House any information as to the situation of affairs in Crete, and as to the progress of negotiations between the Powers with a view to the adoption of Measures for the pacification of Crete and for the reorganisation of the administration of that island?

*THE **PRIME MINISTER** (The MARQUESS of SALISBURY), who was received with cheers, said: I do not know that we have got quite so far as my noble Friend seems to anticipate, but we feel that it is not convenient or desirable that we should abstain from informing the House, so far as we can do so, of the policy which we are anxious to press, and which we think our allies agree with us in pursuing. I will read to the House, as the best form of placing them in possession of the actual facts of the moment, a telegram that was sent late last night to the five Powers:—

> "Inform Government to which you are accredited that Her Majesty's Government propose to make the following public declaration of the policy which they are prepared to pursue and which they believe to be in accordance with the views of their allies:—1. That the establishment of administrative autonomy in Crete is in their judgment a necessary condition to the termination of the international occupation. 2. That, subject to the above provision, Crete ought in their judgment to remain a portion of the Turkish Empire. 3. That Turkey and Greece ought to be informed by the Powers of this resolution. 4. That if either Turkey or Greece persistently refuse, when required, to withdraw their naval and military forces from the island, the Powers should impose their decision by force upon the State so refusing."

I wish to draw attention to the words "when required." It does not follow that, certainly in the case of Turkey, all the troops can be withdrawn immediately. Mere questions of police would prevent such a result as that. On the other hand, it is evident that eventually, at all events, the withdrawal of the Turkish troops is a necessary condition of administrative autonomy, and, therefore, the Turkish troops will ultimately have to be withdrawn, except so far as they may be kept—I am not anticipating the judgment of the Powers—except so far as they may be kept, as in the case of Samos, and, for many years, in the case of Servia, simply as an indication of sovereignty. On that I do not wish at all to anticipate the judgment of the Powers, but for all its effective purposes and for all influence upon the Government or the daily life of the inhabitants the Turkish troops ultimately will evidently have to be withdrawn when automony is established. The Greek troops, I imagine, will be required by the Powers to withdraw at an earlier date. I have nothing further to state, because, though I believe, after much intercommunication, that this is the course which the Powers all desire to take, I cannot go further until I know upon each point of detail what their decision is; that is one of the necessary consequences of acting in concert. But, of course, if these principles which we have ventured to lay down are recognised by them, as I believe they will be, as those which animate their policy, it is not possible that the present state of things in Crete can indefinitely continue. [*Cheers.*] There is no other matter which I have to state. I am sorry that I cannot carry my information as far as the question of my noble Friend, but it is evident that we must advance by steps, and the steps are necessarily measured by the assent which will follow from the consultation of the Powers. ["Hear!"]

THE EARL OF KIMBERLEY: The statement of the noble Marquess is one naturally of great gravity to the situation of affairs in Crete and all the conditions which surround the question; and the noble Marquess, therefore, will not be greatly surprised if I wish to reserve any observations which I may wish to make until I have had time to consider the matter. ["Hear, hear!"]

House adjourned at Half-past Four o'clock, till To-morrow, a Quarter-past Ten o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

Thursday, 25th February 1897.

PRIVATE BUSINESS.

GREAT NORTHERN RAILWAY BILL.

On the Motion that this Bill be read a Second time,

*SIR CHARLES DILKE (Gloucester, Forest of Dean) said he did not propose to divide the House upon the Motion, but to state briefly the reasons why the Amalgamated Society of Railway Servants opposed the Bill, with a view to going to a Division if necessary on Tuesday next, when it had been arranged that an Instruction to the Committee on the Bill should be moved. The clauses of the Bill to which the Amalgamated Society of Railway Servants objected were 37 and 38, Clause 37 being the Savings Bank clause and Clause 38 being similar to a clause inserted in the North British Railway Bill, the Second Reading of which the House had already passed. With regard to the latter clause, he understood that the Great Northern Railway Company were willing to insert into their clause a somewhat similar amendment to that which the North British Company consented to insert into their clause. As to the Savings Bank clause, the House had already allowed some other railway companies to establish savings banks of this kind, but there were many persons who entertained strong objections to the course which the House had taken, perhaps without sufficient consideration. In the Tyne Act of 1890 the then Chairman of Committees introduced very carefully-guarded clauses with regard to the accounts of those societies and their management. Those clauses had since been introduced into an Act promoted by the London County Council, and if it were deemed necessary to guard the rights of the men in the case of public bodies like the Tyne Commissioners and the London County Council, surely it was even more necessary to do so in the case of private companies. He was of opinion that the carefully guarded clauses introduced by the right hon. Gentleman should become for the future statutory clauses to be introduced in all measures of this kind. The general objection of the Amalgamated Society of Railway Servants to the Savings Bank clause was one which was worthy of brief consideration by the House. The men stated that they had no desire to invest their savings with the company, because they objected to their employers being in a position to obtain knowledge of what they deemed to be their own private business. The men also pointed out the bearing which that knowledge might have upon the rate of wages and upon strikes in certain circumstances. Personally he did not like those savings banks clauses in railway Bills. They were not the object or purpose of a railway Bill. ["Hear, hear!"] Railway companies came to Parliament for statutory powers to take land, and not to be made provident societies or savings banks in relation to the people in their employ. He should not divide the House against the Second Reading of the Bill, because he admitted that the principle, having been sanctioned in previous Acts of Parliament, it might not be quite fair to a particular company to divide against a general Bill of theirs upon grounds which applied only to clauses. He did not at all pledge himself not to divide the House on the Instruction, but it seemed to him that the Second Reading was the proper occasion to state briefly the objections he had taken to the extension of this principle, and, at all events, to put the matter in the possession of the House.

MR. JOHN ELLIS (Nottingham, Rushcliffe) said he did not rise to oppose the

Second Reading of the Bill, but to make one or two observations from a somewhat different standpoint from that of the right hon. Baronet. Those who had followed the history of legislation with regard to railways would know that it had been of a very gradual but surely widening character; and whereas the object of these commercial companies in coming to Parliament in the first instance was a very simple one—that of obtaining powers to take land and charge tolls, for the transit of goods and passengers—now it had widened out into all sorts of different matters. He confessed he watched with considerable jealousy this widening of the area of legislation with regard to matters which he believed had better be left to be settled between the parties themselves. It seemed to him extremely doubtful how far the House was wise, in a particular Bill of this kind, in allowing these powers, which were not directly related to the particular object of the existence of the railway. As to the Instruction on the Paper he thought the railway companies would be wise in allowing all parties who might be legitimately affected by the Bill before the House to have a full opportunity of going before the Committee and stating their case.

*MR. F. W. FISON (York, W.R., Doncaster) thought that on this occasion the right hon. Baronet had got a rather poor case against this railway company. Two clauses only in this Bill, which was a long one of some 74 clauses, were objected to. The first of those two clauses, 37, gave the Great Northern Railway Company power to establish a savings bank. He would point out to the House that this was a purely voluntary savings bank. No single person in the employ of the Great Northern Railway Company was compelled to contribute to the bank; no condition of employment was laid down with any servant of the company that he should belong to the savings bank; no fines could be deducted from any money any servant might have in the bank, and, in fact, no deduction whatever could be made from any depositor's account in the bank. The depositors' accounts, he might mention to hon. Members, became a first charge on the undertaking after the mortgage and other debts and interest on debenture stock, and he ventured to say that, in the present condition of things and for some years to come, that was about as safe an investment as anyone could wish to have. But there was no novelty about this proposal of the company. Already some 14 railway companies possessed similar savings banks, and he rather regarded it as a reflection on the Great Northern Company that they had not sooner brought this proposal forward. From the Official Report of Friendly Societies for 1895 he found that in these 14 railway companies' banks there were, roughly speaking, 30,000 depositors, £2,200,000 deposited, and the average deposit per depositor was £75. The Registrar of Friendly Societies reported

> "that these banks show an increase in the amount due to depositors, in the number of depositors, and in the average of each deposit account."

The right hon. Baronet said that many of the railway men objected to put their money into these banks. Well, they had a curious way of objecting, because he found that in 1895 there was an increase of over 25,000 in the number of depositors—["hear, hear!"]—and they put in an amount of £171,000, and the increased interest they got on the deposits was nearly £9,000. ["Hear, hear!"] He would further remind the House that the Registrar of Friendly Societies had to give an opinion upon the sub-clauses of this section, and he had it on that official's authority that the only amendments he required were unimportant verbal ones which could be inserted in Committee in the usual course. He thought the persons who might object to these savings banks were the shareholders, because the shareholders undoubtedly had an increased charge put upon them by the increased rate of interest paid to the depositors; but this Bill had been submitted to their shareholders, and had been most favourably received. He thought he knew a little more than the right hon. Baronet of what the Great Northern men thought about this matter. At King's Cross, no single objection, not a single complaint, had been received from the men in the service as to the establishment of this bank, and when last December he publicly stated at Doncaster, where there were several thousands of railway men, a large portion of whom were in the employ of the Great Northern Company, that it was contemplated by the directors to found this bank, the way the statement was received showed how thoroughly the men appreciated the action of the Board. He now turned to the Superannuation Clause, 38. The right hon. Baronet had pointed out that he would not object to this clause, because the Great Northern Railway Company were prepared to make arrangements which would not be compulsory on the men. The Great Northern Railway never intended that it should be compulsory, and he thought a moment's reflection would show that it could not be compulsory. The clause was to enable the railway servants serving under a Joint Committee of two railway companies to obtain, if they wished, the benefits of the Superannuation Fund. It was perfectly obvious that it would be impossible for one of these companies to force all the joint servants into its own Superannuation Fund. This fund was divided into two portions. There was the portion consisting of salaried officers, who were in receipt of £80 and upwards a year. In those cases the fund was compulsory. They contributed 2½ per cent. of their salaries, and the company added 2½ per cent., and they got the advantage of the 5 per cent. at accumulated compound interest. The second portion which might be said to consist of the workmen of the company, was not compulsory. No workman who received less than £80 a year was compelled to belong to the Superannuation Fund. It was purely a matter of option. They contributed one per cent. and the company added one per cent. In 1893 there were in this second class 2,627 workmen; in 1894 the number rose to 2,885; and in 1895 to 3,556, or an increase in the optional class of 35 per cent. in two years. It was perfectly true that there was a sentimental side to this Bill. It was perfectly true that they hoped, by the establishment of this bank, to bind still closer those friendly relations of their men to themselves, which had always been so prominent in this company. He was proud to say so, because he thought anything that that House could do to bring together employer and employed would best tend to the future glory of their great commercial reputation and enterprise.

Mr. ARTHUR O'CONNOR (Donegal, E.) thought this Bill was an exemplification of a very great and a growing abuse of statutory powers. A large Corporation such as the Great Northern Railway Company obtained exceptional privileges and advantages for the purchase of land and for a monopoly of the carrying trade upon certain conditions, and these conditions this railway company, like many other railway companies, had systematically and lightly disregarded. Among these conditions one of the most important was that, having obtained certain powers to carry out works, they should complete those works within a limited period; that having obtained rights over certain property they should exercise those rights and satisfy the owners of the property. By the non-fulfilment of these conditions the service of the public was neglected, and the interests of owners and occupiers seriously injured. This he had described as a gross and growing abuse of powers granted by Parliament, and he took the opportunity offered to point out to the House the injustice such Bills as this often inflicted. As far back as 1892, in a Committee upstairs, Sir H. Oakley, the general manager of this company, informed the Members that the suburban traffic to the City had been the trouble of their lives, and that they had been in the throes of suggestion for the last year or more. He said the company were carrying the public very badly indeed, that the trains were overcrowded every night and morning, and they could not help it; the difficulty of dealing with this suburban traffic was a burden on the minds of the managers. This was perfectly true in 1892, and it was a great deal more true now, and anybody who travelled on the line by the morning and evening trains could testify that the condition of things was perfectly disgraceful. In compartments constructed to carry ten persons there were to be found from 12 to 20 persons crowded together, and this, not only in the third, but in the first class carriages. It was not a question of getting a seat on this part of the Great Northern line, but every morning and evening it was simply a struggle for standing room in any form and in any place. In the year 1883, the suburban traffic on the line was reported to be 14 millions of passengers annually. In 1886 the total had gone up to 17 millions, and in 1891 it was 22½ millions, and it had been increasing ever since. Lord Colville, who was Chairman of the company in 1894, said that further provision would have to be made for the conveyance of the enormous suburban traffic, increasing at the rate of a million passengers a year. On these representations the Great Northern Company in 1894 obtained from Parliament very considerable powers to purchase land and to raise new capital for the construction of new lines, especially in the neighbourhood just north of London, in the district called Finsbury Park. They had widened the line in part, but still the traffic had to pass through, as it were, the neck of the bottle, and each year passed without further work being estimated for. They had given notice to occupiers that they were liable to be bought up at any moment, and yet, through 1894, 1895, and 1896 this company had done nothing. The present Chairman of the company, at a meeting held in the present year, stated that the suburban traffic was increasing at the rate of 1½ million passengers a year; and from month to month the difficulty of dealing with this traffic increased. And yet this company, having raised the capital it had power to raise, and having the money in hand for two years, had not moved a single stone to carry out the work it stipulated to complete in three years. The company had not done its duty to the public and not even to its own shareholders; it had inflicted grievous injury on owners and occupiers of property, who had all this time a sort of sword of Damocles suspended over them in the shape of a Schedule, and could not deal with their property, for, of course, no one would deal with it when there was the possibility of the company stepping in and taking possession. The shareholders, too, had good reason to complain, but with these he was not now concerned, his complaint was, that companies having obtained exceptional powers neglected to carry out their work within the stipulated time, and at the end of the time came to Parliament again, as the Great Northern Company did now, for an extension of time for work which they had had ample time for completing, but with which they had made no advance since 1894. It was no use attempting to divide the House on this matter, and he did not propose to do so, but he seized the opportunity to point out the grievous injustice many of these Bills covered, often not properly brought to light in Committee rooms upstairs.

MR. CHARLES MURDOCH (Reading) said he did not think the objection could be fairly urged against this Bill that it was a widening of the scope of Railway Bills, and certainly the Savings Bank Clause was not new. Such banks had been established by other companies, and clauses to this effect inserted in Bills. The reason for the clause was that the directors wished the security of those investing should be as good as could be, and it was necessary, therefore, to place before preference and ordinary stock interest, payment of the money deposited in the savings bank. Why the Amalgamated Society of Railway Servants should raise objection he could not understand. His hon. Friend (Mr. Fison), had very clearly put before the House the advantages that would accrue to railway servants. As to the objection raised by the last speaker that year after year railway companies came to Parliament for powers to acquire land and did not complete work, it must be borne in mind that these great works were extremely difficult to carry out. Some of the work had been done between King's Cross and Finsbury Park, and anyone who travelled over that part of the line would recognise how heavy and costly the work was. He could not admit the logic of the hon. Member who, admitting the necessity for the work, yet objected to the Bill for the purpose of carrying out the work.

MR. ARTHUR O'CONNOR said he had pointed out that the company had had the money for years, but allowed the time to lapse without attempting to complete the work.

MR. MURDOCH said the hon. Member had mentioned the date 1894, and it could not be expected that works of this extensive nature could be executed in the short space of 2½ years.

MR. ARTHUR O'CONNOR remarked they were not begun.

MR. MURDOCH said a beginning had been made, but the work had to be divided into sections, and the section to which the hon. Member's remarks referred would be the next work to be undertaken.

MR. G. C. T. BARTLEY (Islington, N.) said the section of the line to which reference had been made was within his constituency. He urged the company to proceed with their work with all possible dispatch. Two and a-half years might not be a long period in the history of a railway company, but it was a fairly long period for ordinary mortals to suffer from the extreme inconvenience to which passengers were subjected by the overcrowding on the line and at the stations near Finsbury Park. He was a little surprised to hear the remark from the other side that it was not the business or object of a railway company to look after its servants and see that they had facilities for thrift and other means of improving their position. It seemed to him in these days that the putting in of a clause of this kind for the promotion of thrift and better habits on the part of the working classes ought to be one of the highest aims of great employers of labour. Railway companies had enormous advantages given them, as they had such large staffs of workmen; and surely the House ought to encourage them in every possible way to provide for the sickness and old age of the workmen in their employment.

Mr. LLOYD-GEORGE (Carnarvon Boroughs) asked whether, in the event of a workman being dismissed for his connection with a strike, he would receive any benefit from the savings bank?

*Mr. FISON: Yes, certainly.

Mr. LLOYD-GEORGE inquired if there was any statutory obligation to that effect. A second question was, Would a man who was dismissed for his association with a strike receive any benefit at all from the provident society connected with the Great Northern Railway, to which he might have contributed liberally for years?

*Mr. FISON: Does the hon. Member mean the Superannuation Fund?

Mr. LLOYD-GEORGE: Yes.

*Mr. FISON said there was a rule in connection with the Superannuation Fund by which a member practically got back his money. As to whether there was a statutory obligation he was afraid he could not answer.

Bill read a Second time, and committed.

Mr. G. C. T. Bartley.

MIDLAND AND GREAT NORTHERN RAILWAYS JOINT COMMITTEE BILL.

Mr. HARRY FOSTER (Suffolk, Lowestoft) moved—

> "That the Report of the Examiners, that the Standing Orders in relation to the said Bill had been complied with, be referred back to the Examiners, with instructions to report whether Standing Orders 4, 30, and 33 have been complied with so far as the common lands known as Gunton Denes and Lowestoft Denes are affected by the Bill."

The hon. Member said the Motion was somewhat unusual, but not absolutely without precedent, and if it lacked precedent it would be because the action which had led to the necessity for the Motion was without precedent also. That House, very properly, was exceedingly jealous of any interference with open spaces or common rights, and in the Standing Orders had laid down express injunctions as to the course to be followed by the promoters of a Bill when they proposed to interfere with common rights. Standing Order No. 4 required that where, by any Bill, it was proposed to take any right to any common or commonable land, an advertisement should appear in *The London Gazette* stating the fact that it was proposed to interfere with those rights of the public, and also the estimated quantity of such land proposed to be so taken. That requirement was obviously for the purpose of putting people on inquiry, and giving notice to the public that rights were to be affected. Standing Order No. 30 also required that there should be deposited, in any case where commonable land or common lands were to be taken, plans and sections, and a book of reference in the Private Bill Office, showing exactly what land was to be taken. By Standing Order 33 it was required that, where such land was taken, notice should be given to the Home Office and a copy of the Bill deposited there, in order that the Home Office might call the attention of the Board of Agriculture to the matter, who were required to report to the House with regard to common rights, and might give notice generally to others interested in the preservation of common rights. The Bill in question was for the construction of a line of railway from Yarmouth to Lowestoft, and the plans deposited disclosed, for the first time, the fact that the proposed line was to come across what were known as the Gunton Denes and the Lowestoft Denes, both of which places were public recreation grounds, which, from time immemorial, had been common land and commonable land, on which there had been a right to pasture cattle exercised for centuries, and which was exercised at the present day. Part of these lands were acquired by the Corporation of Lowestoft in 1890, and in 1891 they were expressly acquired for the purpose of being used by and dedicated to the public for ever, the Corporation being trustees of the public. None of the Standing Orders he had indicated had been complied with. The Bill did not contain one single word, from the first clause to the last, disclosing the fact that common land or commonable land was to be interfered with. No plans had been deposited with the Private Bill Office disclosing that fact, and no notice had been given to the Home Office or the Board of Agriculture. He was told that the promoters of the Bill contended that the lands were not common lands, and that was their reason for not having complied with the Standing Orders. In reply to that contention he would say that, in 1890, the Corporation of Lowestoft applied to the Local Government Board for permission to acquire these lands, and also for enlarging the Borough of Lowestoft, in order to take them in. In their application to the Local Government Board the Corporation stated that one of the most attractive features to Lowestoft had been the proximity to Gunton Cliffs and Gunton Denes, which had been always unenclosed and open to the public, and over which both the inhabitants of and visitors to Lowestoft had, from time immemorial, availed themselves of the privilege of recreation; and it was of the utmost importance that at least the Denes should be perpetually preserved as an open space for the benefit of the public. Upon that express statement the Local Government Board held an inquiry, when evidence was given to show there was a right of pasturage, together with other common rights. The necessary sanction was therefore given for the purchase by the Corporation of that part of Gunton Denes for the use of the public. The solicitor to the Commons Preservation Society assured him that the terms of the conveyance conveying the land to the Corporation established the fact that this was common or commonable land within the meaning of the Standing Order. In the year 1891 the Corporation of Lowestoft desired to acquire Lowestoft Denes, and in connection with that Mr. J. J. Colman, formerly a Member of that House, agreed to give £750 towards the purchase, provided the lands were dedicated to the use of the public for ever. The deed conveying the lands expressly set forth that they were to be for ever kept and used as a public recreation or pleasure ground. He had a communication, dated no later than the previous day, from the Clerk to the Borough and County Justices, a gentleman who was a solicitor, in which he said that Lowestoft and Gunton Denes had been places open and free to the public from time immemorial; and he enclosed a document which, in a very few hours, left for that purpose, had been signed by 14 or 15 persons, who had exercised the rights of free pasturage on these lands for many years. He had in his hand a statement, furnished by the Commons Preservation Society, which showed that, so long ago as the time of Queen Elizabeth, there existed a record to the effect that these were commons or pasture lands. If that were so, and if the Bill did not comply with the Standing Orders, he asked the House to send this reference down to the Examiners—who were in no way to blame—so that they could report upon the matter. He submitted that the Examiners should have an opportunity of deciding whether these were common lands or not, and that those who represented the popular rights should be able to appear before them. He was asked in somewhat official quarters why he was not satisfied to let this Bill be read a Second time, and then the objectors could have a *locus standi* before the Committee. His constituents were deeply interested in this matter, and it would be a gross injustice to put them to the expense of summoning witnesses and instructing counsel, when after all it might be found that the Standing Orders had not been complied with. He believed he had shown that the Bill did not comply with three Standing Orders to which the House attached the greatest importance. He was told that the House might be asked to suspend the Standing Orders in this case. He should like to have the verdict of the House challenged. The House had shown an increasing desire to help local bodies to preserve open spaces for the public, and he should be surprised if, in a case like this, it stultified itself by suspending the Standing Orders.

SIR BENJAMIN STONE (Birmingham) seconded the Motion.

SIR FREDERICK MAPPIN (York, W.R., Hallamshire), in opposing the Motion, said the House would be adopting an unusual course in referring the Bill back to the Examiners. The hon. Member who moved the Motion had made a number of statements which it was impossible for the House to consider. The House would have confidence in the Select Committee to which the Bill would be referred. That Committee would consider all those matters which the time of the House ought not to be occupied with, and he hoped the House would reject the Motion. ["Hear, hear!"]

MR. T. LOUGH (Islington, W.) said railway companies cut lines across commons whenever they could. If the hon. Member for Lowestoft pressed his Motion to a Division he should certainly support him.

*THE CHAIRMAN OF WAYS AND MEANS (Mr. J. W. LOWTHER, Cumberland, Penrith) said the matter was not quite so simple as the hon. Member for Lowestoft put it before the House. It was really a difficult matter. He seemed to assume that there was not the least doubt that the places he had mentioned were commons. He had sought such information as he could obtain on the point, and the information given to him by the promoters was that they were not commons. The Corporation of Lowestoft, who would have a large interest in the matter, denied *in toto* that there were any commonable rights over these places. The Board of Agriculture had made a Report on the Bill. They referred to other commons mentioned, but no mention of these places was made. Not satisfied with this, he communicated further with the Board of Agriculture, and had received from them a letter stating that they had no evidence whatever to show that either of these places were commons, or that commonable rights existed over them. He did not say whether such rights existed or not. That was surely a question of law which neither he nor the hon. Member could decide, and he was perfectly certain the Examiners would not be able to decide it, because they could not do so. He was satisfied that the promoters of the Bill acted in good faith. They had satisfied him that they took steps to ascertain whether the places referred to were commons. At Lowestoft they were informed by those in authority that they were spaces open to the public but belonging to the Corporation, and were public property in that sense, but there were no commonable rights over them. The hon. Member for Lowestoft had asked the House to do what had never been done before, viz., to refer the matter back to the Examiners. The Examiners were not proper persons to decide a delicate and difficult point of law such as would be involved. Supposing the Examiners decided that these lands were commons, and then reported to the House that the Standing Orders had not been complied with? The matter would have to go before the Standing Orders Committee, who would have to consider whether in this case the Standing Orders might or might not properly be dispensed with. That would be a rather roundabout way of arriving at the decision the hon. Member wished the House to arrive at. On the other hand, he ran the risk of the Examiners deciding that the lands were not a common, and that there was, therefore, no obligation on the promoters of the Bill to comply with the Standing Orders. He himself hoped that in these circumstances the House would not take the unusual step of sending the Bill back to the Examiners. The clients of the hon. Member had presented a Petition against this Bill, in which they raised this very point. That Petition would be heard before the Committee if the Bill should go before it, and he had the authority of the promoters to say that if the Commons Preservation Society would present a Petition the promoters would not object to their *locus standi*, and they would doubtless argue the point out whether these lands were commons or not. The Bill was an omnibus Bill. It did not deal with this subject only, but with the construction of a railway at King's Lynn, the creating of a dock at Yarmouth, and of other works, and if the Examiners found that the Standing Order had not been complied with, the whole Bill would be killed—which would be hard on the promoters—just because of a mistake, into which they might easily have fallen, and because they had not complied with the Standing Orders in respect of two small pieces of land.

MR. J. W. MELLOR (York, W.R., Sowerby) said he hoped the House would take the advice just given by the Chairman of Ways and Means. It was advice that any Chairman of Ways and Means would give—that this Bill should go to a Select Committee in the ordinary way. The contention of the hon. Member for Lowestoft involved a delicate and difficult question of law—if there was anything in it at all. How could the House or the Examiners of Private Bills decide such a question? The Examiners had not to decide questions of law. All they had to do was to see whether the Standing Orders had been complied with on the information before them. The natural and only tribunal to try the question involved in this Motion was the ordinary Select Committee, to whom all such Bills as this were referred. He could see no reason why this Motion should be carried.

MR. HARRY FOSTER said he would read to the right hon. Gentleman Standing Order 141. [The hon. Member then read the Order.]

MR. MELLOR thought the hon. Gentleman did not quite understand the meaning of the Standing Order. The Committee would not inquire as to whether the Standing Order had been complied with, but into the question of law as to whether these were common lands or not. He would point out also that the hon. Gentleman would gain nothing even if he carried this Motion; as, if the Bill were sent back to the Examiners, and they reported that there had been non-compliance with the Standing Orders, the promoters of the Bill would go before the Committee on Standing Orders, and, in the case of such an important Bill as this, the Standing Orders Committee would probably suspend the Standing Orders as to which non-compliance was reported. He believed his right hon. Friend was perfectly right in saying that this was the first time that a Motion such as this had been put before the House.

MR. HARRY FOSTER said that, after the statement which had been made and the advice tendered to him, he would ask the leave of the House to withdraw the Motion.

Motion, by leave, withdrawn.

QUESTIONS.

RICHMOND PARK.

MR. E. BOULNOIS (Marylebone, E.): I beg to ask the First Commissioner of Works whether he is aware that a very numerously and influentially signed Petition has been presented to the London County Council for the opening of the Clarence Lanes as an additional carriage way entrance to Richmond Park, and whether he will again urge upon the London County Council and the Wandsworth Board of Works the necessity for opening these additional approaches to Richmond Park so much needed by the inhabitants of London; and whether he will render the assistance promised in the Correspondence ordered by the House to be printed 31st August 1895?

THE FIRST COMMISSIONER OF WORKS (Mr. AKERS-DOUGLAS, Kent, St. Augustine's): I was not aware of the presentation of a Petition to the London County Council on this subject. Though I am most anxious to see this roadway made, and am quite ready to give the assistance promised in 1895, I cannot undertake, having regard to the result of previous communications, to press the matter again on the County Council and the Wandsworth Board of Works.

TRUSTEES SAVINGS BANKS (SCOTLAND).

SIR JOHN LENG (Dundee): I beg to ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer whether he is cognisant of the practice of the principal Trustees Savings Banks in Scotland in publishing lists of persons having dormant accounts and long unclaimed balances, and of the large measure of success attending such publication in securing the payment of such balances to the rightful claimants; and whether he will call for a Report on the methods adopted by the Scottish Savings Banks in this connection with a view to its being brought under the consideration of Parliament?

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Sir MICHAEL HICKS BEACH, Bristol, W.): I understand that the Trustees of the Edinburgh Savings Bank exhibit in their bank offices a list of the names of persons whose accounts have not been dealt with for ten years or more; and that the Trustees of the Dundee Savings Bank—of which the hon. Member is a manager—prepared a similar list in 1895, which has since been advertised in *The People's Journal*. There may be one or two other instances, but, so far as I am aware, very few Trustees Savings Banks have done so. Trustees of savings banks continue liable for money deposited with them without limit of time, and I am not satisfied that it would be desirable to impose on the trustees the duty of preparing and publishing such lists, which could only be done at considerable trouble and expense.

TELEGRAPH FACILITIES (DRINAGH, CO. CORK).

MR. JAMES GILHOOLY (Cork Co., W.): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury, as representing the Postmaster General, whether his attention has been directed to the great want of a telegraph station at Drinagh, county Cork; and whether he proposes to supply it?

*THE SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY (Mr. HANBURY, Preston): The Postmaster General has not received any application for the establishment of a telegraph office at Drinagh. He will, however, be happy to make inquiry on the subject, and will communicate with the hon. Member.

PRISON VISITING COMMITTEES.

MR. E. H. PICKERSGILL (Bethnal Green, S.W.): I beg to ask the Lord Advocate whether the Prison Commissioners for Scotland will give in their annual reports in future a return of the visits paid to each prison by the Visiting Committee, in a form similar to that which has for many years been given as regards Irish prisons, and which the Home Secretary has recently promised to give in future as regards English prisons?

*THE LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. GRAHAM MURRAY, Buteshire): The Prison Commissioners will be glad to furnish in their future annual reports the information desired by the hon. Member.

NEUTRALS IN TIME OF WAR.

MR. GIBSON BOWLES (Lynn Regis): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs what steps Her Majesty's Government have taken in fulfilment of their obligation under the Treaty of Washington of May 1871, relative to the *Alabama* claims, to bring to the knowledge of other Maritime Powers, and to invite those Powers to accede to, the three Rules of the Treaty which provide that a neutral Government is bound to use due diligence to prevent the fitting out within its jurisdiction of any vessel which it has reasonable ground to believe is intended to cruise against a Power with which it is at peace, and also to prevent the departure from its jurisdiction of any vessel intended to cruise, such vessel having been specially adapted in whole or in part within such jurisdiction to warlike use; secondly, not to permit or suffer either belligerent to make use of its ports or waters as the base of naval operations against the other, or for the purpose of the renewal or augmentation of military supplies or men; and, thirdly, to exercise due diligence in its own ports and waters to prevent any violation of the foregoing obligations and duties; whether, during the 25 years that have elapsed since the signature of the Treaty, any Maritime Power has acceded to these Rules; whether they are now binding on any countries except Great Britain and the United States, and as between those two countries only; and whether he will lay upon the Table any correspondence that may have passed between Her Majesty's Government and the Governments of the other Maritime Powers with reference to this matter?

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS (Mr. G. CURZON, Lancashire, Southport): In June 1871, Her Majesty's Government submitted to the Government of the United States a draft Note in which it was proposed to invite the Maritime Powers to accede to these rules. A correspondence took place which was laid before Parliament in 1874, showing the divergence between the views entertained by the two Governments as to the terms of reference to the two Powers and as to the precise meaning of the rules. The correspondence was renewed in 1876, but led to no result, and no invitation has therefore been issued to the Maritime Powers to accede to the rules in question. The 1876 correspondence was published in the United States, and I can show the hon. Member a copy if he desires to see it.

MR. GIBSON BOWLES: Does the 1876 correspondence embrace any with any other Maritime Power besides the United States?

MR. CURZON: No, Sir, this correspondence was between ourselves and the United States Government.

MR. GIBSON BOWLES: Is it the fact that these rules are not binding on any other country except Great Britain and the United States, and as between those two countries only?

MR. CURZON: Yes, Sir, that is so.

STATUTES (QUEEN'S PRINTERS).

SIR STAFFORD NORTHCOTE, (Exeter): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury if he is aware that the Queen's Printers are unable to supply printed copies of certain Acts of Parliament of last century's date; and that, consequently, persons requiring copies of such Acts are compelled either to procure manuscript copies, or to purchase them from a firm of law booksellers, in either case at considerable expense; and whether the Queen's Printers are required by any contract to supply, on demand, copies of all Acts of Parliament; and, if not, if he will consider the propriety of securing, by a clause in any future contract, that copies of all Statutes shall be obtainable at a fixed and reasonable price.

*__MR. HANBURY__: Since 1887 the Controller of the Stationery Office has been the Queen's Printer for Acts of Parliament, Messrs. Eyre and Spottiswoode, who were the printers up to 1887, retained the entire stock of old Acts, and are bound by contract to supply them on the old terms until that stock is exhausted. If any Public and General Act more than ten years old has been sold out, the Controller of the Stationery Office reprints it as soon as a demand for it is received, and sells at the cheap rate at which other Acts printed by the Government are now sold.

TRUNK TELEPHONE LINE.

MR. J. W. CROMBIE (Kincardineshire): On behalf of the hon. Member for East Aberdeen (Mr. T. R. BUCHANAN), I beg to ask the rsght hon. Gentleman the Secretary to the Treasury, as representing the Postmaster General, whether it is the intention of the Post Office that, although the trunk telephone line from Aberdeen to Elgin is to be laid through the coast towns on the Aberdeenshire and Banffshire coasts, there shall be no facilities for telephone communication between these towns?

*__MR. HANBURY__: That is not the intention. The proposed line will afford trunk telephone facilities at Peterhead, Banff, Elgin, and Inverness. Fraserburgh being in the Peterhead area, it will rest with the National Telephone Company to connect that town with the trunk centre at Peterhead. Similarly it will rest with the Company to connect the Macduff and Lossiemouth Telephone Exchanges with the Banff and Elgin trunk centres respectively. The Postmaster General is informed that it is the intention of the Company to make these connections.

BANKRUPTCY COURT (IRELAND).

MR. PATRICK O'BRIEN, (Kilkenny): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether the Judges of the Court of Bankruptcy in Ireland in 1896 submitted to the Lord Chancellor for his approval an Order enabling the official assignees of the Court of Bankruptcy to be appointed as official assignees and receivers and to other appointments; and, if so, what are these other appointments. Has any correspondence passed between the official assignees of the Court of Bankruptcy and the Judges of that Court, and between them and the Lord Chancellor, and between the Lord Chancellor and the Judges of the Court of Bankruptcy, or any other and what other Judges, or between the officials of the Court of Bankruptcy upon the subject; have any communications passed between the Lord Chancellor and the

Chambers of Commerce; and, if so, what was the nature of such communications; and what were the words of the proposed Order as first submitted by the Judges of the Court of Bankruptcy to the Lord Chancellor?

THE CHIEF SECRETARY FOR IRELAND (Mr. GERALD BALFOUR, Leeds, Central): The Judges of the Court of Bankruptcy were some time ago in communication with the Lord Chancellor on the subject of the proposed Order, but it would not be in accordance with practice to publish such communications. Communications on the subject of the proposed Order have also been addressed to the Lord Chancellor by Chambers of Commerce and other public bodies, but nothing further has been done by the Lord Chancellor and the Judges in respect of the making of the Order. The proposed Order, and the public correspondence in reference to it, have all been published in the Press, and are known to every one who is interested in the matter.

INDUSTRIAL SCHOOL CONTRACTS (IRELAND).

MR. PATRICK O'BRIEN: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary for Ireland whether governors (other than religious orders) of industrial schools in Ireland are required by law to advertise for tenders before entering into contracts for the supply of all goods required for those institutions; how many industrial schools are under lay managers in Ireland; where are they situate; and do the managers of those schools advertise for tenders; and is the Press allowed to be present when the contracts are under discussion; if not, will he see that in the interest of the ratepayers all contracts are advertised, and that the Press shall be free to report the proceedings of all meetings, and especially when contracts are under discussion?

MR. GERALD BALFOUR: No distinction is drawn in the general regulations relating to industrial schools in Ireland between schools under lay and clerical management, respectively. There are nine Protestant and two Roman Catholic schools under lay management, and the remaining sixty schools are, I believe, under the management of Roman Catholic religious orders. The hon. Member will find further particulars as to the location of these schools in the annual report of the Inspector presented to Parliament. It has not been the practice, so far as I am aware, to admit the Press to be present at the proceedings of the managers of such schools, and I am not aware of any legal provision requiring either that the deliberations of the managers should be open to the Press, or that tenders for supplies shall be invited by public advertisement.

HORSE-BREEDING (IRELAND).

COLONEL McCALMONT (Antrim, E.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether the Congested Districts Board have recently acquired a number of thoroughbred and hackney mares, which are located at the Chantilly Stud Farm, near Dublin; with what object are they there; and, what benefit do the inhabitants of the congested districts derive from them?

MR. GERALD BALFOUR: The Congested Districts Board have not recently acquired any hackney mares, but they have purchased two thoroughbred mares, which are placed at the Chantilly Stud Farm for breeding purposes. The intention is to use their offspring in order to improve the breed of horses in congested districts.

LIBERIA (BRITISH TRADE).

SIR GEORGE BADEN-POWELL (Liverpool, Kirkdale): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether any definite agreement has been come to with the Government of the Republic of Liberia as to any increase in the number of ports of entry and in facilities for British trade; and what arrangement has been come to in regard to the recent cases of firing on British vessels by the Liberian gunboat?

MR. CURZON: The Governor of Sierra Leone, who is also Her Majesty's Consul for Liberia, visited Monrovia recently, and discussed the question of increased trading facilities with the Republic. Steps have since been taken with regard to the issue of licences to trade with ports of non-entry. He also received assurances that British vessels should not be fired upon, and orders have been issued by the Liberian Government to that effect.

SOLENT (ARTILLERY FIRING).

SIR GEORGE BADEN-POWELL: I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade whether the Report of the Inquiry respecting the proposed Artillery by-laws for Spithead and the Solent has yet been sent in and considered; and, whether a copy thereof can be laid upon the Table before any further decision is arrived at by the Government?

THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF TRADE (Mr. RITCHIE, Croydon): Yes, Sir, the report of the Inquiry held by Sir George Nares as regards the proposed Artillery by-laws for Spithead and the Solent has been received. A copy of it was sent to the War Office for their consideration, and the Board of Trade have not at present approved of the by-laws. The Report is of a confidential nature, and, as at present advised, I do not think that a copy can be properly laid on the Table.

PETTY SESSIONS COURTS (IRELAND).

MR. MACALEESE (Monaghan, N.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland if he will introduce a Bill during the present Session of Parliament to prevent Grand Juries in Ireland from allowing Petty Sessions Courts to be used as Orange Lodges?

MR. GERALD BALFOUR: No, Sir, it will be time enough to think of such a Measure when any reason for it has been shown.

JURYMEN'S EXPENSES (IRELAND).

MR. MACALEESE: I beg to ask the Attorney General for Ireland if he could undertake to bring about such a change in the law as would provide that the hotel expenses and cost of travelling of common jurors, in attendance at Assizes and Quarter Sessions Courts in Ireland, should be borne by the Imperial Exchequer?

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. J. ATKINSON, Londonderry, N.): The question of the payment of Jurors is one which must, I think, be dealt with in a general Measure applicable to the three Kingdoms, if dealt with at all. I cannot, therefore, give the undertaking asked for by the hon. Member.

MAGISTRATES (IRELAND).

MR. MACALEESE: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland (1) has any magistrate, or have any magistrates, been relieved of the Commission of the Peace within recent years in Ireland for adjudicating outside certain prescribed areas in the counties for which they held their appointment; (2) what were the names of such magistrates and for what counties did they hold their Commissions; and (3) will he have the regulation rescinded which prevents certain magistrates from exercising jurisdiction except in prescribed areas of the counties for which they hold their Commissions?

MR. GERALD BALFOUR: No public advantage would be gained by giving the information indicated in the first two paragraphs of this Question, and as to the third paragraph, the reply is in the negative.

EDUCATIONAL ENDOWMENTS (IRELAND).

COLONEL SAUNDERSON (Armagh, N.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether his attention has been called to the great dissatisfaction existing amongst the Protestant population in Ireland in consequence of the acceptance by the Government of the Bill of the hon. Member for Louth, affecting existing Educational Endowments; and, what course the Government propose to take regarding the Bill?

MR. E. CARSON (Dublin University): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether his attention has been called to the Resolution passed by the Archbishops and Bishops of the Church of Ireland, deprecating the changes proposed in the law regulating the Educational Endowment Commission; and, what steps the Government propose to take in relation to such proposed changes?

MR. GERALD BALFOUR: I am aware that much dissatisfaction has been excited among Protestants in Ireland in connection with the Bill of the hon. Member for North Louth—a feeling which I cannot help thinking is, for the most part, due to a misconception of the views of the Government upon the subject. While not opposing the Second

Reading of the Bill, I indicated that it could not be allowed to pass without extensive alterations. The question whether it is possible to effect the changes which we consider necessary by means of Amendments to the Bill appears doubtful, and is now under consideration. Under these circumstances, perhaps, my hon. and gallant Friend will postpone the last part of his question, relating to the course the Government propose to take, for a few days.

EVICTED FARM (WESTPORT).

Colonel **SAUNDERSON**: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that a man, named Scanlon, was fired at twice at Westport on the 21st inst., for taking an evicted farm; and that a meeting was held recently in the neighbourhood, at which Mr. W. O'Brien held up land grabbers to public odium; and what steps the Government are taking to prevent such teaching bearing further fruit?

Mr. **MICHAEL DAVITT** (Mayo, S.): I would ask the right hon. Gentleman before he answers that Question whether it is the fact that the village where the firing is alleged to have taken place is 40 miles distant from the place Mr. William O'Brien made his speech at?

Mr. **GERALD BALFOUR**: I do not think this Question refers to that village at all. Two shots were fired at a distance of about 80 yards from the house of Peter Scahill, to whom this Question presumably refers, on the night of the 14th inst. There is no evidence, however, to show that they were fired at Scahill. Scahill is in occupation of an evicted farm in the district of Westport and county of Mayo. A meeting was held at Cahir, 40 miles away, in the same county, some days previously, at which Mr. O'Brien used language of the nature indicated. The police have taken, and will continue to take, whatever steps seem necessary to protect Scahill and other persons who, in the exercise of their legal rights, take and occupy farms from which the former tenants have been evicted.

SLAVERY IN ZANZIBAR.

Mr. **THOMAS BAYLEY** (Derbyshire, Chesterfield): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs when he will lay upon the Table the correspondence giving Mr. Hardinge the instructions of the Government in fulfilment of their undertaking to abolish the legal status of slavery in the island of Zanzibar?

Mr. **CURZON**: The instructions will be laid in due course, but I cannot at the present moment name a date.

OYSTER CULTURE.

Mr. **HENNIKER HEATON** (Canterbury): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade whether he is aware that, owing to the publication by the Local Government Board of a Report on Cholera, and of another Report on Oyster Culture in Relation to Disease, public confidence in the wholesomeness of oysters has been so much impaired that the annual consumption of oysters has fallen off to the extent of three-fourths, and a large number of the fishing poulalation have been reduced to distress; whether he has observed that the reports alluded to condemn only a few small oyster layings round the coasts of England, while many of the chief layings, including the whole of those on the coast of Kent, were declared free from contamination; whether he is aware that the Kentish layings thus pronounced free from disease are more extensive than all those in the rest of the Kingdom put together; and whether he is aware that they have suffered from the lack of demand equally with the polluted layings; whether, with a view to restore public confidence in a valuable article of diet and assist the fishing population, he will recommend the appointment of inspectors of layings, and also of all shops and stalls for the sale of oysters, authorised to enforce such conditions of sanitation as may effectually safeguard the public against disease; whether he is aware that foreign oysters are frequently introduced into this country from polluted layings, and that the only instance of enteric fever in an epidemic form arising in England from oysters was traced to the eating of Dutch oysters; and whether he will therefore recommend that it shall be made a penal offence to sell oysters brought from foreign layings without declaring their origin at the time of sale and without plainly marking such origin?

MR. RITCHIE: I have little doubt that the reports referred to have, to some extent, impaired the confidence of the public in the wholesomeness of oysters, but I venture to think that my hon. Friend overestimates the decrease in their consumption. I am aware that, whilst only a certain number of beds are condemned, others have suffered from the reduction in demand. The trade has brought the matter to the notice of my right hon. colleague the President of the Local Government Board, whose province it is to deal with questions affecting the public health; but if it should be found that the Board of Trade can take any useful action in the matter, I shall be ready to give careful consideration to any proposals which may be laid before me. As at present advised I do not think that the marking of foreign oysters —[*laughter*]—would be either feasible or an efficient remedy.

AGRICULTURAL IMPROVEMENTS (IRELAND).

MR. GILHOOLY: I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury whether any alteration has taken place since the passing of the Land Law (Ireland) Act, 1881, with regard to advances for works of agricultural improvement, pursuant to section 31; whether a tenant farmer, whose poor law valuation is £7, can now obtain a loan; whether every tenant farmer, whose poor law valuation is £7 and upwards, having sufficient security to offer, can obtain an advance by way of loan to the amount of five times his poor law valuation, and if there has been a new departure, what reason can he assign for it?

*MR. HANBURY: Originally the minimum loan was £100 (reduced to £50 in 1883), and the maximum equal to five times the poor law valuation. Since 1892 the minimum has been reduced to £35, and the maximum fixed at three times the poor law valuation or judicial rent, if no collateral security is given, or five times if collateral security is forthcoming. The alteration was shown, by the experience of the first decade during which the Act was in operation, to be necessary in order to avoid undue risk to the Exchequer. It follows that a tenant whose valuation is £7 only cannot obtain a loan on any terms for less than £35. If he can give collateral security he may obtain a loan for £35, which is five times his valuation or judicial rent. The hon. Member will find information on the point on pages 16 and 17 of the Board of Works report for the year 1894-95.

MR. GILHOOLY said he would call attention to the subject on the Estimates.

METROPOLITAN POLICE CLOTHING.

SIR LEWIS McIVER (Edinburgh, W.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, with reference to favourable replies given by him to similar questions last Session, whether he has been able to make arrangements for an issue of light clothing to the Metropolitan Police for use in the summer months?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE HOME DEPARTMENT (Sir MATTHEW WHITE RIDLEY, Lancashire, Blackpool): Yes, Sir, such arrangements have been made.

LICENSING SESSIONS (BALLYBOT).

MR. PATRICK O'BRIEN: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that County Court Judge Kisby threatened to report Mr. William Adams, J.P., to the Lord Chancellor for voting at the Licensing Sessions at Ballybot in October last; whether Mr. Adams was within his right in voting at those Sessions; and whether Judge Kisby was justified in publicly reprimanding him?

MR. GERALD BALFOUR: Mr. Adams is a Justice of the Peace residing at Portadown, and, so far as Judge Kisby was aware, had not been in the habit of attending Ballybot Sessions. He appeared, however, at these Sessions on the 6th October last, and Judge Kisby animadverted on the growing habit of Justices going to Licensing Sessions outside the division in which their Petty Sessions districts are situated, for the purpose of voting in licensing cases. The learned Judge was clearly within his rights in commenting upon a practice which is evidently undesirable, and the matter is now under the consideration of the Lord Chancellor.

ORDNANCE STORE DEPARTMENT.

*SIR CHARLES DILKE (Gloucester, Forest of Dean): I beg to ask the Financial Secretary to the War Office what number of men are employed in the Ordnance Store Department who receive less than 20s. a week; and, how many men there are in the Ordnance Factories who receive less than 24s. a week?

*THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR WAR (Mr. BRODRICK, Surrey, Guildford): The number of men at present employed in the Army Ordnance Department who receive less than 20s. a week is 1,291. In the Ordnance factories those who receive less than 24s. a week number 1,393. Of these 229 have also pensions; and a large number are young men or men of short service in the factories.

MARINE INSURANCE POLICIES (STAMP DUTY.)

SIR GEORGE BADEN-POWELL: I beg to ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer (1) whether he has received several memorials from commercial and underwriting associations, pointing out the burdensome character of the existing rate of stamp duties on marine insurance policies; (2) whether the present minimum rate of duty on a marine policy is 3d. per cent. while the duty on any other form of policies on property is 1d. per policy, irrespective of the amount insured; and (3) whether action can be taken towards assimilating the duty on marine policies to that of fire policies to the great relief of the British commercial community?

*THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER: The answer to the first question is, Yes. The present minimum rate of duty on a marine policy is one penny on all policies where the premium amounts to 2s. 6d. or less per cent. of the sum insured. The question of reducing the duty above this point is under my consideration, but the suggestion of the hon. Member would involve a considerable sacrifice of revenue, and I can make no promise with regard to it.

LEE-METFORD RIFLE (MANCHESTER VOLUNTEERS).

SIR WILLIAM HOULDSWORTH (Manchester, N.W.): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for War when the Lee-Metford rifle will be received by the Manchester Volunteers?

*MR. BRODRICK: The Manchester Volunteers will be supplied with the Lee-Metford rifle during the next financial year, and as soon as possible after the 1st November next.

VACCINATION ACT (IRELAND).

MR. J. C. FLYNN (Cork, N.): On behalf of the hon. Member for Galway (Mr. J. PINKERTON), I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland if the Local Government Board (Ireland) can compel Poor Law Guardians to put into practice the compulsory clause of the Vaccination Act?

MR. GERALD BALFOUR: The Local Government Board have power to pass any regulations they think fit to prevent the spread of dangerous infectious diseases, such as small-pox, and thus to compel compliance with the Vaccination laws. No Boards of Guardians in Ireland have, I may add, refused to do their duty in this respect.

IRISH MAILS.

MR. PATRICK O'BRIEN: I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury, as representing the Postmaster General, whether there is a Treasury Minute, bearing the date 19th October 1855, referring to the conveyance of passengers by Irish mail trains between London and Holyhead; and whether he has any objection to give the terms of the Minute or lay it upon the Table of the House?

*MR. HANBURY: Yes, Sir, there is such a Treasury Minute. It deals with a Private Act of 1855 which was passed for the express purpose of improving the passenger as well as the postal communication between England and Ireland, and it therefore stands on a different footing from an ordinary Treasury Minute dealing with postal communications only. It has already been laid before Parliament and was printed as House of Commons Paper No. 27 of the year 1856.

VOLUNTARY SCHOOL BILLS.

MR. J. BRIGG (York, W. R., Keighley): I beg to ask the Vice President of the Committee of Council on Education, if, in the definitions of the Voluntary School, the expression "Voluntary School" may be taken to include the evening classes as well as the day classes which exist in public elementary day schools?

THE VICE PRESIDENT OF THE COUNCIL (Sir JOHN GORST, Cambridge University): A Voluntary School is defined to be a day school. A day school would not mean an evening class. [*Laughter.*]

LETTERS FOR SIBERIA.

MR. J. COLVILLE (Lanark, N.E.): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury, as representing the Postmaster General, whether he is aware that many letters and papers dispatched from this country to Siberia never reach their destination; and if so, whether he can give any explanation regarding this, or hold out any prospect of improvement in this direction for the future?

MR. HANBURY: The Postmaster General is not aware of the fact alleged in the Question, but, if the hon. Member will send to the Post Office particulars of any cases which may have occurred, a communication on the subject will be addressed to the Russian Post Office.

HIGH SHERIFF (CARRICKFERGUS).

MR. D. KILBRIDE (Galway, N.): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that Captain Higginson, who was appointed for 1897 high sheriff for the county of the town of Carrickfergus, refuses to act; whether any, and if so, what proceedings have been instituted by the Attorney General in the matter; under what authority can a citizen in Ireland be compelled to accept an office which frequently involves considerable loss of time and money; and if he will give the name and address of the person now discharging the duties belonging to the office of high sheriff in Carrickfergus?

MR. GERALD BALFOUR: Captain Higginson has refused to serve. Proceedings by criminal information have been instituted against him at the suit of the Attorney General. It has long been established that any person who, having been appointed Sheriff, refuses to serve, is guilty of a misdemeanour. A gentleman named Hutchinson was proceeded against similarly for a like refusal in the year 1893 by the late Government. The Sheriff of last year, Mr. Wilson, is bound to discharge the duties of the office till his successor has entered upon his duties.

LAND COMMISSION (IRELAND).

MR. KILBRIDE: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether the Return granted to the hon. Member for South Down in connection with the Land Commissioners has been prepared, and whether he can say when it will be circulated?

MR. GERALD BALFOUR: Every effort is being made to complete the preparation of the Return referred to without unnecessary delay, and it will be laid on the Table as soon as I receive it.

TREASON FELONY PRISONERS.

MR. M. DAVITT: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether he has received a petition signed by 9,000 citizens of Johannesburg, asking for the release of the few remaining Irish political prisoners; and if, in obedience to the appeal made by so large a number in that city, he can see his way to recommend the liberation of these men during this jubilee year of Her Majesty's reign?

SIR MATTHEW WHITE RIDLEY: I have received a petition to the effect mentioned, signed by a large number of residents in Johannesburg and the South African Republic generally, but I am afraid my answer must be that I have nothing to add to my recent statements in the House on this subject.

INDIAN MINTS.

SIR HENRY MEYSEY-THOMPSON (Stafford, Handsworth): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for India whether any coins have been struck at the Indian Mints either for the Government or anyone else since the date when the privilege of getting rupees coined was withdrawn from the public?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR INDIA (Lord GEORGE HAMILTON, Middlesex, Ealing): The only coins which have been struck at the Indian Mints since June 1893 (with the exception of the coinage of silver in transit at that time) are (1) silver coins representing fractions of the rupee, to the value of Rx.504,624; (2) copper coins for the Indian Government, for native States, for the British East Africa Company, and for the Straits and Ceylon Governments; and (3) British dollars, for Eastern trade, at the request of the Colonial Office.

BRISLEY (NORFOLK) PARISH COUNCIL.

Mr. FREDERICK WILSON (Norfolk Mid): I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board whether it is proposed to hold an official inquiry in respect to the application of the Brisley (Norfolk) Parish Council for a loan of £50 for a new burial ground, notwithstanding that the Norfolk County Council has already held an inquiry in the village and consented to the loan, while the parish meeting has unanimously approved the scheme, and the owners and occupiers within 100 yards of the proposed site have given their written consents; whether the cost of a further inquiry will absorb a large proportion of the £50 to be borrowed; and, whether, under these circumstances, the cost of further investigation will be borne by the parish?

The PRESIDENT of the LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (Mr. Henry Chaplin, Lincolnshire, Sleaford): It is the practice of the Local Government Board in the case of applications for sanction to loans for new burial grounds to direct an inquiry by one of their inspectors, as it is necessary that the proposal should be considered from a sanitary point of view, and especially with reference to the possible effect as regards adjacent sources of water supply of the use of the site for burial purposes. On the latter ground there appears to be exceptional reasons for holding the inquiry, although the amount proposed to be borrowed is but small. The Board in such cases arrange that the inquiry shall be held when an inspector can conveniently visit the place in connection with the holding of other inquiries, so that the expense of a separate journey from London may be avoided.

LOAN FUND SOCIETIES (IRELAND).

Mr. JOHN DILLON (Mayo, E.): On behalf of the hon. Member for South Donegal (Mr. J. Swift MacNeill), I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether he will make further inquiries into the system of converting renewals into new loans which prevails in the Ballyshannon (County Donegal) Loan Fund Society's office; whether, notwithstanding the information supplied by the clerk at Ballyshannon to the Loan Fund Board, it is the custom for a police pensioner, who is or was a committee man or trustee of the said society, to attend and lend the money to the borrower as he enters the office, and take it from him as he emerges therefrom; whether, in view of the illegalities practised by such societies, such a state of affairs will be allowed to continue; and, whether he will order a further inquiry on oath into the working of the Ballyshannon Loan Fund Society?

Mr. GERALD BALFOUR: I have twice endeavoured to obtain from the clerk of the Ballyshannon Loan Fund Society a satisfactory explanation of the alleged practices complained of in this Question, but without success. The only positive statement I can gather from his reports is that no loans have been renewed by the society since the 25th July last. The whole matter is now, however, receiving the consideration of the Loan Fund Board, who propose to direct their inspector to proceed forthwith to Ballyshannon and inquire into the irregularities referred to.

TRUCK ACT (FINES).

Mr. S. WOODS (Essex, Walthamstow): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether he is aware that prior to the passing of the Truck Act last year, a workman could recover from an employer fines deducted from wages, and whether the recovery of fines of a similar character under the Act of 1896, after such fines have been posted up, is impossible; whether he is aware that while the Act of 1896 provides for the punishment of employers who make illegal fines, and also compels the production of copies of contracts in respect to fines in Clause 6 of the Act, there is no provision for jurisdiction on railways by inspectors, the power being given only to inspectors of factories and mines; and, whether, under these circumstances, he will make adequate provision for the proper protection of railway employees?

Sir MATTHEW WHITE RIDLEY: The state of the law prior to the passing of the Truck Act was, so far as I was able to ascertain, the exact contrary of that suggested in the Question. On coming to the Home Office I consulted the highest legal authorities on the point, and was advised by them that a deduction from wages in respect of fines was not only, as had been decided by a series of cases in the Courts ranging over 30 years, not an offence against the Truck Acts, but was not even recoverable by the workman in the civil Courts. The law was fully explained in the memorandum on the subject which I laid upon the Table of the House last year, and to which I would refer the hon. Member. The statements in that memorandum were not controverted while the present Act was under discussion, or, as far as I am aware, since. Under the present Act it is now possible within six months to recover by civil proceedings so much of any fine as the Court may hold to be unreasonable. I am quite aware that the jurisdiction of the inspectors of factories and mines does not extend to railways or to many other employments. I have now under my consideration the lists of fines proposed by the companies.

BRITISH TROOPS IN INDIA (HEALTH).

MR. ROBERT CAMERON (Durham, Houghton-le-Spring): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for India if he will state what are the terms of the reference to the Departmental Committee now sitting on the subject of venereal disease among British troops in India; whether the evidence taken by the Committee will be circulated as soon as complete; and, whether the House will be afforded an opportunity of discussing the question before any action is taken by the Imperial or the Indian Governments?

LORD GEORGE HAMILTON: The terms of reference were as follows:—

> "To examine the official returns of venereal disease among British troops stationed in India, and to report what changes, if any, have taken place during recent years in the prevalence of such disease and in its character and intensity; also, to obtain and report any information which may be available with regard to the presence of venereal disease and its character and intensity among foreign armies."

The report is now under my consideration, and will be published. The evidence on which it is founded being almost entirely documentary, has not been separately recorded, but is embodied or referred to in the Report. I am at present unable to say what course may be taken by Her Majesty's Government; but, undoubtedly, the House will have an opportunity of discussing any decision we may arrive at.

BRITISH UITLANDER POPULATION, TRANSVAAL.

SIR ELLIS ASHMEAD-BARTLETT (Sheffield, Ecclesall): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies whether the Transvaal Volksraad have passed a Law making the High Court of the Transvaal subject to resolutions of the Volksraad, and placing the Judges under the Boer Executive; and, if so, what steps Her Majesty's Government propose to take to secure impartial justice and the protection of Law for the British Uitlander population?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES (Mr. J. CHAMBERLAIN, Birmingham, W.): I understand that such a Law as the hon. Member describes has been introduced into the Volksraad, but I have no information that it has been passed. In any event, the protection of British subjects in the South African Republic is secured by the Convention, which Her Majesty's Government have declared their intention to maintain in its integrity.

ARMENIA.

MR. JAMES BRYCE (Aberdeen, S.): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether the attention of Her Majesty's Government has been called to a statement reported to have been made by the French Minister for Foreign Affairs in the French Chamber on 22nd February, that in November 1895 when the Powers were deliberating on the course to be pursued towards the Sultan with reference to the massacres in Armenia, England pronounced for pacific means; whether Her Majesty's Government accept that statement as correct; and whether if it is correct, he will inform the House in what Dispatch laid before Parliament such a decision of Her Majesty's Government is stated or referred to?

*MR. CURZON: M. Hanotaux's actual words were that "England did not think fit to have recourse to other than pacific measures." This statement, which appears to be a general version on the part of the French Minister for Foreign Affairs of the attitude of Her Majesty's Government in the autumn of 1895, is not contained in any Dispatch.

HOLLOWAY PRISON (SELINA, LADY SCOTT).

MR. PICKERSGILL: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether he has given permission to Dr. Bond, in conjunction with the medical officer of Holloway Prison, to examine a prisoner named Selina, Lady Scott, with a view to reporting to him upon the state of Lady Scott's health; and, if so, upon what grounds has this permission been given?

SIR MATTHEW WHITE RIDLEY: It is the case that Lady Scott has been seen by Dr. Bond. As I have stated in the House on several occasions, the visiting committee have very large powers of granting visits in the case of first-class misdemeanants; and when the application that Dr. Bond might visit Lady Scott was received by the Prison Commissioners, it was referred by them to the committee, who allowed the visit. I am of opinion, however, that professional visits of this nature do not come within the rules, and I have given directions that all such applications in future shall be referred to me for my decision.

MISSION TO KING MENELIK.

MR. DILLON: I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether the Government have decided to send a Special Mission to King Menelik; and, if so, what are the objects of this mission?

*MR. CURZON: The mission is sent to assure King Menelik of our friendly intentions, to endeavour to promote amicable political and commercial relations, and to settle certain questions which have arisen between the British authorities in the Somali Coast Protectorate and the Abyssinian Governor of Harrar.

MR. J. M. MACLEAN (Cardiff): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs if Her Majesty's Government will attach a representative of British commercial interests to the political and military mission they are sending to the court of King Menelik?

*MR. CURZON: It will not be possible on this occasion to send any special representative of British commercial interests with the mission. But Mr. Rodd will receive instructions to pay particular attention to those interests in his communications with the Abyssinian Court.

SALISBURY PLAIN.

MR. CHAS. COLSTON (Gloucester, Thornbury): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury what steps the Government propose to take in connection with the purchase of land on Salisbury Plain for Military purposes, for the protection of ancient monuments?

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR, Manchester, E.): If there are monuments of interest on the land proposed to be bought they will be carefully preserved by the Government.

AGRICULTURAL HOLDINGS.

MR. G. LAMBERT (Devon, South Molton): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury if he can say when a Bill will be introduced by the Government to amend the Law relating to agricultural holdings?

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY: I am afraid that in the present condition of public business I could give no answer to the hon. Gentleman on the point.

CRETE.

MR. F. A. CHANNING (Northampton, E.): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether it is true, as stated in the Dispatch of Colonel Vassos, that Turkish troops sallied from Canea to attack the advanced positions of the insurgents or to defend positions held by Turks; and, whether this was done by the orders or with the approval of the representatives of the Powers at Canea?

MR. F. S. STEVENSON (Suffolk, Eye) also asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, in view of the fact that the Powers made arrangements to prevent an attack upon Canea, what steps they took to prevent a sally of the Turkish troops from that town for the purpose of attacking the Cretan position?

*MR. CURZON: According to our information, no sally from the town took place.

MR. STEVENSON asked the Under Secretary for Foreign Affairs who gave the signal for the bombardment of the Cretan position by the combined fleet of the Powers.

*MR. CURZON: I answered this Question on Tuesday.

Mr. STEVENSON: The right hon. Gentleman was then unable to state who gave the signal. He said he had no information.

*Mr. CURZON: I beg pardon. I said I believed the signal was always given by the senior Naval officer, who in this case was the Italian Admiral.

General Sir HENRY HAVELOCK-ALLAN (Durham, S.E.): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether Her Majesty's Government, with a view to the earlier cessation of hostilities in Crete, will give orders to the British Fleet pending reply from the Five Powers to the Circular Note addressed to them by Lord Salisbury, to prevent the landing in Crete of provisions for the Greek forces and the Cretan insurgents, which provisions, equally with munitions of war, cannot fail to prolong the duration of the struggle?

*Mr. CURZON: The British Admiral having instructions to act in concert with the other Naval commanders, no separate orders can be sent to him to act in independence of his colleagues.

Mr. HERBERT ROBERTS (Denbighshire, W.): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether the Government have received any confirmation of the telegram that owing to the encouraging effect of the bombardment of the Cretan position by the allied squadron on Sunday last, the Turkish cannon were firing upon the Christians both on the Suda and on the Galata side of Akrotiri; whether it is a fact thas the outposts of the Greek army in camp at Platania were also fired upon repeatedly by the Turks, and that they (the Greeks) did not return the fire; and whether he will state whether the instructions issued to the British Admiral in command orders the prevention by bombardment of the advance of Cretan Christians, but allow the Turkish troops and Mohammedan irregulars to continue without interference warlike operations against the Cretan insurgents and the Greek army.

Mr. H. J. WILSON (York, W.R., Holmfirth): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether the attention of Her Majesty's Government has been called to the statements to the effect that the encouraging effect of Sunday's event upon the Turks is already visible, and that both on the Suda Bay side and on the Galata side of Akrotiri the Turkish cannon have been busily firing upon the Christians, who had not replied, fearing lest they should be shelled by the foreign warships; and whether Her Majesty's Government will forthwith send orders to the Consul General and the Naval officers that the Turkish officers must be warned to desist from these operations, and that the English fleet will take steps to prevent by force any further attack by Turks upon Christian positions?

Mr. DILLON: I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether the Turkish cannon, both on the Suda and Galata side of Akrotiri, have been busily firing on the Christians since Sunday, the Christians not replying fearing lest they should be shelled by the Foreign war ships?

*Mr. CURZON: The only information that we possess with reference to the points raised in these three Questions is to the effect that throughout Monday desultory firing continued to the south of the town, and that yesterday fighting was going on on both sides of Suda Bay. It is clear that this information applies to both combatants.

Mr. H. J. WILSON: The right hon. Gentleman has not replied to the latter part of my Question.

*Mr. CURZON: Well, Sir, I have already replied to it in answer to another Question. So far as we know, these operations have not taken place.

Mr. CHANNING: I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether representations have been made by the Greek Minister in this country protesting against the action of the fleet in shelling the Cretan positions, and conveying the substance of the resolution adopted by the Greek Chamber to the effect that a protest be sent to the Powers concerned against the bombarding of Christians as an act unparalleled in the history of the world; and what reply has been given to the Greek Minister?

*Mr. CURZON: No such communication has been received.

Mr. D. F. GODDARD (Ipswich): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether his attention has been called to the statement that the Turks opened a brisk fire on the Cretans while they were picking up their dead and wounded; and what steps have been taken to prevent a recurrence of such a practice?

MR. DILLON: I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether the statement is true that, immediately after the British ships had ceased firing on the Cretans, and as the Cretans were picking up their dead and wounded, the Turks at the nearest outposts opened a brisk fire, to which the Cretans, disheartened by the fire of the warships, did not reply?

*MR. CURZON: So far as our information goes the statement is incorrect. No wounded were seen.

MR. DILLON: The question is whether, after the British ships ceased firing, the Turkish troops opened fire on the Greeks while they were carrying away their wounded?

*MR. CURZON: As I have already said, we have received no information that there were any wounded. ["Hear, hear," *and laughter.*]

MR. DILLON: Is it not a fact that the admirals offered to send on shore medical officers to attend the wounded? [*Cheers.*]

*MR. CURZON: It is perfectly true, but the Greek commander would not let them go. [*Cheers.*]

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY: Because there were no wounded.

SIR ELLIS ASHMEAD-BARTLETT: I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether Her Majesty's Government and the Governments of the other Great Powers have decided to send the armed European force of 300 men necessary, in the opinion of the Consuls of Italy, Russia, and England, to save from massacre 3,000 Mussulmans now beleaguered at Kaudamos and Selinos?

*MR. CURZON: No reply has yet been received to a telegram of inquiry which was addressed to the British admiral on the subject, but we know that on the 23rd the admirals were concerting measures for the relief of the beleaguered districts.

MR. H. LABOUCHERE (Northampton): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (1) whether he can inform the House what is the distance between Canea and the Cretan village bombarded by the fleets of the Great Powers; (2) whether any Turkish vessel joined in that bombardment; (3) whether any Turkish vessel fired on the insurgents before or after that bombardment; and (4) whether any Turkish forces have moved from the towns occupied by the Great Powers in Crete since that occupation, and have attacked outside these towns the Cretan forces?

*MR. CURZON: So far as we can gather, the position taken up by the insurgents on the heights commanding the town must have been between one and two miles from the walls of the latter. We have no reason to believe that the statements in paragraphs 2 and 3 are correct. In answer to paragraph 4, no troops, as I have previously said, advanced from the town, nor have the Turks advanced beyond their former outposts.

MR. CHANNING: Is the right hon. Gentleman in a position to state whether the insurgents have artillery which can command the town?

*MR. CURZON: I think so. It was from the fear that they were going to plant that artillery in a position to command the town that the action of the fleets took place. [*Cheers.*]

MR. BRYCE: I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether Turkish transports, carrying Turkish troops from one part of the coast of Crete to another, have been escorted by British ships of war?

*MR. CURZON: We have no information to that effect.

MR. BRYCE: As I put this Question down last Tuesday—[*cheers*]—and as we have still received no information, I give notice that I shall repeat the Question. [*Cheers.*]

MR. FLYNN: I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether, on Monday and Tuesday last, the Turkish cannon on the Suda and Galata side of Akrotiri fired upon the Christian troops, who did not reply for fear of being shelled by the warships of the Powers; and whether a protest has been sent by the Cretan Christian troops to the Foreign admirals complaining of such action?

MR. DILLON: I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether a formal protest has been received by the Foreign admirals from the insurgents; and whether, in that protest, the insurgents state that they are afraid to reply to the Turkish fire for fear of being annihilated by the Christian guns, and that on Sunday the Turks were aggressors in firing.

*Mr. CURZON: We have not yet received a reply to inquiries that have been made on the first point. The second question is identical with No. 55 standing in the name of the hon. Member for East Mayo. We know nothing of any such protest.

Mr. FLYNN: I shall put the Question again To-morrow.

Mr. DILLON: I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether on Sunday several shells were thrown into the gardens of the Convent of the Prophet Elias, and three women, of whom one was a nun, were wounded; and whether the Government can yet state how many were killed and wounded by the fire of the ships?

*Mr. CURZON: The only information we have on the first point is that the insurgents had taken up a position at Prophet Elias, and that the fire of the squadron obliged them to haul down their flag. We do not know how many were killed or wounded, the Greek Commodore having declined to allow medical officers from the fleet to make inquiry on the spot. No wounded, however, were seen.

Mr. DILLON: I wish to ask the right hon. Gentleman whether the admirals took any steps to inform themselves as to whether there were women in the convent before they opened fire, and what period of notice they gave before the guns opened fire? [*Cheers.*]

*Mr. CURZON: I do not think it is at all certain that the convent was fired on at all—[*cheers*]—and if I may judge of the accuracy of this statement by that of many others proceeding from the newspapers which I am called upon to comment on, I should say that it was, on the whole, probably inaccurate.

Mr. DILLON: I respectfully ask the right hon. Gentleman to make inquiries, as the statement is taken from the Correspondent of *The Times* at Canea. [*Cheers.*]

Dr. TANNER (Cork Co., Mid): May I ask whether it is not the fact that even if the medical officers were not absolutely consulted—

*Mr. SPEAKER: Order, order. If the hon. Member continues to interrupt the business of the House I shall be compelled to request him to leave the House for the remainder of the sitting. [*Cheers.*]

Dr. TANNER: Quite right. Certainly. I would sooner leave it than be in it.

Mr. CHANNING: What steps have the Government taken to ascertain the accuracy of a statement made by *The Times* Correspondent and other persons?

*Mr. CURZON: It is quite impossible for Her Majesty's Government to be telegraphing out every five minutes of the day to test the accuracy or the inaccuracy of the various statements emanating from foreign correspondents that appear in the newspapers of the United Kingdom. [*Cheers.*]

Mr. THOMAS BAYLEY: I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether the Government have had any official Report from the British Admiral in Cretan waters of what took place on Sunday last?

The FIRST LORD of the TREASURY: All the information at the disposal of the Government from the Admiral has already been given to the House in answer to questions addressed to my right hon. Friend the Under Secretary. I have nothing to add.

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT.

The FIRST LORD of the TREASURY: The Prime Minister, in another place, in answer to a Question, has made a statement on behalf of the Government in regard to the policy in Crete, and, although no Question has been addressed to me, I propose to make an identical statement to this House if they will permit me. We have recommended to our allies that the following policy should be adopted:—

> "(1) That the establishment of administrative autonomy in Crete is, in our judgment, a necessary condition to the termination of the international occupation; (2) that, subject to the above provision, Crete ought, in our judgment, to remain a portion of the Turkish Empire; (3) that Turkey and Greece ought to be informed by the Powers of the above resolution; and (4) that if either Turkey or Greece persistently refuse, when required, to withdraw their naval and military forces from the island, the Powers should impose their decision by force upon the State so refusing."

We have received no official information that these views are shared by all our allies; but we have every reason to believe that they are. [*Cheers.*]

*Sir WILLIAM HARCOURT (Monmouthshire, W.): I am sure that the House will feel the extreme gravity of the announcement made by the right hon. Gentleman, affecting, as it does, the relations of this country, not only at present, but in future, with all the Powers of Europe, with the Government of Turkey, and with the Government of Greece, especially in the last paragraph relating to the employment of force. The House ought to address itself to this question with due deliberation, and we ought to have time to consider the bearing of the statement made by Her Majesty's Government, and not enter upon it without consideration. At the same time I am sure that the Government will feel, and the House will feel, that we ought to have an opportunity of properly asking for further explanations with reference to the policy of Her Majesty's Government. [*Cheers.*] I am quite sure that that is a view in which Her Majesty's Government will concur, and therefore I hope that the right hon. Gentleman will intimate his willingness to enter into arrangements, which may be made according to the convenience of the House, for an early discussion of this matter, with a view to further explanations on behalf of Her Majesty's Government. I would venture to suggest that To-morrow may be a convenient day. [An hon. Member: "That is Friday."]

The FIRST LORD of the TREASURY: The appeal which has been made by the right hon. Gentleman must, of course, be considered favourably by Her Majesty's Government, having regard to the quarter from which the appeal comes. But I would remind the right hon. Gentleman that we have already had two adjournments on the subject of Crete; and that if this appeal is merely for the purpose of eliciting information and having a desultory discussion, strict limits of time ought to be placed on any Debate which may be raised. ["Hear, hear!"] Of course, if the right hon. Gentleman desires to move a Vote of Censure upon the Government, that is an entirely different matter, and I should not desire to burke any suggestion that might be necessary under such circumstances. I should be glad to consider with the right hon. Gentleman what course ought to be pursued, but I say at once that I do not think that To-morrow would be a convenient day for it, as it would interfere with the Friday Rule, and in addition to that I think that it would be specially inconvenient at present that the time for discussing the Supplementary Estimates, which are very pressing, should be unduly cut short. [*Cheers.*]

*Sir W. HARCOURT: Certainly it would not be consistent with the views I have presented that we should desire at present and be prepared to move a Vote of Censure upon Her Majesty's Government. What we are asking for is an explanation to the House and the country of the policy which the Government are pursuing, and which, I understand, the other Powers of Europe are pursuing. It is quite obvious that the discussion and explanation should take place at the earliest possible moment, and we do not require at this time anything beyond explanations from Her Majesty's Government. But I would still suggest to the right hon. Gentleman that, if there are to be these explanations on the part of the Government, it would be inconvenient to postpone them for several days—inconvenient to the Government, inconvenient to the country, and inconvenient with reference to the negotiations that are going on. After all, the Supplementary Estimates might be taken upon another day. The sooner this question is taken out of public rumour by authoritative statements on the part of the Government of a much fuller description than that we have to-night, the better it will be for all parties concerned. ["Hear, hear!"]

The FIRST LORD of the TREASURY: I may say, in answer to the right hon. Gentleman, that I think we have done our best by so far departing from ordinary diplomatic traditions as to make this statement of our views before receiving full and formal assent of those views from our colleagues. I think that it would be a pity if the discussion should take place as early as to-morrow, before that assent has been received. We shall be in a far better position to discuss the matter at a later date. I, therefore, still adhere to the view that a later date would be better.

*Sir W. HARCOURT: May I ask the right hon. Gentleman whether he will say Monday? [*Cries of* "No."]

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY: That must, of course, depend upon the state of the negotiations, but I shall be glad to communicate with the right hon. Gentleman on the subject.

MR. PATRICK O'BRIEN: May I ask the right hon. Gentleman what is meant by the expression "administrative autonomy"? Does he mean that the people of Crete are to have the power to make their laws, or are they to be subject to the control of the Turkish Government?

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY: Well, Sir, there are plenty of instances of autonomy in the Turkish Empire already. ["Hear, hear!" *and laughter.*]

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

VOLUNTARY SCHOOLS BILL.

Order for Committee read.

The following Notices of Motion stood upon the Paper:—

MR. LAMBERT: To move—

"That it be an Instruction to the Committee that they have power to insert Clauses in the Bill to provide that the schoolrooms in schools that receive an aid grant, on such occasions as do not interfere with the educational purposes of the schools, and under the condition of payment of all reasonable expenses by the conveners of the meeting should be at the disposal of the inhabitants of the district in which such school is situated for the purpose of holding public meetings."

MR. ELLIS GRIFFITH: To move—

"That it be an Instruction to the Committee that they have power to insert Clauses in the Bill to provide that in schools receiving aid grant no teacher shall be required to perform any extraneous duty, that is to say, any duty other than those of teaching in the school and instructing the pupil teachers therein."

MR. ELLIS GRIFFITH: To move—

"That it be an Instruction to the Committee that they have power to insert Clauses in the Bill to provide that in school districts where there is no Board School it shall not be required as a condition of any pupil teacher being appointed in a public elementary school in such districts that such pupil teacher shall be or not be a member of any particular religious denomination, or shall attend or abstain from attending any particular place of religious worship."

MR. LLOYD-GEORGE: To move—

"That it be an Instruction to the Committee that they have power to insert Clauses in the Bill with a view to making provision for insuring adequate representation of local authorities or parents on the management of the schools in receipt of the aid grant."

MR. SYDNEY GEDGE: To move—

"That it be an Instruction to the Committee that they have power to enable the managers of Voluntary Schools to contract with School Boards for the supply of the education required by the Education Code to such children and on such terms as to payment, inspection, representation or otherwise as may be agreed between them."

MR. CHANNING: To move—

"That it be an Instruction to the Committee that they have power to insert Clauses in the Bill to create elective authorities in districts where there is no School Board, to prepare schemes from time to time for the apportionment of the aid grant, and to give power to School Boards to prepare such schemes for their districts."

***MR. SPEAKER**: There are several Instructions to the Committee on this Bill on the Order Paper. The first is in the name of the hon. Member for South Molton (Mr. Lambert). It introduces a subject that appears to me to be foreign to the subjects dealt with in the Bill, and on that ground it is out of order. The next Instruction stands in the name of the hon. Member for Anglesey (Mr. Ellis Griffith). That proposes to provide that as a condition for receiving the grant no teacher in a Voluntary School shall be required to perform any extraneous—*i.e.*, non-educational—duty. Such a proposal would be in order as an Amendment to the Bill, and therefore it is out of order as an Instruction. The next Instruction which stands upon the Paper is also in the name of the hon. Member for Anglesey, and proposes to make provision for the absence of religious tests for pupil teachers in Voluntary Schools. That appears to me to enter upon matter which is foreign to the whole scope of the Bill. ["Hear, hear!"] The Bill is one for affording relief to Voluntary Schools. The term "Voluntary Schools" is substantially convertible with the term "denominational schools," and to give an Instruction to a Committee on a Bill for the relief of Voluntary Schools to undenominationalise them would be not only foreign to, but contrary to, the whole scope of the Bill. ["Hear, hear!"] The next Instruction stands in the name of the hon. Member for Carnarvon (Mr. Lloyd-George). He proposes that the Committee should have power to insert clauses in the Bill for making provision for insuring adequate representation of local authorities or parents on the management of schools in receipt of the aid grant. That appears to me to be in order as an Instruction. The Bill proposes that certain associations representative of the managers of the schools associated together should be the machinery for distributing the grant in aid, and the Instruction proposes to alter and amend the constitution of these managing bodies. As this is a very large proposal, which only bears indirectly on one of the subjects of the Bill, and as it raises a new principle not hitherto brought under the consideration of the House, it cannot be entertained without an Instruction. The next Instruction stands in the name of the hon. Member for Walsall (Mr. Gedge). It proposes to enable the managers of Voluntary Schools to contract with School Boards for the supply of the education required by the Education Code to such children and on such terms as to payment, inspection, representation or otherwise, as many be agreed between them. That does not relate, it appears to me, either to the relief of Voluntary Schools or to the distribution of the grant in aid. Whether it is a matter that requires legislation or not I do not know, but if it does require legislation it will have to be done by a separate Bill. The next Instruction stands in the name of the hon. Member for Northamptonshire (Mr. Channing). That Instruction in effect proposes to destroy altogether the existing form of management of Voluntary Schools, and to set up in its place elected authorities in districts where there is no School Board. It also proposes to give powers to the School Boards, with which this Bill is not concerned, to prepare schemes for their districts. Both branches appear to me to be outside of the scope of the Bill and out of order. Therefore the only Instruction which is in order is that of the hon. Member for Carnarvon.

Mr. LEONARD COURTNEY (Cornwall, Bodmin) asked as a point of order whether it would be competent without an Instruction to move an Amendment in Committee proposing to add some representative element to the existing managing body of a Voluntary School in order to make that school eligible to receive the grant.

*Mr. SPEAKER: Such an Amendment would require an Instruction, and the Instruction standing in the name of the hon. Member for Carnarvon covers the case.

Mr. LLOYD-GEORGE (Carnarvon Boroughs) moved:—

> "That it be an Instruction to the Committee that they have power to insert Clauses in the Bill with a view to making provision for insuring adequate representation of local authorities or parents on the management of the schools in receipt of the aid grant."

He said his object in moving the Instruction was to enable the Committee to provide for some form of popular representation on the management of schools which received a grant in aid. The figures before the House showed that a large percentage of the income of Voluntary Schools was derived from public funds. He contended that upon the broad principle that representation should follow taxation, which was ingrained to such an extent in the British nation, a certain amount of public control in the management of these schools should be given. In the year 1870 the bulk of the financial support of these schools was derived from local sources, and under the Act of 1870 the principle was recognised that Voluntary Schools should find, at any rate, one half of their incomes locally. That was changed in 1876, when the 17s. 6d. limit was fixed. In 1891 there was a further change made by the addition of the 10s. grant, and now it was proposed to abolish the 17s. 6d. limit altogether, and to give an additional grant of 5s. from the Exchequer. So that, practically, it would be possible in future for a school to derive the whole of its income from public sources, without any provision whatever from public control. ["Hear, hear!"] How that worked in certain cases was best shown by illustrations. In the parish of Llandwrog in Carnarvonshire there were nothing but Voluntary Schools. The grants to the schools in that parish amounted in the aggregate to £264, and the subscriptions and endowments to £21; that was the amount of voluntary support was something like 1-14th of the total income of the schools. Four-fifths of the children who attended the schools were children of Nonconformist parents, and the schools being Church schools, their parents had no voice in their management, and no Nonconformist child had a chance of being promoted to the position of a pupil teacher. These children were compelled to attend the schools, and if the Nonconformist parents attempted to set up another school or to get a School Board, under which their children would get equal treatment, it would be open to the Education Department to say that the ground was already covered. He submitted that that state of things was exceedingly unfair. [" Hear, hear! "] He would go to another parish in the same county—Criccieth. There there was a School Board, and probably four-fifths of the population were Nonconformists. There was a Churchman on the Board, the headmaster was a Churchman, and one or two of the teachers were Churchmen also. Here was a case in which a School Board treated Churchmen in exactly the same way as it treated Nonconformists, and yet that parish was not to receive a penny of relief, though it would have to contribute to perpetuate the unfairness which it declined to imitate. [" Hear, hear! "] He would take another School Board district with Voluntary Schools side by side with the Board Schools. In Liverpool, two-thirds of the children attended Voluntary Schools and about one-third attended Board Schools. The grants to the Voluntary Schools amounted to £70,000, the fees to £11,000, and the subscriptions and endowments to £10,600. Thus the subscriptions amounted to something like one-ninth of the total income. [" Hear, hear! "] The parents contributed more than the subscribers, and yet they had no voice in the management of the schools. The subscribers who only contributed one-ninth of the income got the whole of the control, while the taxpayers and parents, who contributed eight-ninths got no voice in the control. [" Hear, hear! "] It might be said that one-third and two-thirds fairly represented the division of opinion in Liverpool, and that the Nonconformists had put their schools under the control of the School Board; but that was not so, for he believed that three-fourths of the members of the Liverpool School Board were denominationalists, so that the result was that all the schools in Liverpool were controlled by the denominationalists. He maintained that that was absolutely unfair. But he commended this Instruction to the House, on the ground of efficiency also. He contended that it would conduce to the increase of efficiency. There were Board Schools with popular control, and Voluntary Schools with no management at all, except that of the clergyman. [" No, no! "] He knew subscribers had nominally a voice in the management, but practically it was left entirely in the hands of the clergyman. [" Hear, hear! "] He would compare the work of the two systems. The grants earned by Board Schools were considerably larger, and that would be seen if the House would deduct from the average grant the amount which did not depend at all on merit. He found that the Board Schools earned 6s. 11½d. per head, and the Voluntary Schools 5s. 5¾d.; so that the Board Schools, who were subject to popular control were superior, so far as the grant earned was concerned. But he maintained that their education was more efficient. The managers of Board Schools were selected on the ground of some peculiar qualification, and if at the end of three years it was shown that they were not capable or competent the ratepayers of the district could dismiss them. That was not so in the case of the managers of Voluntary Schools. They were not selected on the ground of efficiency. They might be efficient or they might not. The fact that a man was a clergyman was not necessarily a qualification for managing a school. Clergymen were not, as a rule, very capable administrators; they were not men of the world, not men of affairs. Therefore, he thought that, as school managers, their ranks ought to be supplemented by men who were men of the world, who knew something about business, and who had an insight into human nature. If six or seven men were elected by the ratepayers on account of their peculiar qualifications for the position, they would collectively make good one another's deficiencies. As long as they continued to make the clergy practically the sole managers of the Voluntary Schools they would find that teachers were selected for other reasons than that of educational fitness. At present a teacher who was a good organist, or was likely to make a good lay preacher, stood a far better chance of appointment than one who was a much more capable educationist but who had not those other extraneous qualifications. It was natural that, when a clergyman had to select between two such men, he should choose the man who would serve the interests of the church best. The present system tempted him to do it, and it ought to be changed, for the most important element in the success of a school was the appointment of a good teacher. If a body of lay managers were appointed, even if they were Churchmen, they would, he believed, control the action of the clergy in respect of these appointments; and so teachers would be chosen for their educational competency, and not for other reasons. By increasing the circle of control they would also widen the circle of school subscribers. The greater the control given to the general public the greater would be the number of the subscribers, and the result of that would be greater educational efficiency. When it was argued that Board Schools were better schools than Voluntary Schools, hon. Members opposite always replied that more money was spent upon the former. That was true; and he maintained that any system which would bring in more money in subscriptions for Voluntary Schools must result in greater educational efficiency, and therefore was desirable from the point of view of the supporters of denominational schools themselves. One way, then, to achieve that result was by enabling local authorities to appoint representatives upon the managing bodies, for that would increase the general interest taken in the schools. But as a rule, the clergy tried to keep the whole management in their own hands. [*Ministerial cries of* "No!" *and* "Hear, hear!"] Then, why did they object to parental control? Either they objected to control from the outside or they did not; but if they did not, why should hon. Members opposite oppose this Instruction? What he and his Friends said was, that as long as the taxpayers of the country contributed five-sixths of the income of the Voluntary Schools they were certainly entitled to some share in the management of those schools. On these grounds he begged to move the Instruction standing in his name. ["Hear, hear!"]

MR. COURTENAY WARNER (Staffordshire, Lichfield) seconded the Motion. He did not agree that complete control over Voluntary Schools ought to be given to an elected body, but he did hold that the people who paid for these schools ought to have some share in the management of them. There was no doubt that enormous advantages would accrue to these schools if there were one or two elected managers on their boards of management. The educational efficiency of the schools would be greater, and the subscriptions would probably increase, because there would be an extension of the interest taken in these institutions. He had taken considerable pains to ascertain the views of different denominations in his constituency on this subject, and he found that, although the Roman Catholics objected strongly, and naturally, to the exercise of complete control over their schools by elected bodies, objection was very seldom expressed by them to the presence of one elected member on a board. He should not himself object if the power of election were restricted to the parents of the children attending a school. He believed that the presence of even one elected manager would inspire confidence, and render a school ten times more popular than it was before. They often found distrust among the people of any institution over which there was no popular control. At present the accounts of most of the Voluntary Schools were not submitted to the people of the district, so as to enable them to make their voice heard respecting them. If the people were represented by even one elected manager it would give them confidence and a feeling of security that the money subscribed for a school was being properly spent. The school would become much more popular, and parents would be more inclined to send their children to it. By making this slight concession hon. Members opposite would not only reduce the opposition to this Bill, but would strengthen the position of the Church of England by increasing the popularity of Voluntary Schools. If the people gained greater confidence in these schools more Dissenters' children might be expected to go to them than went to them now.

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR, Manchester, E.): The hon. Member who moved this

Instruction based his Motion upon two grounds—first, on the abstract right to have representation wherever there was taxation, and, secondly, on the ground of expediency—at the same time endeavouring to show that the alteration of the kind he proposes would add to the efficiency of the Voluntary Schools. In so far as the hon. Member's first argument is concerned, I think he must himself feel that this much quoted maxim has very little application to the particular case to which he ventured to apply it. [*Cheers.*] Because the public Exchequer contributes money to the Voluntary Schools, what right do those who live in the same parish gain to obtain representation on the board of the Voluntary Schools? The two propositions have no congruity; they have no relevancy one to the other; and by no logical process can they be deduced one from the other. Parents in most cases contribute nothing to the Voluntary Schools. There are a certain number of cases in the north where fees are still paid voluntarily for the most part by the parents, but over the larger part of the country, as a matter of fact, education is free, and parents no more than the rest of the ratepayers of the district are called upon to contribute one farthing to the maintenance of the schools. My hon. Friend the Member for the Cambridge University, who spoke on the first night of the introduction of the Bill, put the whole argument in a nutshell when he reminded the House that the contribution from the rates was a good reason for giving ratepayers control, and that contribution from taxes was a good reason for giving the representatives of the taxpayers control, but that contribution from taxes gave no right to the ratepayers and contributions from the rates gave no right to the general taxpayers. That is the whole philosophy so far as the first branch of the hon. Member's argument is concerned. The hon. Member left in absolute vagueness the particular form of control which, if this Instruction were passed, he would desire to see. He expressed at intervals a personal preference towards ratepayers' control, but he interspersed with those expressions of personal predilection the statement that he and his Friends would be content with parental control. I do not think it would be possible to argue those two kinds of control on their merits and detail until we know which of the two kinds the hon. Member desires to see introduced. I shall not go into any general discussion on the question, but I may say that I am informed by those more intimately cognisant with the Education Acts than I can pretend to be, that while they never discourage parental control, their observation to its effects does not lead them to believe that any results of great magnitude to the benefit of the schools have accrued in any special cases where that system has been tried. I deal next with the second branch of the hon. Member's argument—that of efficiency. The hon. Member appeared to be of opinion that one immediate result of giving local control over the Voluntary Schools would be that voluntary subscriptions would largely increase. [*Opposition cheers.*] A more amazing conclusion from such premises surely was never advanced in the House of Commons. [*Cheers.*] Persons have been found to contribute the necessary funds for building a school and the funds for aiding in support of the school solely on the ground that the school belonged to the denomination of which they were members, and is it to be supposed that their liberality would be stimulated by handing the school over by hypothesis to certain Members of the Opposite Party? The hon. Member moves from one control to another as it suits the particular argument with which he deals; but let us take parental control. He gave us the instance of a parish within his personal knowledge, and said, "What a monstrous thing that the parents have no control over the schools." The hon. Member went on to explain that four-fifths of the parents were Nonconformists, and his desire is to hand over the control of the school to the management of parents, four-fifths of whom do not belong to the denomination which has built the school or to the denomination which supports it.

Mr. LLOYD-GEORGE: I expressly disclaimed that, I said that parents ought to have a voice in the management but could not claim the complete control.

The FIRST LORD of the TREASURY: I do not understand the hon. Member's view. He wants to establish such a constitution of the school, situated as the school described, that the parents shall always take one side, but always be outvoted. ["No, no!"] Are they to have control or not? [*Cheers.*] If they are not to have control, they are a kind of official Opposition who are never allowed to become a Government. [*Laughter.*] If, on the other hand, they belong to a minority which may become a majority, what amount of denominational control of the school are they to have? There is no answer to the dilemma in which the hon. Member is placed. If the hon. Member carried out his own principles to their logical conclusions and gave to the parents or the ratepayers complete control over the schools—["No, no!"]—the dominating control—["No!"]—then you do want them to be in a permanent minority? [*Laughter.*] I cannot conceive machinery less calculated either to promote the efficiency or increase the amount of subscriptions, or bring that harmony into parochial life which the hon. Member would desire to promote. The hon. Member contrasted the efficiency of the two systems, and, by a method of calculation which he did not fully explain, he made out that the Board Schools in the country earned what he called a merit grant—a phrase not known to the Education Code—of a substantial amount per head over the merit grant earned by Voluntary Schools. I do not know what is meant by "merit grant." The phrase was in the Code at one time, but it has disappeared. I am perfectly ready to admit that if you take the Board Schools all over the country and the Voluntary Schools all over the country you will probably find in the Board Schools a higher amount of grant earned than in the Voluntary Schools. It follows probably from two reasons. In the first place, in the country districts the Voluntary School system predominates, and in the towns as well as in the country the Board Schools have behind them the resources of the rates, and the Voluntary Schools have behind them no such resources. Is it not absurd to say that the comparative inefficiency of the Voluntary Schools is due to their management when its real cause stands in such plain characters that anyone can read it? [*Cheers.*] I do not know that it is necessary to discuss at any greater length the particular merits or demerits of the vague proposal before us. There is in truth an initial objection to the acceptance of this Instruction, the force of which the House will see. We have not brought forward this Bill, and have not pretended to do so, as one dealing with all the difficulties of our present educational system in England. We have not included all the subjects we think ought to be dealt with. We have deliberately, and from the beginning, said that this is not a complete but an incomplete instalment. [*Cheers.*] We have learned from experience, and in bringing forward this Bill we avowed it to be limited in scope and, because limited, therefore imperfect. Our limitation has been largely dwelt upon in the earlier stages of our Debates—namely, that it excludes poor Board Schools. That cannot be referred to now at any length; and I plainly say that if we are to assent to the scope of this Bill being widened I should prefer to enlarge it in order to include poor School Board districts rather than give "ample room and verge enough" to discuss any possible or probable schemes in the management of Voluntary Schools. I do not believe that the House could touch with advantage the management of Voluntary Schools without there being the very greatest danger of destroying their voluntary character altogether. [*Cheers.*] I observe that those who are most anxious to deal with the constitution of the Voluntary Schools are those who make no secret whatever of approximating the constitution as far as they can to Board Schools, squeezing them out of existence altogether. The avowed policy of hon. Members is not one which is pretended to benefit the Voluntary Schools. I beg the House not to assent to this Instruction, because I am convinced that the only path of safety which lies before us is to rigidly limit this Bill to the single subject with which it purports to deal. [*Cheers.*] For these reasons I hope the House will, without any undue delay, refuse to admit the proposed Instruction.

MR. A. H. DYKE ACLAND (York, W.R., Rotherham) could not help expressing great regret that the right hon. Gentleman should not have seen his way to accept this Instruction. The right hon. Gentleman complained that the proposal was vague, but it was not the business of the Opposition at that moment to produce minute schemes in detail. Their business was to convince the House of Commons that this subject, being one of deep interest to the great mass of country parishes and many populous districts, ought not to be shut out from being debated. Considering that they were going to discuss a Bill which grants £620,000 to the Voluntary Schools, he thought the Leader of the House might be generous enough to allow the matter to be discussed. The hon. Gentleman, speaking of the speech of the hon. Member for Carnarvon Boroughs, said that it was, from the local government point of view, an almost ridiculous proposal, but the right hon. Gentleman himself spoke as if he had a very imperfect knowledge of our country parishes, and the situation he predicted might almost be described as grotesque. Was it not known that even if a single person joined a body like the managers of Church schools he might be of great service, not only to the parents, not only to the inhabitants of the parish themselves, but to the clerical managers of the schools? ["Hear, hear!"] If the right hon. Gentleman would not take it from him, he might take it from letters of clergymen which appeared in *The Times* last year. In one of these letters a well-known clergyman suggested that

> "Parish Council meetings should have power under the new Bill to appoint a representative on the committee of managers of every elementary school in their respective parishes,"

and said that this

> "would afford a real security against abuse and unfairness which, to say the least, are always possible, as things now are, in the relations of manager and teacher, teacher and parent, Churchman and Dissenter."

The other clergyman, speaking of Nonconformists, said,

> "Put one of those suspicious persons on the management and he will be able to tell his friends that his suspicions are all a myth,"

and he ended his letter by saying, "Churchmen are strong enough to be generous." ["Hear, hear!"] What said Lord Northbrook on this question? He was chairman of his County Council, he knew local life well, and surely what he said deserved attention. The noble Lord said that if additional State aid was given to Voluntary Schools,

> "it will be right that some representative element should be introduced into their committees of management. In country parishes the Parish Council or parish meeting might nominate, or the parents of the children might elect, a proportion of the committee."

Those were the very words of the Instruction. [*Cheers.*] Lord Cross's Commission—which included a principal member of the present Government, Cardinal Manning, the Duke of Norfolk, Lord Harrowby, Canon Gregory, and the junior Member for Oxford University—dealt with this question. First of all they spoke about the managers, and they observed—

> "There are a large number of schools in which the management practically falls into the hands of a single manager—most frequently the clergyman of the parish."

And again—

> "We would insist, however, upon the importance of Voluntary Schools being placed under a board of management."

[*Cheers.*] Would the right hon. Gentleman admit that into the Bill? Would he give them the opportunity of having a Board? And then what did Lord Cross's Commission say?—

> "So long as the parents are not a preponderating element, we should be glad to see them represented on the committee of management."

[*Cheers.*] That was what they asked for. Apparently the Government were not going to concede even the opportunity of discussing that now. ["Hear, hear!"] It was all very well to say "Hear, hear," but in many agricultural districts, as Conservative Members opposite knew, this was not a popular thing to do. [*Cheers.*] As to the distinction the First Lord of the Treasury made about rates and taxes, although the right hon. Gentleman might put the whole philosophy of the question in a sentence, he was not sure, after all, that was the main point at issue. But even if it were, what would the right hon. Gentleman say about the grants in aid of County Councils? Would those grants in aid from the taxes have been made—indeed, were many of them made—until they had set up representative bodies to whom they could intrust money? The House had already recognised the principle, and they were only asking the House to take one very humble step, which would injure nobody, in the same direction. He appealed to Scottish Members, who were so proud of their system, to take one single step with them in the direction of the Scottish system. The Government would boast, no doubt, later on of what they had done for the Wesleyan and British Voluntary Schools, but let them not suppose that the managers of those schools were with the Government in the action they proposed to take that night. They were all of them in favour of some genuine concession towards real representation upon the Voluntary Schools.

MR. VICARY GIBBS (Herts, St. Albans) asked on what grounds the right hon. Gentleman made his last statement?

MR. ACLAND replied that he would read an extract from a memorial by Lord Salisbury on the subject. Lord Salisbury said:—

> "There should be no increased grant of public funds, either from the local rates or from the Imperial taxes, to denominational schools unless that increased grant is accompanied by adequate and representative public management."

["Hear, hear!"] There was a large body of opinion in favour of the principle for which he was contending, including the Royal Commission appointed by the Conservative Government in 1885. He appealed to hon. Gentlemen on the other side, including the First Lord of the Treasury, who believed in the value of the Scottish system—in which the principle in question largely prevailed—to take one step forward with the view of developing a similar system in England. ["Hear, hear!"] They had already gone some way in this direction in connection with our local charities. On the management of many of those charities in rural districts the people were represented, and he ventured to say the effect of adopting the principle had been to the advantage of the charities and their administration, for public confidence in the management had been thereby secured. ["Hear, hear!"] Moreover, there was the case of the endowed schools. Forty years ago numbers of them were managed in the closest possible manner, by clerical managers, or purely self-nominated bodies. The Charity Commissioners, however, who could not be charged with being a Radical body, had decided, with regard to the great mass of endowed schools in town and country, to place representatives of the local authorities on the Boards of Management. ["Hear, hear!"] Yet, for some extraordinary reason, they were told by hon. Gentlemen opposite that they were to adopt a totally different principle when the education of the poor was concerned. ["Hear, hear!"] He hoped the majority of the House would not adopt the narrow view of the matter which had been taken by the First Lord of the Treasury; he hoped so in the interests of education, in the interest of a more peaceful and reasonable management of the Voluntary Schools, and in the interest of arriving at a settlement of this important question, which would not injure but strengthen the Church Schools. ["Hear, hear!"] The present Archbishop of Canterbury, who was a member, and perhaps the most prominent member of the Schools Inquiry Commission, in 1868 said—and he quoted the words because they lay at the very root of the matter—

> "The real force of the endowed schools must come from the people. Every arrangement which fostered the interest of the people in the schools, which taught the people to look to the schools as their own, and which encouraged them to take a share in the management, would do at least as much service as the wisest advice and the most skilful administration."

["Hear, hear!"] Those words were as applicable now to the Voluntary Schools as they were to the middle-class schools when spoken, and he contended that they would never succeed in making the Voluntary Schools in the country districts popular until local representatives of the people were admitted to the Boards of Management. ["Hear, hear!"] By adopting this course, and admitting the parents to a share of responsibility in the well-being of the schools, he repeated that the interests of education and the schools alike would be served and strengthened—["hear, hear"]—and from this point of view he still hoped that the House would assent to the Instruction which had been moved. ["Hear, hear!"]

MR. CHARLES SEELY (Lincoln) opposed the Instruction on the ground that, as the ratepayers contributed no portion of the money that maintained the Voluntary Schools, they had no right to participate in their management. Then it was urged that the people of a locality were entitled to representation on the schools as taxpayers. Now, hon. Members who had any knowledge of the practical working of those schools would probably agree with him in thinking that in many cases the public control already possessed by the Education Department over the schools was greater than it should be in proportion to the amount of money the Department provided for the maintenance of the schools; and for his own part he thought it would be to the advantage of education if, in some respects, the control of the Department was diminished rather than increased. [" Hear, hear!"] Consequently there was public control from the point of view of the general taxpayer. [" Hear, hear!"] Then there was the contention for parental control. He objected here to the use of the word "control," and to the idea which underlaid it. The right hon. Gentleman who had spoken used the word "representation," for he saw the point of the objection to the word control. Well, if hon. Gentlemen opposite did not want control in this connection why did they put it in the Instruction?

[Several HON. MEMBERS: The word is not in the Instruction. [" Hear, hear!" *and laughter.*]

MR. SEELY looked at the Instruction, and said he begged hon. Members' pardon. The word, as had been stated, was not in the Instruction. He had been misled by the tone of the speech of the hon. Member who moved it. [*Laughter.*] But though he objected to the idea of control, he should be glad if some means could be devised by which parents in villages and rural districts where there were only Voluntary Schools could more easily obtain access to the managers of the schools—for instance, by which they could go before the managing committee and state any grievance they entertained. [" Hear, hear!"] After all, the means of simplifying the removal of grievances was not an unimportant consideration. [" Hear, hear!"] One of the greatest grievances in connection with this matter was the position of the Voluntary Schools and of the subscribers to them. There were Voluntary Schools in School Board districts, and there were Voluntary Schools in districts where there were no Board Schools. That in the School Board districts the subscribers to the Voluntary Schools had also to pay fully the School Board rates was a grave injustice. [" Hear, hear!"] Last year the Government, by means of the Agricultural Rating Bill, gave back to the ratepayers in agricultural districts where there were Board Schools half the school rates, and he thought it would be only fair that an equivalent grant should be made to the Voluntary Schools in districts where there were no Board Schools. [" Hear, hear!"] For those reasons he held that it was the duty of the Government to do what it could to remove the serious grievances under which the subscribers to Voluntary Schools laboured, especially as no one could have watched the Debates on the Bills both of last year and this year without perceiving a desire on the part of hon. Members opposite to hinder the passing of any Measure which might benefit the Voluntary Schools. much as he should like to see some attempt made to give the parents of the children a voice in the management of the school, but realising the great practical difficulty there was in carrying it out by a legal enactment, though it would be easy enough to carry it out voluntarily, he should vote against the Instruction. There was the added reason that hon. Gentlemen opposite would, if the proposal were adopted, use it as a means of accomplishing their avowed object, which was to assimilate the Voluntary system with the School Board system. He should be very glad if any simple way could be devised of carrying out some of the objects sought to be secured by the Instruction, but he thought the questions of immediately assisting the Voluntary Schools and of taking away the grievances under which they and their subscribers suffered were of greater and more pressing importance than the proposal now before the House. He hoped the mothers of England, who were the persons who felt the pinch most, would realise that the reason they had not got put into the Bill a provision giving them the right to put their grievances before the management, was the factious opposition of hon. Gentlemen opposite.

*MR. ALBERT SPICER (Monmouth Boroughs) said they must all sympathise with the hon. Gentleman who had just sat down. His heart seemed to be with them, but for Party reasons he did not feel able to vote with them. The First Lord of the Treasury seemed to think that he had disposed of the abstract justice of their contention by the assertion that national funds should be subject to national control, and that local funds should be subject to local control. But it seemed to him there was one great difference in the present Measure. If the

First Lord of the Treasury had brought in a Bill which provided that this extra grant to the Voluntary Schools should be at the disposal of the Education Department, which was subject to the control of Parliament, he would have been inclined to agree with the right hon. Gentleman, but he had not done that.

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY: The hon. Gentleman is quite mistaken. The control rests with the Education Department.

*MR. SPICER said that if these associations, on the importance of which the right hon. Gentleman laid so much stress, were likely to promote the efficiency of the schools, they had a very close connection with control, and if the ultimate settlement with regard to the terms of the associations was to be with the Education Department he maintained that the right hon. Gentleman had not been consistent with the principle he had supported. The right hon. Gentleman also said that it would not be likely to promote the efficiency of a school if a minority of Nonconformists were part of the managing body. He would remind the right hon. Gentleman that after all a minority might do a great deal to prevent injustice, in forming public opinion, and the opinion of their colleagues, and in bringing them to see that suggestions made by the minority, which were fair, might reasonably be accepted. As a Nonconformist he should be perfectly satisfied with many of the Voluntary Schools if only there was a minority; if, at any rate, the parents of the children attending them were allowed to elect a certain proportion of the Managing Committee, and if they could once get away from what none of them on either side of the House liked in the present system—the one-man management. He also put in a claim for the justice of this Instruction. There was one sentence in the Schools Inquiry Committee of 1868 to which he should like to refer. They remarked that they hoped for a good deal

> "from an intelligent interest of the people in the cause of education; there might be many failures and mistakes, but the end would be corrections and improvements."

The experience of the last 25 years in the cause of education had shown how much was done by popular control. A large number of new men and women had been brought into the public service, and the work they had done in the cause of education had been of enormous advantage to the country as a whole. A system that had had that effect justified in saying that, in the interests of the Voluntary Schools and in the interests of education itself, they could not do a better thing than, in connection with this Bill, to give some measure of representative and popular control to those schools. He did not think they could do a better thing for the nation than to see that the elementary education of the country was the very best they could give. Artificial systems might be all very well, but they did not get over the difficulty. If the future generation were sent into the world with a sound elementary education he ventured to think that England would be able to hold its own in competition with the nations of the world much better than by any artificial system they might be able to devise. They knew what other nations were doing in the matter. He was reading only the other day an observation by a leading Swiss manufacturer, who said,

> "We know in this feeble country nearly the whole of the people will start life burdened with poverty but we are determined that they shall not start life burdened with ignorance also."

Whether they looked at the matter in the interests of the Voluntary Schools themselves, or from the standpoint of education, he did not believe they could do a greater service than to give to the schools some measure of control. He hoped the day was not far distant when the Scotch system, which acknowledged denominational teaching, but gave popular control, would be the system in this country. [*Cheers.*] The right hon. Gentleman the First Lord of the Treasury, in his closing speech on the Second Reading, referred to that subject, and all he would say as a Free Churchman was that he would heartily welcome that system. After all, Churchmen and Nonconformists had got to live together and to work together; they did not always want to be clawing at each other, and surely if they devoted themselves to the matter in a right spirit it ought not to be incapable of solution that they should find a system, which should be really helpful to the education of the country and the interests of the nation.

*Mr. ALFRED HOPKINSON (Wilts, Cricklade) said the Instruction was open to two very serious objections, and apparently to two only. In the first place, it might open the door to a large number of amendments, and possibly might imperil the passage of—not this Bill, for that was absolutely impossible—but the passage of another Bill which had been promised, and in which he, with many of his hon. Friends, took great interest—the Bill in regard to necessitous Board Schools. [" Hear, hear ! "] That was an objection of procedure mainly, and it could, of course, be met. If this Bill, which the Government had undertaken to pass in pursuance of election pledges, was obstructed, recourse could be had to the Closure to carry it through its several stages. But another objection arose on the use in the Instruction of the word " adequate." If that word was to have any meaning at all, it might mean that the management of Voluntary Schools was to be handed over to a majority of representatives of parents or local authorities, which, of course, would be unjust. This objection might be met by the omission of the word " adequate," and he suggested to the Government that with this objectionable word removed they might accept the Instruction. [" Hear, hear ! "] There was a strong feeling in the country that there ought to be associated with large grants of public money some element of popular representation in the administration. He was anxious that these schools should work well and successfully, with as little friction as possible, and an element of this kind on the management would, he believed, greatly assist that result. He knew a case—it was in what might be called an " obscure village," but it was a typical case. It was a Church School in a village where the majority of the people were Nonconformists. The school was admirably managed without any difficulty, and this was in a great measure due to the fact that the board of management associated with themselves voluntarily a certain number of Nonconformists. [" Hear, hear ! "] He knew another case where the Voluntary Schools worked admirably and there was no desire for a School Board because the clergyman associated with himself people fairly representative of other views than his own, and the management was harmoniously conducted. He objected altogether to the idea that a body of Nonconformists would necessarily be a permanent opposition, or that as a matter of practice on all questions the Churchmen would be found on one side and the Nonconformists on the other. It would be far more likely that, supposing there to be such a case as was said to have arisen at Willesden, where the managers dismissed a master because he did not go to a particular church, there a representative element would probably have been successful in enforcing a more reasonable view. He entirely objected to making this representative element the majority on the governing body ; that would not be fair, and, whatever system he might prefer, certainly he should insist on Voluntary Schools having fair treatment. Though supporting the Bill, as he did, he was in favour of the main principle of the Instruction, and wished very much, sharing the opinion that prevailed among large masses of people in the country, that the Bill recognised that principle. He could not, however, support the Motion while the word " adequate " remained in it, as it might mean to give absolute control to the representative element. Take that word out, and the principle of the Instruction might be the means of great practical benefit in the effective management of Voluntary Schools, and he should be disposed to vote for the Motion. He would be glad to see the Government treat this matter as one open for Parliamentary discussion and decision. Frequently Members found themselves in the position that where they were strongly in favour of a proposition, their action would be open to misconstruction if they voted against the Government. With perfect agreement with the Government in their general policy, he did on this subsidiary point wish very much that it were left open, or, better still, that the Government would accept the principle of the Instruction. [" Hear, hear ! "]

Mr. GEORGE LAMBERT (Devon, South Molton) said two speeches in favour of the present proposal had been made from the other side of the House by supporters of Voluntary Schools, and, while in one case the hon. Member was prepared to vote in acordance with his opinion, in the other he was not. The hon. Gentleman who said he was misled by the terms of the Instruction must have really been misled by the speech of his own Leader, for the First Lord of the Treasury had read into the proposal the word "control," which really formed no part of it. The Education Department, he said, had control over Voluntary Schools, but in discussion of the Bill of last year the Vice President of the Council said the overburdened Department could not exercise proper control over all the details of management. What right, said the Leader of the House, had the ratepayers to be represented on the management of a Voluntary School because the taxpayer contributed to the maintenance? but what right, he would ask, had the clergyman of a parish to exercise, as in many instances he did, sole and absolute control over the money supplied by the taxpayers. In what country in the world could it be shown that the clergy were the best educationalists? It was admitted that the clergy were not good men of business; would it not, then, be of the greatest advantage to a clergyman to have the assistance of a few business men in his parish? He represented a constituency in which were a very large number of Nonconformists, and they had no representation on the management of schools their taxes did so much to maintain in their midst. The Leader of the House seemed to think that if four-fifths of the population of a parish were Nonconformists, yet there was no grievance.

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY said he distinctly stated this was one of the inequalities of the existing system.

MR. LAMBERT said then why not bring in a Bill to remove the inequality. ["Hear, hear!"] He did not know how to take that cheer from the right hon. Gentleman. Let him follow the advice of his own supporters. In the constituency of South Molton Nonconformists were compelled to send their children to schools on the management of which they had not the least influence. It would increase the efficiency of Voluntary Schools to have this outside element introduced, he was certain it would in no way injure these schools, and as an educationalist he had no desire whatever to injure the schools. He supported the Instruction in the full belief that to adopt it would increase the efficiency of the schools and would remove that inequality which was admitted to exist. It would be for the benefit of Voluntary Schools that the principle of the Instruction should be embodied in the Bill. Nonconformists had a very great grievance in regard to the appointment of teachers. Over the doors of the Voluntary Schools of the country might be written the words, "No Nonconformist need apply here for the position of teacher." He claimed for Nonconformists the right to participate in the teaching work, and a share in the amount the State granted for teaching purposes. He could not but think that the Bill had less the interests of education in view than the interests of a proselytising church. If not this, why not accept the principle of proper representation on the management?

VISCOUNT CRANBORNE (Rochester) observed that, while he had a good deal of sympathy with what had been said as to the rights of parents, he should vote most heartily against this Instruction. He would submit to the House that a great deal of the discussion was beside the point. This was not a Bill for regulating the management of Voluntary Schools, but it was a Bill of a much smaller kind. The right hon. Member for Rotherham spoke of it as a great settlement. It was not a settlement at all, as everybody must know. It was a matter very much smaller than that, having nothing whatever to do with the management of the school, the whole object being to pay certain sums of money—[*Opposition cheers*]—which were to be administered under certain conditions which the representatives of the taxpayer, through the Education Minister, were to lay down, and that money was to be paid to the Voluntary Schools in order that the people of this country who believed in Voluntary Schools should not suffer for that belief. ["Hear, hear!"] It was clear that the local body, who under the control of the Education Department, would have most to say to the distribution of the money would be the associations, and if that was the case surely any representation there should be should be on the boards of association, who would have the management of the money, and not on the management of the schools. Was it seriously proposed that parents should be represented on the boards of associations. It would be perfectly impossible to arrange clauses by which parents themselves should be represented on the associations. He next came to the ratepayer, and he must say that of all the absurd proposals, the one that they should have a representation of the ratepayers without a contribution from them was the most absurd. ["Hear, hear!"] His hon. Friend who had recently spoken from that side of the House had said the Bill was quite certain to pass, but he ventured to say if a proposal was made that there should be direct control by the ratepayer without contribution from the ratepayer the Measure would not pass. ["Hear, hear!"] Under certain conditions he would accept the ratepayers' representation on these associations. Give the Voluntary Schools the share of the rates they were entitled to in all justice and they would willingly accept representation on the boards of the associations. ["Hear!"] But this was only an interim Bill; and dealing with an interim Bill, and waiting for the ultimate settlement which they knew must come, they should resist with all their power the idea of representation of ratepayers upon the associations when there was no contributions from the ratepayers. ["Hear, hear!"] Let them have representation with taxation but not representation without taxation. If the House once passed this Instruction, a tremendous field for controversy would be opened up. He hoped for that reason, because of the enormous complications which it would involve in the conduct of the Bill, and because it was a Bill, not for the management of schools, but for the distribution of money in the case of Voluntary Schools which required it, that the House would, by a large majority, refuse to accept the Instruction. ["Hear, hear!"]

MR. LAWSON WALTON (Leeds, S.) observed that the noble Lord had given three reasons for voting against these Instructions. Those three reasons struck any friend of the public voice in the control of the public education of the country as somewhat strange, both in principle and in the mode in which the noble Lord had conveyed them to the House. His first remark was, that the Bill provided for an increased grant towards the popular education of the country, which was conducted through the machinery of the Voluntary Schools. It was not a Bill, said the noble Lord, for effecting further and better arrangements for the management of these schools. The ground of the objection of the Opposition to the Bill in its present form was, that it was a provision for increasing financial support without provision for further more effective popular representation. The argument which would induce the noble Lord to vote against the Instruction was an argument which would induce Members on the Opposition side to most strongly support it. The second reason the noble Lord had given was, that the money was not to be paid to the schools. It was to find its way to these associations, but the beneficiaries were to receive this money in such driblets as the voluntary associations might choose to dispense funds which passed through their hands. Surely if the money was to be applied to the schools the necessities of the school were to be considered in the application of the funds. The noble Lord's third argument was, that he wished to retain the right of concession of popular control as the terms of a bargain which he offered. He acknowledged the justice of the concession; he acknowledged that some measure of controlling the government of a school established for popular interests and maintained by popular funds ought to be made.

VISCOUNT CRANBORNE: No; I said nothing of the kind.

MR. WALTON: He said, "We will concede that when you give us direct access to the rates, and do not leave us to Imperial grants for educational purposes." There were two arguments in favour of this proposal which had not yet been met. How did this proposal stand as regarded principle? Could there be, on any ground of principle, an objection to the principle that, in the case of a school—although voluntary in its origin and in its feature of primary control—which was popular in its character and operation, which was the only school in the district, and maintained largely by public funds, they should ensure for public opinion some representation in the control of that institution? The answer given them was, that the institution had connected itself with the Church of England as a denominational body. But the noble Lord would be the first to insist that the Church of England, though denominational in its character, was a national institution; that its members were members of that institution because they were citizens of this country, and that every inhabitant of these villages, by the theory of the law and constitution, was a member of the church which had established that school for the purpose of popular education, and had, by virtue of that constructive membership, in relation to his citizenship some title to a voice in the management of that institution. Therefore, on principle, he asked the House to say there was every reason why an institution, national in its character and popular in its operations, should have some provision for popular representation in regard to its control. On the ground of expediency, what answer was there to the argument used by his hon. and learned Friend the Member for Dorset? In the interest of expediency, surely the friends of Voluntary Schools should consult public opinion in regard to their management. He knew of no mode by which the suspicion of clerical influence could be more effectively disarmed, or the beneficial influence of the schools could be better secured, that by insuring some measure of popular representation in their management, which would enlist the enthusiasm of the people in whose districts they existed and excite their interest and render the operations of the schools in the future more beneficent in the interests of education and to the advantage of the districts in which they were established. Until they heard some objection to the Instruction on the ground of principle or expediency, they on that side of the House would feel that they were right—notwithstanding the danger to which it was said the passing of the Measure, about which they were not enthusiastic, might be exposed—in supporting the Instruction and asking the House to accept it. ["Hear, hear!"]

*SIR ALBERT ROLLIT (Islington, S.) said, as a strong supporter of the Bill on grounds both of private faith and educational economy, he desired to say a few words, not controversially, and least of all of theological controversy, but from the standpoint of education and in the real interests of the Voluntary Schools. The principle of the Instruction seemed to commend itself to almost all parts of the House, and the objections raised related chiefly to questions of procedure and to verbal modifications. In supporting the Instruction he gave utterance to what he believed to be the feeling of the majority of his constituents—lay and clerical. He felt it his duty to support the principle of the Instruction last Session, and on the previous stage of the Bill, and he could not help reminding hon. Friends who objected to the Instruction that the underlying principles of the Bill of last Session, whatever else might be said of it, were of a distinctly representative character. The local authorities were made educational authorities, and, though there was to be the supervision of a central authority, the Bill was of a distinctly local representative character. The corollary of increased grants was security for good and efficient management, and this would be secured by some representation of the parents. The guidance of experience justified the adoption of the Instruction. There were many schools already in which there was representation of parents. There were many Churchmen, including dignitaries of the Church, who strongly advocated the cause of representation, and he believed that, among the most efficient schools were those in which the representative principle was brought to bear in keeping them in line with the general course of education, and modifying and keeping in check extremes which might injure denominational education. He believed that the proposal contained in the Instruction would be in the interests of education and Voluntary Schools. One great difficulty in elementary education at the present time was the want of interest of parents in the teaching and instruction of their children. He believed, judging from opportunities of observation he had had at prize-givings and the like, that the more parents were brought into direct touch with the education of the children the more would the efficiency of that education be increased, and the educational progress of the school would be greater if it were aided by sympathy in the home. He believed that the proposal contained in the Instruction would even be an advantage to each denomination. One of the desires of many denominations was to attach new members to themselves; and interest in the schools of the denomination, by attracting parents, would attach them in many cases to the denominations themselves. So, from a religious aspect, he thought the proposal would prove beneficial. What was the chief objection urged by his hon. Friend the Member for Rochester and others to the practical representation of parents? It was that this was a grant in aid from a central authority, and that the assistance was not to come from the rates. But the Bill proposed to exempt Voluntary Schools from rates. This deficiency in the rates would have to be made up by the ratepayers, who therefore would have some claim to representation. Although the amount of the deficiency in the rates might be comparatively small, it was not correct therefore to say there would be no contribution whatever from the ratepayers. Though made in the form he had indicated, the contribution carried with it some claim for representation, and as the local authority would lose by the exemption, that body had also some similar claim, and grants in aid to local authorities, though made by the State, had to be administered by the representatives of the ratepayers. He had risen to express what he believed were the views of his constituency, and certainly of the great majority of laymen there. The clergy of the Rural Deanery of Islington, at a meeting at which the subject was discussed, had also, he was informed, by a majority passed a resolution that some representation of parents was desirable in the interests of education and the Voluntary Schools. He advocated what he believed to be right in principle. Representation of parents and parishioners would keep the schools in line with the growth of education and public opinion, and enable them to carry on their work in stimulating competition with the Board Schools. He believed in the maintenance of both Board and Voluntary Schools, the maintenance of the latter of which would prevent a possible reaction against all education owing to its great cost, in which respect the Bill would help London much less than Lancashire, which he regarded as most unjust; and because he did not think the Instruction aimed adversely at Voluntary Schools, but would carry out a right principle with advantage to those schools, he should give it his hearty support.

*MR. CARVELL WILLIAMS (Notts, Mansfield) said that the Member who had just spoken had displayed the liberality and independence which usually characterised his speeches, but he had made one slight mistake. He had said that there seemed to be general acquiescence in the principle involved in the Instruction, but there had been a signal exception in the speech of the Leader of the House, who had distinctly denied the right asserted by the Instruction. There had been a great contrast between the speeches of the hon. Members for Cricklade and Lincoln. Both expressed sympathy with the object of the Instruction, but the latter had a greater desire to befriend the subscribers, who could take care of themselves, than the parents, who were poor and feeble. The Leader of the House had given them, what he called, the whole philosophy of the matter, but, if so, it was but a narrow and superficial philosophy. The Instruction was based on the broad principle of expediency. This was not, as had been stated, a mere question of £ s. d., for it was one of those cases in which it could not be said that "money answereth all things." Something more was wanted to insure efficient popular education—viz., popular interest. They needed the assistance of parents, who did not at present realise their responsibility in regard to the education of their children. It had been contended that the control of the Education Department was sufficient, but the Department was too far off; it had too little local knowledge and had no popular sympathy. They heard last Session much of the rights of parents in regard to religious teaching; but the champions of those rights were now silent. If they had local representation less would be heard of the pranks of clerics in Voluntary Schools—men like the Vicar of Willesden, for instance. At present, when such clergymen were complained of in that House, they were told that the Department had no authority, and minded its own business; but, with a local representative body, there would be some one whose business it was to prevent such improprieties. If the schools were really the schools of the people, they could correct whatever might be amiss in them; while, if the schools prospered, they would have a legitimate pride in their success. He was sorry that a large number of the parents of children in elementary schools were lacking in a sense of responsibility, and he held that the parents of the children could do far more than they had yet done to assist the school managers and the School Boards to give efficient education. If the people of a locality could be made to feel that the schools were not the parson's schools but their schools, then, when anything went amiss, they would feel themselves responsible and seek to apply the remedy, while if the schools were efficient and prosperous they would feel that they had a share in the credit.

Mr. D. F. GODDARD (Ipswich) said the question was not so much to whom was this money to be paid, but whose money was it that was going to be paid. As the money would come from the taxes of the people, the people had a right to some representation on these schools. The principle of representative management was, in a sense, in the Bill, but it was there in its most objectionable form. These associations of schools were to be the means of distributing the money, and would have some kind of control over its distribution, but they could not in any sense, constitutionally or popularly, be called representative associations. The Bill set up an authority as representative which was only a sectarian authority, and they strongly objected to that as a retrograde step. The Act of 1870 recognised elementary schools of all sorts, but this Bill recognised denominational bodies as representative, and committed large sums of money to them. These bodies would become, in a sense, competitive with the elected School Boards, and so would put the School Boards to a disadvantage. So far as they could gather, the only kind of representation in the Bill was that these schools were to be subject to the approval or disapproval of the Department; but the Board Schools had to satisfy the public as well. The Bill was an anti-School Board Bill, it would injure the School Board system, and displayed an anti-local control spirit. The Estimates which came to hand that morning proposed to increase the 165 schools which received a special grant under the Act of 1870 to 400, and the grant was to be raised from £26,400 to £41,600. Was this the relief which was to balance the £620,000? [*Cries of* "Order!"]

*Mr. SPEAKER said the question before the House was whether adequate representation should be given, and these figures did not refer to that question.

Mr. GODDARD asked why they should not make a just and fair attempt to consult the wishes of all the parents. That could only be done by electing representatives of the parents. These schools were supported and kept in existence by public assistance. They recognised the principle of representation in endowed schools, although in that case there was not nearly so much justification for it as in the case of the elementary schools. The people were taxed for these purposes, and where there was taxation there should be representation. He would like to make one quotation from a speech of Dr. Temple's on the Report of the Royal Commission of 1888. He said:—

> "There is no security for efficiency without interested local supervision—['hear, hear']—there is no security for economy without the vigilance of those who bear the substantial burden of the cost."

That was all that they asked for.

*Mr. ERNEST GRAY (West Ham, N.) said he had very much sympathy with the Instruction before the House, and could not bring himself, knowing what he did of the Voluntary Schools of the country, to vote against it. Without any doubt many of our Voluntary Schools were as ably managed as the very best Board Schools in the country, and those were the schools where the management was of a wide and democratic character. [*Opposition cheers.*] Whether under trust deeds or in violation of them the managers had associated with themselves representatives of all classes of the community. Those were the schools which were upholding the credit of the Voluntary system. There were others, unhappily, where the management was very restricted in character, and others where the management was not only restricted but bad. No true friend of the Voluntary system would deny the existence of these blots on the system, or evade the opportunity of improving the bad schools. He looked upon this proposal as something more than a mere grant of money to the schools, and the setting up of a machinery to distribute that grant; he regarded it as an attempt to secure the efficiency of the Voluntary Schools—["hear, hear!"]—and he was convinced that nothing would more quickly secure the efficiency of the schools than their adequate management. No reference had been made to the fact that in many districts the single manager of the Voluntary School would gladly associate with himself others in the district. It must not be imagined that the restricted management was due to the action of the vicar or the local rector; it was in many cases in spite of the efforts made by the vicar. The fact was that those in the district, who knew that the burden of debt hung around the Voluntary School, would not associate themselves with the work of the school lest a part of the liability for the debt should rest upon them. This Bill would do something to remove that difficulty, and make it possible in such districts for persons to associate themselves with the managers as provided by the trust deeds. But there were schools in other districts—and he regretted to have to say it—of which the manager under the trust deed was but one person. There were cases in which the trust deed distinctly laid down that the local vicar was the sole manager of the school, and in which the vicar would not take any step to associate others with himself in the management of the school. [*Opposition cheers.*] What was happening in many parts of the country? What had happened recently? A liberal-minded vicar, a man desirous of doing the best for his school and for the children under his care, in spite of the trust deed, associated with himself many of the parents and other ratepayers in the district in the conduct of the school; but a new man had come into the district, he had sheltered himself behind the trust deed, turned his co-managers adrift, and insisted upon managing the school according to his own sweet will. [*Opposition cheers.*] He regretted that, while the Government were making efforts in this Bill to secure the efficiency of the Voluntary Schools, they would not take one of the very first steps essential to that efficiency—[*Opposition cheers*]—and make some provision for bringing up the bad Voluntary Schools to the level of the best Voluntary Schools. He admitted the difficulty in the way of incorporating clauses in the Bill by which this could be carried out. He was not sure that the terms of the Instruction were as satisfactory as personally he would wish. The object of the Instruction might be a good one, but there was more than a suspicion that the Instruction amounted to an attempt to establish a system of control over the Voluntary Schools that he, for one, was not desirous of bringing about. [*Ministerial cheers.*] He would not support any Amendment which would destroy the denominational character of the Voluntary Schools. ["Hear, hear!"] He was intensely desirous, in the best interests of the Voluntary Schools themselves, that the management should be as wide as possible; yet he held that the final control should rest in accord with the terms of the founder of the institution. The Instruction might be innocent enough if that was the object it sought to carry out, and the avoidance of such a word as "adequate" would have removed misconception. Unfortunately, it was not now possible to amend the Instruction, but he would suggest a method by which it seemed to him they might escape from the difficulties presented by the Instruction, and also give effect to what he believed to be the view of hon. Members on both sides of the House—namely, that the management of these schools should be made such that it would withstand all public criticism. ["Hear, hear!"] There was an Amendment on the Paper in the name of the hon. Member for the Barnstaple Division (Sir Cameron Gull), by which it was suggested that the Education Department should have, amongst other things set forth in the Bill, the power of insisting on the management being in accord with the requirements of the Education Department. It would not be possible to proceed hurriedly with Departmental schemes for bringing the management into line, but it would be possible to give the Education Department power to withhold these new grants in all cases where the management was unsatisfactory. That would in itself tempt the managers of the schools whose trust deeds provided for the management by one man, to bring up their trust deeds to the Charity Commissioners and obtain a provision for management by half-a-dozen or more persons—to popularise the management of the schools, and thus give effect to the wishes of all sections of the community, Nonconformists and Churchmen alike. That could be accomplished by amendments in Committee, and he should say that, if a representative of the Government could give them an assurance that in Committee some effort of that sort would be made, it would be an advantage rather than a disadvantage to withdraw the Instruction. To go on with the Instruction would have this result—many men, desirous of avoiding any suspicion of opposing the Bill, would vote against the Instruction. He would not risk that course, because he believed that the Instruction could be defended, if not in actual phraseology, certainly in the object it sought to achieve. [*Opposition cheers.*] He could not bring himself to vote against it, but he believed many would, and the result would be a decision recorded by this House against the principle embodied in this Instruction, and to have such a decision recorded would be fatal to the future efforts in this direction. [*Cheers.*] That was his opinion. It was not a question of what could be accomplished or what could not be accomplished under the Bill. He was not contending that the scope of the Bill should be widened indefinitely, but he asserted that the question of management was part and parcel of the Bill as it stood. ["Hear, hear!"] The Bill was to make for the efficiency of the schools, and without some reform in the management of the worst of the Voluntary Schools that efficiency could not be secured, no matter what they did either by increased grant or increased powers of the Education Department. He felt very strongly indeed that the position of the Voluntary Schools was not such as was frequently represented by those who sympathised with the Board system alone, and who detested the Voluntary system; it was not as bad as they would make it out. But it was not as good as many on the Government side of the House would have them to believe, largely because they had a strong dislike for the Board School system. There were good Voluntary Schools and bad Voluntary Schools, and he stood there as one who was intensely desirous of maintaining the Voluntary Schools as an integral part of the national system of education in this country. He felt, however, that that could not be brought about unless the bad schools were brought up to the level of the very best. Improvement in the management would accomplish that, and he therefore hoped the principle, if not the phraseology, of the Instruction would be accepted by the House. [*Cheers.*]

*Mr. J. W. LOGAN (Leicestershire, Harborough) supported most heartily the Instruction before the House, and did so because, although he was quite prepared to grant, under proper conditions, as much money for the purpose of education as any Government would propose to grant, he was strongly opposed to the granting of a single penny unless the local authorties or the parents had some voice in the control of the expenditure of the money. The noble Lord the Member for Rochester was under the impression that the adoption of the Instruction would delay the passing of the Bill. Personally he thought that the acceptance of the Instruction, even in a modified form, would do more to facilitate the passing of the Bill than anything else the Government could do. It was little less than monstrous that the taxpayers of the country, who found five-sixths of the money for the so-called Voluntary Schools, should not have any voice in the management of those schools, while those who found the one-fifth of the money should have the entire management and control of the schools. But he, as the representative of a large number of working men, did not look upon this question merely from the pounds, shillings and pence point of view. If by the operation of this Bill the Government deprived the working classes of the opportunity of securing the very best education for their children, they did the children a grievous harm and did an irreparable injury to the entire community. He claimed, not only in the interests of the parents and children, but of the nation, the undoubted right of every parent to have a voice in the selection of the education which was to be imparted to his children. The question of parental control was peculiarly a poor man's question, because the well-to-do people could send their children to what school they chose. It was a disgrace to us as a nation that there were to-day 8,000 villages in England in which there was only one school, and that a school dominated, in most cases, by one man, the Church parson, and that to that school the Nonconformist parent was compelled to send his child whether he liked it or not. Working men were beginning to realise what education meant. They were beginning to realise that without education their children must grow up hewers of wood and drawers of water, and, recognising the hard struggle they themselves had had, they were anxious to better the lot of their children if they could. During the last 20 years he had had a splendid object-lesson as to the absolute necessity of some control over the Voluntary Schools. In the little village in which he lived there was a Voluntary School, a school which was endowed by some pious man in the past. The endowment, he doubtless thought, would be of benefit to the community, but, instead of that, what had been the result? He knew of more than one boy who to-day was at the tail of the plough earning a miserable pittance, simply and solely because the school at which he was educated was dominated, and managed and controlled by a self-elected body. Whereas had that school been in years gone by what it was now—owing to a change made during the lifetime of the late Liberal Government—those boys would have been able, thanks to a better education, to earn a decent living. He appealed for popular control over those schools because he knew there was a strong feeling amongst the clerical managers that any kind of education would do for the poor man's child. He would quote the Colonial Secretary in support of that view. He quoted the right hon. Gentleman, not for any Party purpose, but because he expressed that view much better than it could be done by 999 out of every 1,000. The right hon. Gentleman said:—

> "The idea gains currency that a cheap education is good enough for the poor man's child, and that anything better must be reserved for his superiors. To such a cruel and insolent doctrine I object. I do not admit that education ought to be watered down and reduced and limited to the level of the poor. It is, believe me, the interest of the nation, as well as the interest of the parents and of the children, that each child, according to its natural gifts and aptitudes, should have the opportunities of the best cultivation, and that all should be stimulated and encouraged to develop the faculties with which God has gifted them, to their highest extent."

It was because he wished to see developed the natural gifts and aptitudes with which God had gifted so many of our children that he desired to see the parents of the children having some control over the schools. He could call the Vice President of the Council as a witness that that control was necessary. The right hon. Gentleman said:—

> "The labourer's children are turned out of school to scare crows at 11 years old, and often by the connivance of the School Attendance Committee officers, who are under the thumb of the farmers, at a much earlier age."

It was because he knew that the parents did not wish to have their children turned out to scare crows at 11 years of age that he wished to give the parents this control over the schools. And who refused the parents this control? It was the Church of England, which claimed to be the Church of the people, and which declared that love for it was deep-rooted in the hearts of the English people. Then, if the Church believed that love for it was deep-rooted in the hearts of the people, why did it refuse to the people this voice in the control of education? For his view, that those who found the money should have some control over the expenditure, he had the Colonial Secretary on his side, for the right hon. Gentleman said, a few years ago:—

> "The existence of sectarian schools supported by State grants, is no doubt a very serious question in itself, and one which some day or other ought to receive consideration. Whenever the time comes for its discussion I for one shall not hesitate to express my opinion that contributions of Government money, whether great or small, ought in all cases to be accompanied by some form of representative control. To my mind the spectacle of a so-called National School turned into a private preserve by clerical managers and used for exclusive purposes of politics or religion, is one which the law ought not to tolerate."

He supported the Resolution, not in the interest of any Party or in the interest of any sect, but for the sake of the children and even for the sake of the English nation as a whole, for he believed that, unless the people were provided with a thorough and practical system of primary education, many hon. Members of the House would live to see the commercial supremacy of England shaken.

On the return of Mr. SPEAKER, after the usual interval,

COLONEL MILWARD (Warwick, Stratford-on-Avon) said that he did not like to give a silent vote on this Instruction, because, on the Second Reading of the Bill, he spoke very strongly in favour of a Measure of representative management. But he could not resist the arguments of the First Lord in opposition to this Instruction. The right hon. Gentleman pointed out that the present Bill was not a final Measure; and it was evident that the Bill dealt with but a few of the educational questions which required attention. He hoped that the question of representative management would soon be brought up, but if it were introduced into the present Bill it would occupy the attention of the House for a least a week. [*Opposition cries of* "No!"] At present there were 40 pages of Amendments to a Bill which of itself only occupied two pages. [*Cheers.*] He remembered that last year, when a similar Bill was before that House, an Amendment that had been brought forward was strongly resisted by the Government on the ground that if they were to accept it they would be compelled to accept an enormous number of consequential amendments. The same objection applied to this Instruction. Therefore, although he approved of the principle of the Instruction, he intended to loyally follow his leaders. They had a long series of discussions before them, which would probably take some weeks to get through, and which would no doubt try their patience and even their tempers, and unless they loyally supported the Government it was impossible to say when they would reach the end of their labours. For his own part, he believed that the question of the representative management of these schools was ripe for decision, and in a vast number of the schools representative management had been carried out with great success. The trustee managers of the schools thought too lightly of their office, and generally looked to the clergyman of the parish for guidance. He thought that hon. Members opposite attached too much importance to parental management. He attached importance to the representative management of persons who were not necessarily connected with the Church. He believed that this question of representative management would come to the front before very long. The question before them, however, was what would happen to this Bill if this Instruction were carried? Why, it would wreck it beyond all doubt. ["Hear, hear!" *and ironical cheers and laughter.*] He was aware that there were many hon. Gentlemen opposite who wished well to the Voluntary Schools, but there were others who, on the contrary, were bitterly opposed to its principle, and who supported this particular Instruction with the object of defeating the Measure. What would the Government do if this Instruction were carried? Why, they would either withdraw the Bill or they would resign. ["Hear, hear!" *and Opposition cries of* "Oh!" *and laughter.*] That was the natural inference from what had fallen from the right hon. Gentleman the First Lord of the Treasury. For his own part he might say that he intended to vote against the Instruction, because he was not willing to risk the loss of the Bill. ["Hear, hear!"]

MR. J. M. PAULTON (Durham, Bishop Auckland) said that the remarks of the hon. and gallant Gentleman who had just sat down would tend to show that hon. Members on the Government side of the House were not in the least afraid of popular representation in the management of these schools.

COLONEL MILWARD: We are not.

MR. PAULTON said that the mode in which the hon. and gallant Gentleman intended to show his approval of popular representation was by voting against this Instruction. The noble Lord opposite had said, "Do not let us have representation without taxation," but that was the standpoint of the Liberal Party also. They were to have taxation under this Bill, but they were not to have representation on the management of the schools. Hon. Members opposite alleged as their reason for voting against this Instruction, that, were they to accept it they would open the door for so much discussion that it would be impossible to pass the Bill through the House within the limits of an ordinary Session. What a confession of weakness on the part of the Government supporters that was. It was not from the Opposition side of the House that this issue had been raised. The Members of the Opposition were willing to leave things as they were or to accept equal treatment for the Board Schools. Although they had always contended that some form of popular representation on the management of the Voluntary Schools would largely add to their efficiency, and to conciliatory action which they desired to see adopted, especially in rural districts, they would not have raised the point had matters been allowed to remain as they were. The Government, however, had chosen to set up one class of schools against the other. The First Lord of the Treasury and the noble Lord had contended that, inasmuch as under the present system of free education the parents contributed nothing to the grant in aid, they had no right to representation on the management of these schools. But how about the case of schools in which fees were paid by the parents? Could it be said that in such a case the parents were not interested in the management of the schools? In his own constituency, as against 720 children attending free schools, 1,231 attended schools in which fees were paid. Surely, in that case, it could not be said that the parents did not contribute to the cost of education. He contended that under the provisions of this Bill parents would contribute to this grant as taxpayers. When the noble Lord said that ratepayers would not contribute to this grant he forgot that ratepayers were also taxpayers, and that, therefore, they ought to have a voice in the management of the schools. Whether it were the local authority or the parents who received a measure of control in this matter, he cared very little, though he would prefer that it should be the local authority, because, as had been pointed out by his hon. Friend, the Member for Rotherham, parental representation would probably involve an additional election. In an Amendment which he had put down on the Paper, and which he would not have the opportunity of moving if this Instruction was defeated, he proposed that two representatives should be appointed by the Parish Council to represent the popular element upon the management of Voluntary Schools. There was no desire in this Instruction or in any Amendment that might be put down in consequence of it, to kill the principle of denominationalism. [" Hear, hear! "] His reason for advocating such a plan as this was that, as a rule, in most districts, there was a fanatical clergyman who was determined to carry through his will in opposition to the opinions of his other parishioners; and the smallest measure of the popular element that was introduced would do a great deal to remove friction of that sort. [" Hear, hear! "] Beyond that, however, there was the broad principle for which they contended, and they held that it was a confession of weakness on the part of the Government that they would not admit that this was a subject they could afford to discuss in this Bill. [" Hear, hear! "] Whatever was the result on this Instruction, the discussion would do an enormous amount of good, for it would show the country that the Government was not willing to subject their proposals to the light of discussion in the House. [" Hear, hear! "] That remark was cheered from the other side of the House. It was a proof of what he said, for hon. Gentlemen opposite knew that discussion killed the Bill of last year. [" Hear, hear! "] For the reasons he had stated he should support the Instruction.

Mr. G. C. T. BARTLEY (Islington, N.) thought that nobody would accuse him of not being heartily in sympathy with denominational schools, as he preferred to call them. He should strongly oppose anything that would tend to the control of these schools by any representative body, for he felt that if they were subjected to the control of an elective body, the object of their existence might be rendered impossible by the introduction into the management of a majority not in sympathy with it. He for one was in no way afraid of some sort of representation in the management of those schools. [" Hear, hear! "] There was no doubt that the management of any body by one despot was a source of danger to the institution he managed. [*Opposition cheers.*] If the clergyman of a district was a good all-round man, whatever representation in reason was put in the management of the schools, he would still practically rule. If, on the other hand, he was not a wise man, many of his mistakes would be avoided. [" Hear, hear! "] He believed, therefore, that it would really be for the benefit of denominational schools if a limited representation were put on the management. [" Hear, hear!"] He could not see any danger in it. To his mind, the larger the interest taken in the schools in any district the more likely those schools were to be well managed, and for the Church of England to say it was afraid of having representative managers seemed to him a confession of weakness. [*Opposition cheers.*] The greatest benefit sometimes accrued to an institution by introducing an opponent into its management. They had only to look to Scotland to find this. There, there was a very strong religious feeling, and people were, perhaps, somewhat bigoted; still, one denomination worked harmoniously with another, and although the Roman Catholic schools were not numerous many of them were worked under a general board, and no difficulties had arisen. ["Hear, hear!"] It must, however, be clearly indicated that there must not be such a representation as would swamp the denominational element. That would be most unfair, and he was sure it would be possible to frame a scheme by which that would be prevented. They were not now discussing the details of a plan—[*Opposition cheers*]—they were simply considering whether they should or should not in Committee try to frame a scheme by which a limited representation could be established. The Government had a very large majority, and they could stop any sort of representation which would injure the characteristics of a school, and he, for one, should certainly vote against anything that would tend to that, because in his view denominational teaching was the backbone of education. The Instruction seemed to him to be in no sense opposed to the spirit of denominational education. On the contrary, in his judgment, it would tend very largely to do away with some of those causes of complaint and matters of irritation which arose sometimes. ["Hear, hear!"] On his side of the House, with the exception of one or two Members, notably, the noble Lord the Member for Rochester, nearly every Member had said he was strongly in favour of some sort of representation, but gave other reasons for voting against the Instruction. It was argued that this Instruction would open the door to a certain number of Amendments, and having been a Member of the House for a number of years, he knew that that was a practical objection; but when they came to consider the great scheme of renewing the power of Voluntary Schools and giving them large financial assistance he did not think it was at all desirable that a Government, with so large a majority, should hesitate to do what was right simply because of that difficulty. ["Hear, hear!"] Some hon. Members had expressed the fear that the adoption of the Instruction would lead to the loss of the Bill. That was out of the question. In fact, he believed that the Bill would pass all the more easily if, by granting this principle of representation, they removed a grievance that rankled in the bosoms of many persons. He should himself prefer to delete the word "adequate" from the Instruction, but it was not a point of very great importance, and Members on his side of the House could take the word as meaning adequate in their sense. He thought that one representative member out of four or five members of the Board would fully meet the necessities of the case. The change would be extremely popular, and would be likely to strengthen the Church of England. He regretted, therefore, that the Government would not consent to this Instruction, for which he should himself certainly vote. [*Opposition cheers.*]

Mr. CHARLES MORLEY (Brecknock) said that public management ought always to accompany the expenditure of public money. The Instruction suggested two alternative courses—the representation of local authorities or the representation of the parents. He much preferred the former, because he could not subscribe to the claims that had been put forward on behalf of the parents. If the parents in some cases paid fees they need not do so. The payment was optional, and therefore did not constitute a claim to representation. If education had been made compulsory solely in the interests of the children, it would not be unreasonable to give the parents control under that education; but they knew that when the Liberal Party advocated Free Education they did so mainly on the ground that education had been made compulsory, not only in the interests of the children, but also very largely for the benefit of the State, and the argument was that it was not unreasonable to ask the State to pay that which was for its own benefit. The First Lord of the Treasury had said that the Voluntary School buildings had been paid for by the generous contributions of Churchmen in the past, whose object it was to maintain the distinctive teaching of their Church. That he thought was open to qualification. It was quite possible to believe that these generous Churchmen were animated, not only by a desire to promote the teaching of their Church, but also by a desire to promote the efficiency of our national system of education. Then, when the first Government grant of £20,000 was made to the British and Foreign School Society and the National School Society it was distinctly stated that the money was not to be spent on the education of the children, but in school buildings. Therefore, these buildings had not been erected exclusively by generous Churchmen. A not inconsiderable portion of them had been erected at the cost of the nation. It was strange that the members of the richest Church in the world were unable or unwilling to support their own schools. There had been in the past, and there were no doubt now, very generous supporters of Church Schools, but the position in which these schools found themselves to-day was largely due to the fact that the generosity and liberality of the few could not compensate for the indifference and apathy of the many. Three-fourths or four-fifths of the cost of the maintenance of these schools the public contributed, and yet the public had no control over them. That was not a just arrangement, and he should therefore vote for an Instruction which sought to place these public elementary schools, which were so largely supported out of public money, under some local control.

COLONEL SANDYS (Lancashire, Bootle) thought that the Instruction was one deserving support, and he regretted that the Government would not embody its principle in the Bill. [*Opposition cheers.*] The Government were asking them to vote the taxes of the people for the education of the rising generation and at the same time refused to grant to the taxpayers the right of representation in consideration of the money so voted. In the circumstances he must go into the Lobby with the Mover of the Instruction. [*Opposition cheers.*] He regretted greatly having to do so, but it was with him a question of supporting a principle. It was one of the constitutional maxims of this country that representation and taxation should go together; we had decided that our institutions should be representative, and he did not see why that principle should not be applied to the education of the country. It was his fixed impression that a clerical despot was the least suitable of men to exercise absolute control over a school or other institution. [*Opposition cheers.*] He was very glad that the word "adequate" had been allowed to remain in the Instruction, because if there was to be representation it ought to be sufficient and not illusory. There were about 22,000 clergy of the Church of England, and of these between 6,000 and 7,000 were known to be members of clerical secret societies. [*Cries of* "No!" *and Opposition cheers.*] He could give the names if necessary, and in the circumstances he certainly held public control to be necessary.

MR. T. P. WHITTAKER (York, W.R., Spen Valley) congratulated the two last speakers upon the Ministerial side of the House upon the fact that they were going to Vote in favour of the Instruction of which they approved. Other Gentlemen opposite had admitted that some form of popular representation would be just and reasonable, and even necessary; and had these proceeded to hunt about for excuses for not voting for this proposal? They had defended the principle, and then condemned the method of carrying it out. It was the old Tory cry of "not thus and not now." Why did not hon. Gentlemen who agreed with this principle, but disagreed with the method, draft an Instruction themselves? A good deal had been said about the word "adequate," and there had been an attempt to read into the word a meaning that it did not bear. "Adequate" did not necessarily mean a majority. It was for the House to decide what amount of representation would be adequate, and as hon. Members opposite were in a large majority they could determine themselves what would be a due representation. All that the supporters of the Instruction urged was, that the representation should be adequate to insure religious liberty and an efficient system of education in the Voluntary Schools; and he thought that a reasonable minority of representation would be sufficient to secure that. They would make a great mistake if they applied the phrase, "taxation and representation." too literally and individually, because they did not act upon the principle in this country. The elections of Members of Parliament, for example, were by persons who were never tested as to whether they paid taxation or not. These electors voted because they were ratepayers, and therefore it was clear that they did not recognise, in this case, the principle of representation and taxation with the strictness which hon. Members suggested should be applied. The reason for desiring local representation was, that the parents were compelled to send their children to those denominational schools. In his own constituency Nonconformist children who were demanding free education were being forced into Roman Catholic schools; and this was a serious grievance. He therefore thought that this was an additional reason for asking that the parents and the ratepayers should have some voice in the management of those schools. The question of local control was a village and small town question. Where there were School Boards the parents had a choice for their children; but where there were no Board Schools ought the parents to be compelled to accept the minimum of education that would satisfy the Department? He thought not. The parents and the inhabitants were entitled to claim that there should be a thoroughly efficient system of education, and the only way was to give the people in the locality a voice in the control of the schools. In thousands of parishes there were only the denominational schools at which the children could attend, but if local representation on the management were allowed this would modify the intolerance which existed with regard to those schools. He did not suggest that there should be a controlling voice in the election of the teacher, but a small minority of representation would have an influential voice in it. Their aim would be to prevent inequality and injustice and proselytising, and to secure comfort in the schools for the children of Dissenting parents, as well as to secure a chance for Dissenting pupil teachers in those schools. It was said that the people desired denominational education. If that was the case, then why did the Government fear to give the people a voice in the management of the schools? Representation on these schools would undoubtedly secure efficiency, because the local representatives would vote against teachers having imposed upon them the outside duties of playing organs in the churches; this would mean, therefore, more efficient teachers in those schools. Denominationalists claimed the sole local management because they provided the local funds, and they refused the ratepayers and parents a representation because they did not directly find any funds. But many places to-day found very little money. Some large towns only found 2s., 2s. 3d., and 2s. 6d. per head of the children, and the money so provided was not more than enough to pay the cost and maintenance of the buildings, as they were used for denominational purposes outside the purposes of education. The buildings were used for Sunday schools and for meetings in connection with the church. The Instruction would thus remove one great objection to the denominational system, while it would help the Voluntary Schools to get subscriptions.

MAJOR RASCH (Essex, S.E.) thought that there was a great deal in the views urged by the hon. Member for the Carnarvon Boroughs. ["Hear, hear!"] In the populous districts of Tilbury and the valley of the Thames, which he represented, those views were certainly supported. [*Opposition cheers.*] He would not attempt to criticise the proposals of the Government; he was not an expert in these matters, and he was not a fanatical enthusiast on the subject of education. [*Laughter.*] It had been said that Members on the Ministerial Benches were casting about how to vote with the Government. That was not a difficulty which appalled him at all. He should not follow the hon. Member for the Carnarvon Boroughs, because one must draw the line somewhere. [*Loud laughter.*] But, on the other hand, he had not the slightest intention of voting against him —[*Opposition cheers*]—because to do so would be in opposition to the convictions of the men he represented and the opinions which he held himself.

*MR. J. H. YOXALL (Nottingham, W.) regretted that the Leader of the House did not make his statement at the end of the Debate instead of at the beginning, because, having regard to the sympathy which had been expressed on his own side in favour of the Amendment, the decision of the Government might have been different. [*Ironical cheer by* the FIRST LORD of the TREASURY.] He hoped that even now it was not too late for the right hon. Gentleman to change his mind. ["Hear, hear!"] The desire on both sides of the House to have efficient management given to the Voluntary Schools obtained very widely outside the House as well. For the last four or five years in parish after parish, month after month, there had been held meetings of protest and indignation against what had been called the "unbeneficent despotism of the vicar in charge of the parish schools." The time would come when more than what was asked for now would be required. The wise course would be, instead of thus foolishly bolstering up the Voluntary system in an undemocratic way, to accept the olive branch which was held out to-night. Experience had shown what good representative management had done for the Voluntary Schools, and as to the argument that to admit the Instruction would be to open the door to innumerable Amendments, he submitted that precisely the opposite effect would be produced. The right hon. Gentleman said rate-aid postulates ratepayers' control, and State-aid State control. That was logical and cogent in the domain of argument, but what about the domain of fact? If it was urged that State-aid postulates State control, then they must go on to say that the State control must be as efficient as the ratepayers' control. That was notoriously not the case. The control of the ratepayers extended to the buildings, to the appointment of teachers, to the dismissal of teachers, to the use and finance of the school—it covered the whole ground, and included many things of which the Education Department took, and could take, no cognisance whatever, unless it put one of its agents on the committee of every school in the country. What was asked for could be done without damaging in the least the denominational character of Voluntary Schools.

MR. BRYNMOR JONES (Swansea Boroughs) supported the Instruction, in the first place because in his view the representation of local authorities upon the governing bodies of schools was proved by the experience of all those who had been concerned either in secondary or primary education, to have a highly beneficial effect. He spoke with knowledge and experience, derived not from English counties, but from his acquaintance with education in Wales and Monmouthshire. In the University of Wales, the three colleges, the intermediate schools, and the central board for intermediate education, local authorities had proper and adequate representation, and he did not believe there was a single gentleman in the House who would not say that the whole working of the Welsh system had been greatly assisted by the representation of public authorities on the governing bodies. He could not see why, in regard to Voluntary Schools, the Leader of the House should refuse some representation to the local authorities or the general community on the associations proposed to be created under this Bill.

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY: I did not refuse, but I did refuse to consider it in this Bill.

MR. BRYNMOR JONES inferred from that interruption that the right hon. Gentleman now, having heard all the speeches, accepted the principle of the Instruction.

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY: That is exactly what I said six hours ago.

MR. BRYNMOR JONES asked why, if so, there should be any difficulty in carrying out the principles in the passage of this Bill through the House. He found that by Clause 3 associations of schools were to be constituted in such manner, and in such areas, and with such governing bodies representative of the managers, as were approved by the Education Department. Why could not the right hon. Gentleman, after what he had said, assent to the Instruction moved, and then try to devise some scheme of management by which its terms might be carried out? ["Hear, hear!"] He supported the Instruction because also the Voluntary Schools were, in his judgment, public institutions supported mainly out of the public funds. ["Hear, hear!"] He assented to the proposition that originally the schools were started in the interests of one denomination, and for the sake of argument he would not say that that fact should be ignored, but he still maintained that substantially the Voluntary Schools were public institutions, supported chiefly by public money.

["Hear, hear!"] The subscriptions to the Voluntary Schools were a very small amount compared with the sum received from the Imperial Exchequer. During the last few years the Voluntary Schools in Cardiff had been receiving about £6,550 annually, and if the present Bill were carried they would receive £1,030 a year more from the State; while, on the other hand, the Voluntary subscriptions given by Church people to the schools amounted to about £700 only. ["Hear, hear!"] This had been going on for many years, and he contended that the time had now come, especially when so large an additional grant was to be made, when the schools should be managed, not in the interests of a particular denomination, but in the interests of the community at large. ["Hear, hear!"] The other day he was reading a lecture by a man whose name he was sure the Leader of the House would respect—Professor T. H. Green, of Oxford—and, speaking in a lecture as far back as 1878, he said, referring to this question, that it must never be forgotten that if the grant were to come to the Voluntary Schools from year to year, there must come a time when the interests of the community in the schools would become so great, and the claims of the State on the schools so great, that all private interests would disappear, and when the State might justly and rightly come forward and declare that the schools must henceforth be managed in the interests of the community generally. ["Hear, hear!"] Moreover, even in the interests of the classes directly concerned in the Voluntary system, it was expedient that some change should be made from the present system of clerical management. Those classes were three in number—the members of the Church, the parents, and the teachers. It was the general opinion that the schools, especially in the rural districts, were too much under clerical control, and Churchmen themselves admitted that it would be to the advantage of the schools and of education if the laity were now admitted to a larger share in the management of the schools. ["Hear, hear!"] As to the case of the parents, his observations on this point would refer more particularly to Wales, on the people of which the existing system bore very unjustly. ["Hear, hear!"] It was well known that Nonconformists largely outnumbered Churchmen in Wales, and that, notwithstanding, there were many places in which the only school was a Voluntary or Church School, managed almost wholly by the local clergyman. Surely hon. Members opposite, who assumed to be so anxious about the consciences of the parents, must perceive how hard in many cases this state of things must bear on the Welsh Nonconformist; and he was confident that if in such cases one or two Nonconformists were permitted to take part in the management of the school it would tend not only to the harmony of the parish but to the efficiency of the school. ["Hear, hear!"] The case of the teachers under the present system was perhaps the hardest of all. They were practically civil servants, and were paid out of the public funds, and yet they were placed entirely at the mercy of those of a particular denomination to whom the school belonged. This was neither fair nor expedient, and ought to be prevented. Hon. Members opposite had practically admitted that, in the interests of education, a case had been made out for some alteration in the management of the Voluntary Schools if this further grant was to be made. The Bill, through the provision relating to the association of schools, gave the Government an easy opportunity of introducing such changes in the management of the schools as the Instruction proposed, and he thought they would act most unwisely in the interests of the schools themselves if they rejected it. He was curious to learn, after the articles he had read, what the Vice President of the Council had to say in this matter. Personally he should be utterly astonished if that right hon. Gentleman did not see his way to follow the hon. Member for Islington in his firm and consistent demand for some representation of the community upon these Voluntary bodies.

SIR EDWARD CLARKE (Plymouth) who was received with loud cheers, said that, as one supporting this Bill with all his heart and desiring to see it carried, and as one who felt that the Government had done the right thing in the decision they had come to, and that they would have imperilled the Bill by throwing open the discussion to those questions which were raised by the Instruction, he thought it was time to say a few words. [*Opposition cheers.*] He understood the meaning of those cheers, and would refer to them in a moment. He would say that if the Government had taken a different course, and by accepting this Instruction had enlarged the area of the Bill, had practically added to it a supplementary Bill, or added the opportunities, at all events, for discussing a supplementary Bill—["hear, hear!"]—they would not only have suffered in the time that would have been expended in the discussion of those matters, but would have met with a resolute resistance from a great many of their own supporters. [*Cheers and counter cheers.*] He understood the meaning of that cheer. It was a repetition, in another form, of the observation made in both of the speeches from the other side they had just listened to with regard to the number of Members on the Ministerial side of the House who had spoken in sympathy with the Instruction, and who had expressed their intention of either voting for it or of not voting at all. The number of those speeches was deceiving hon. Gentlemen opposite, and would produce an absolutely false impression outside unless that impression were corrected. [*Cheers and counter cheers.*] When a Bill like this, to which a very large majority of the House had pledged itself—the most popular Bill, so far as Members on that side of the House were concerned, that they could be called upon to support in the House—was under discussion, and when certain Members on that side of the House, for different reasons, felt bound to separate themselves from the Government and to refuse to listen to the exhortation and the appeal made by the First Lord of the Treasury, it was necessary for them, for their own position with their constituents, to give some explanation of the vote they were going to give. Hon. Members opposite had had the gratification of listening to a series of speeches that evening from hon. Members on that side of the House when they might have had three or four times as many—[*cheers*]—from men who felt quite as strongly upon this question, and who thought, as he did, that the Government had taken the right course. [*Cheers.*] With regard to this Instruction, it was not a matter which he thought needed discussion in detail, because the objection of the Government to it was not founded upon the consideration of the results of any possible legislation that might follow if it were adopted, but was founded upon the necessity of going straight through with this Bill as it was—[*loud cheers*]—in order to carry out the great object to which they were pledged, and which the whole of their supporters desired them to accomplish. There were two classes of representation suggested by the Instruction. With regard to the representation of the ratepayers on the managing bodies of Voluntary Schools, he saw no excuse for the proposal whatever. ["Hear, hear!"] If a Voluntary School, conducted by those who belonged to the creed in connection with which it was founded, was doing efficient work, was giving good education as tested by the inspectors of the Education Department, it was entitled to be paid a share of this grant, and there was no excuse for desiring to thrust the ratepayers' representatives upon its managing body. ["Hear, hear!"] With regard to the representation of the parents, they heard read out, by one of the hon. Members for Islington, a Resolution which was arrived at by the clergy in the rural deanery of Islington declaring that it was desirable to have a representation of the parents upon the managing bodies. Perhaps in their case it was, and if that were so, let them have it. ["Hear, hear!"] They could have it to-morrow without any interference from the House—[*cheers*]—and in very many cases throughout the country, especially in the rural districts, the clergyman did associate with himself, to the great advantage of the school—[*Opposition cheers*]—and to the great relief of his own anxiety and work, managers who assisted him in the conduct of that school, and, in some cases, represented the parents. But that system, good as it had proved in many cases, was not applicable in all. ["Hear, hear!"] Schools in town and country differed very largely in their circumstances, and he was thinking now of great schools in London. There was a school in a parish in which he was greatly interested with some 600 or 800 children. To frame a legislative proposal for enabling the parents of the children to elect representatives on the managing body of that school, for defining what parents should be allowed to vote, what notice of meeting there should be in order that they should be called together, and whether any decision was to be made as to the length of time a child had been at school in order to enable a parent to vote, and so on—all these matters would be extremely complex as subjects of legislation—["hear, hear!"]—and he was quite satisfied, with regard to the school he was now thinking of, that, after their most elaborate legislation had provided for them a means of selecting the managers for that school, it would be found practically waste paper, considering the sort of locality in which the school was situated and the class of persons from whom these children came. ["Hear, hear!"] If this Instruction had been carried he should have resisted, as far as he possibly could, any insistence upon the ratepayers' representation upon the managing committees of Voluntary Schools, and he was sure that when the House came to frame legislation for enabling parents to elect persons on those committees they would have found it far more complex and far more full of difficulties than had been thought by his hon. Friends who had been talking so lightly of the acceptance of this principle. [*Cheers.*] But really the point was this. The Instruction endeavoured to fix upon the Government the duty of dealing with a separate portion of the Bill. If the Instruction were adopted he did not know if the Government would consider it their duty to propose provisions on this matter, but somebody would have to propose a series of clauses constituting quite a second part of the Bill, and his hon. Friends who had been so lightly lending themselves to this ingenious attempt to defeat the Bill altogether—["No, no!" *and cheers*]—would find that they had deprived the Government of a very large portion of Parliamentary time which it was proposed to devote to other very useful purposes after this Bill was disposed of. ["Hear, hear!"] Several Members had talked of the different aspects in which this question might be viewed, and several Members had said, and he assumed it was the popular attitude to take, that they looked at it from an educational point of view. That was, of course, the right way to look at it; that was the way he looked at it. He was convinced that the best service they could do to the cause of education in the country was to pass the Bill as it stood —[*cheers*]—and so to give to Voluntary Schools that relief which they had long needed and which had been promised by the Unionist Party. [*Cheers.*] Much had been said about the necessity of making schools efficient, and, of course, everyone desired to make schools efficient; but the repeated demands of the Education Department had been raised to such an extent, and the burden on Voluntary Schools was so great, that they were struggling for existence in many parts of the country. ["Hear, hear!"] What better service could they render to education than to give these schools the help they needed to save them from extinction? That was the service the Government intended. They had introduced a simple Bill, and he was glad they had expressed a resolute determination to stand by that Bill. [*Cheers.*] He hoped it would be seen to-morrow that his hon. Friends who had spoken in favour of the Instruction had been vindicating themselves before their own constituents—[*Opposition cheers*]—vindicating themselves before their constituents for a vote which they would not give if they thought it would be effective. [*Ministerial cheers.*] They expressed the confidence they felt, and he hoped they rightly felt that they would be beaten—[*laughter*]—by a substantial majority of the House; but he was quite sure there was not one of them who, if he thought his vote would have the effect of determining the Division against the Government, would not rather say he would stand by the Government and save the Bill for the advantage of Voluntary Schools than indulge in the attempt to tack on to the Bill something which would embarrass the Government and might also destroy the Bill itself. [*Cheers.*]

MR. LEONARD COURTNEY (Cornwall, Bodmin): My hon. and learned Friend no doubt was quite right in calling attention to the undue proportion that appeared on this side of the House of Members who are ready to support the Instruction, and the Government may be congratulated on finding an able supporter for the line of action upon which they have resolved, although my hon. and learned Friend left me at the end of his speech in doubt as to whether he opposed the Resolution on the ground of inexpediency or on the ground of principle. ["Hear, hear!"] He seemed to dwell most strongly on the inexpediency of adopting the Resolution, but now and again he repeated expressions which seemed to indicate that he opposed it root and branch, and I find that other hon. Members here have formed the same conclusion. Now, my hon. and learned Friend ended his speech with a declaration that he thought many hon. Members were going to support this Instruction who would not do so if they believed it was going to meet with success. ["Hear, hear!"] Now, I am going to support this Resolution—[*Opposition cheers*]—and I should do so if I thought it would succeed. ["Hear, hear!"] I should do so for this reason—that, in my opinion, it would make the prospects of the Bill as part of the educational organisation of the country better in the future. ["Hear, hear!"] It would relieve it from that partiality which does not at this moment imperil its fortunes, but which will be remembered against it, and which may perhaps lead to its being reconsidered, and perhaps repudiated, by a later Parliament. ["Hear, hear!"] I do not approach this question as an enemy of Voluntary Schools, or, to speak more correctly, of denominational schools; on the contrary, I have been impressed more and more during these discussions of the justice and necessity of affording substantial aid to Voluntary Schools. Facts have been made public during these Debates that have borne this conclusion more strongly into my mind than when the Debate began. If I may explain my own position in respect to this Instruction, I may be pardoned if in order to do so I call attention to two or three facts which were mentioned at another time, and which appear to me to lead to a certain conclusion as to the policy which should be adopted by Parliament with respect to popular education in the country. We heard of a city in the north where there are 12,000 children in Voluntary Schools and 12,000 children in Board Schools, and it was said that the grant of 5s. a head in respect to the children in the Voluntary Schools of that town would be the cause of considerable resentment in the town on the ground of its injustice. ["Hear, hear!"] It came out also that the amount of £30,000 a year was raised in that city in rates for the support of Board Schools. Now half the children go to Voluntary Schools and half the ratepayers—probably in respect to payment and rateability more than half—are in favour of the Voluntary system: yet the conclusion from the facts is this—that for years past £15,000 a year have been drawn from ratepayers who repudiate Board Schools in order to support those schools. Now is that a conclusion which can be maintained in the future? ["Hear, hear!"] Can it be said for a moment that a system under which half the population is taxed to maintain a system of education they repudiate is one that can endure? Is it to be supposed that this will be consonant to feelings of justice, and that it will continue to be tolerated? ["Hear, hear!"] I am certain it will not be, and the answer in the present Bill, as I conceive it, is that this payment of £3,000 a year to Voluntary Schools is but a sort of hush money to cover up injustice suffered by the friends of Voluntary Schools in the past. I, therefore, approach this Bill, and especially this Resolution, with the view that you must do something to correct the injustice which prevails, that something must come in the way of substantial allowance to Voluntary Schools in the future. I believe that the noble Lord the Member for Rochester, who on this one point is in agreement with me, agrees that funds must come from the same source in support of both classes, and justice will be recognised in carrying out this policy. Now, what is the deduction from this illustration? It appears to me that it illustrates the conclusions—first, that support given to Voluntary Schools in the future rests on the fact that the parents of half the children, or of those who are found in these schools, desire the maintenance of these schools. The second deduction is that the community at large cannot exercise that control over these schools which would destroy their essential character without interfering with the justice which requires the allowance to be made to the schools. The control has to satisfy two conditions—first, that it shall not prejudice the essential character of the schools; and, next, that it shall secure the desires and wishes of the parents who send their children to these schools. Let me observe that this apology for our defence of the Bill does not at all apply to those parishes, which abound in the country, where there is a Voluntary School and nothing else. Nobody in a parish of that kind can complain that a ratepayer as a ratepayer is supporting a school of which he does not approve. There is no rate levied in opposition to his wishes, but inasmuch as in the course of circumstances we know that in these country parishes there are found many schools which exist because they do exist, we are justified in respect of these schools in asking for some control, some representation in their management which shall satisfy the local demand, as well as that other representation which is due to the parents from the strength of whose preference alone these schools in other places exist. [*Opposition cheers.*] Therefore I am entirely in favour of the Instruction, which carries out and which rests upon the very principle of our action, because it justifies it, if it justifies it at all, on the ground that parents desire the school; and yet the Government shrink from the suggestion that parents should have a voice in the management of the schools. [*Cheers.*] What are the reasons against the introduction of this kind of element in the management? My right hon. Friend at the head of the Government, who, I understood by an interjection of his a little while ago, was not opposed in principle to the present Instruction— [*Opposition cheers*]—

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY: If my right hon. Friend misrepresents me, I must interrupt him. I distinctly stated in the speech I made six hours ago the main objection the Government had to this Instruction, and it is an insuperable objection, in face of which we shall certainly drop the Bill if the Amendment be carried. [*Cheers and counter cheers.*] That objection is that the Bill is restricted in its scope, and it would not be legitimate to add a new Bill to it by the Instruction which it is proposed we should carry. [*Ministerial cheers.*]

*MR. COURTNEY: I will deal with that main and insuperable objection presently. But, meanwhile, is or is not the right hon. Gentleman in favour of the principle of the Instruction? [*Opposition cheers.*]

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY: When the Instruction is embodied in a Bill, and brought before the House for discussion, I will give an opinion upon it. [*Ironical Opposition cheers.*] But, so long as we do not know in which at least of 20 different forms the Instruction is to be embodied, I surely may be absolved from giving an opinion upon any one of them. [*Ministerial cheers.*]

*MR. COURTNEY: Then my right hon. Friend will not give us an opinion. [*Cheers.*] I do not complain of that, but I thought that he did, with some warmth, make an observation just now, when the hon. Member for Swansea was speaking, to the effect that six hours ago he had expressed his concurrence in that principle. [*Opposition cheers.*]

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY: My right hon. Friend cannot have caught what I said.

*MR. COURTNEY: I understood the right hon. Gentleman to oppose the Instruction, grounding his opposition upon the principle which he borrowed from the phrase of the hon. Member for Cambridge University, that local support requires local control, and Imperial support requires Imperial control. [*Cheers.*] That appears to have captured a great many minds, but it is one of those catch phrases which turn upon a play of words, and if you examine them narrowly there is little or nothing in them. [*Cheers.*] Surely the principle and nature of the control or management which we are going to introduce into the system of schools, whether maintained out of local or Imperial taxation, must depend upon an examination of the expediency or inexpediency in itself of the control which we are going to introduce. You cannot manage elementary schools all over the country from Whitehall, even if you desire it. That was admitted last year, and it remains true now. ["Hear, hear!"] You must, if you want efficient control, get the assistance of local control as well as central. ["Hear, hear!"] It is said there are other difficulties. There is the difficulty that the Instruction goes too far. There has been talk of "adequate" representation, and although it is suggested that "adequate" might be dropped, you, Sir, observed that that cannot be done because that is an alteration of the Instruction without notice. Of course, that is a perfectly true principle. An Instruction cannot be moved without notice, and an alteration which added to its force could not be moved. But an alteration which diminished its force, narrowed its scope, restricted its application, can, I believe, be moved at any time. [*Cheers.*] The omission of the word "adequate," I believe, might be held to enlarge the scope, and would clearly leave it in an indefinite shape. We might have a more than adequate representation. But I do not think anyone would suggest the ludicrous Amendment that we should put in "a less than adequate representation," and the ingenuity of man is not beyond framing some kind of Amendment which might bring this Instruction within the range approved by some of my hon. Friends, and which yet should not be open to the censure that it was a breach of order. Possibly we might amend the Instruction by speaking of minority representation, which would satisfy the demand made on the other side, and, at the same time, secure the preponderance of the present management which is desired. ["Hear, hear!"] After all, in assenting to this Instruction you assent to nothing. It is not a legislative enactment, and you are only going so far as to enable the Committee to consider the matter of putting parents upon the school committee at all. Then comes this insuperable objection upon which my right hon. Friend relies, and which my hon. and learned Friend here magnified in his very ingenious speech. That insuperable objection is, that if you really did adopt this Instruction you would open a floodgate of Amendments which would sweep away the whole Bill. That is the objection upon which reliance has been placed. How far is that insuperable objection sound? My hon. and learned Friend pictured to himself a Committee of the House devising a scheme of representation of parents and of ratepayers, and he asks, Should the parent who has got children in the school at a particular date be of the electors, or should they be parents who had children there a certain time, and how, he inquired, should they vote and when? Hon. Gentlemen must know well enough that this House would never go into all the details of the machinery involved by this Instruction. That machinery would be framed by the Education Department. ["Hear, hear!"] It would be that Department, and not this House, who would determine how the parents and the ratepayers should be represented on the management of the schools. To suppose that this House would deal with all these details is a mere figment of the imagination. ["Hear, hear!"] I cannot understand how any different view of the matter can be taken by anyone who is conversant with the history of our educational legislation. ["Hear, hear!"] Hon. Members sitting on this side of the House have declared that they are in favour of the principle of this Instruction, and that they only oppose the Instruction because of the amount of discussion it would leave open in Committee, and because, in their opinion, the Bill would perish under the weight of the new matter which would be imported into that discussion. But let me ask—Would it have been impossible to have entered into some Parliamentary understanding in reference to this subject? [*Opposition cheers and Ministerial ironical cheers and laughter.*] Some hon. Members laugh at that suggestion—why, Parliamentary understandings form part of the ordinary machinery for facilitating the business of this House. I think that a Parliamentary understanding might have easily been arrived at earlier in the evening, or, indeed, before the Debate commenced, whereby this discussion might have been kept within very narrow limits. [*Opposition cheers.*] In my opinion such a Parliamentary understanding would have saved the time of the House instead of wasting it. ["Hear, hear!"] I will end as I began. I shall support the Instruction, because I believe that by adopting it we should improve the Bill and should have afforded the Committee an opportunity of improving the educational organisation of the country. [*Opposition cheers.*] We may have—and I hope we shall have—a supplementary Bill; but even such a Measure, unless it includes the principle of this Instruction, will not be satisfactory. In conclusion, I may say that I believe that we should have saved time instead of losing it, if the right hon. Gentleman had had the courage to have accepted this Instruction, which I believe would operate in the interests of the education of the country, and in those of the Voluntary Schools. [*Opposition cheers.*]

*SIR HENRY FOWLER (Wolverhampton) said that he was certainly surprised that no occupant of the

Treasury Bench should have thought it necessary to rise and answer the powerful speech of the right hon. Gentleman who had just sat down. ["Hear, hear!"] He did not really know whether the new mode of conducting Debates in that House was that the Government Front Bench was to preserve silence in all cases after the right hon. Gentleman the First Lord of the Treasury had spoken, in order to prevent criticism and to prevent the opinions expressed by their supporters from being carried into effect in the Division Lobby. The speeches which had been delivered from the other side of the House, with perhaps one or two exceptions, were practically in support of the principle of the Instruction, and he must again express his surprise that no notice whatever should have been taken by the Government of those speeches. He was sorry that so much stress should have been laid upon the length of this Debate, which, no doubt, was considerable. [*Ironical cheers from the Government Benches.*] He quite understood the meaning of that cheer and the misconstruction of his words. ["Hear, hear!"] He thought, however, that a question of this magnitude deserved a reasonable amount of consideration. He denied the right of the strongest Government to say that that House must register their decrees, and that that House must do as they told them. ["Hear, hear!"] They would see by-and-by whether that was a successful mode of conducting the business of that House. [*Cheers.*] No doubt the Government were influenced in the line they were taking in this matter from what had fallen from certain of their supporters. One hon. and gallant Member opposite had spoken strongly in favour of the principle of this Instruction, but had said that, notwithstanding that fact, he felt it to be his duty to support the Government and to vote against the Instruction. The Government, however, had unfortunately, as he thought, announced that they regarded this question as a vital one, and the independent Conservative Party had determined to fight it upon strict Party lines, instead of looking at it from the point of view as to what would be the best for the educational interests of the country. ["Hear, hear!"] Upon what were they going to divide that night—or, at all events, at the conclusion of this Debate? They were not going to divide upon any question of machinery, not upon any question involving the right of parents or of ratepayers to take a part in the management of these schools, but whether the Committee was to have an opportunity of considering whether the scheme embodied in this Instruction was or was not a feasible one. ["Hear, hear!"] The only opposition to that proposition which could be justified, was the opposition of hon. Members who took the view of the hon. and learned Member for Plymouth—namely, the opposition to the principle. He was in a state of perfect confusion as to what was the meaning and attitude of the First Lord of the Treasury. [*Laughter.*] He told them just now that what he said then was what he said six hours ago. What did the right hon. Gentleman say six hours ago? He then opposed, upon principle, upon the merits, parental control and ratepaying control. ["Hear, hear!"] What did he say about parental control? He ridiculed the thing as impossible, and asked the question, "Why should parents have control?" He said they contributed nothing, he said they got their education absolutely free, and he asked what right they had to interfere in the management of the schools.

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY: Hear, hear. [*Opposition laughter.*] I do not know whether the right hon. Gentleman listened to my speech—

*SIR H. FOWLER: Oh, every syllable of it. [*Laughter.*]

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY: I never called parental control the worst thing; what I said was that it had been tried, and that, in the opinion of the Department, in the places where it had been tried the success had not been very marked.

*SIR H. FOWLER said the right hon. Gentleman would not question his accuracy in saying that he asked this question, Why should parents—

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY: "What right?"

*SIR H. FOWLER said the right hon. Gentleman asked the question, "What right had parents to have control?" He would tell him what right they had. They had the right given them by the fact that in 8,000 parishes of this country they had no choice as to the school; they must either send their children to the school appointed, or be sent themselves to prison —[*cheers*]—and of every 1s. that was spent in that school 9d. came out of the public funds, to which those parents contributed in the shape of taxes. He contended that that constituted a moral right that they should have some voice in the management of the schools, and some means of seeing that those securities which the Legislature had provided for the protection of their children's rights should be fully and adequately carried out. [" Hear, hear ! "] The right hon. Gentleman then asked what right had the ratepayers, and told them that the whole philosophy of the case was contained in one syllogism, which was practically this—every expenditure of public money from the rates was controlled by the ratepayers, every expenditure of public money from the taxes was controlled by the House of Commons; this was an expenditure from the taxes, therefore the control of the House of Commons was sufficient. He denied the major premiss of that syllogism, and he thought his right hon. Friend who had just sat down had disposed of it, in theory, completely. But he would venture to remind the House that it was already disposed of in practice. It was perfectly true that in large branches of public expenditure, such as the Army or Navy, the control of the expenditure was in the hands of the Minister who was responsible to the House, and the House exercised a direct control in that matter; but there was a large class of expenditure which the House delegated to local authorities because it was of a local character. He would give the familiar illustration of the police. He would be a very bold man who should propose that the police of this country should be controlled in that House through the means of the Home Secretary, and the local authorities deprived of all power, because one half of the cost of the police was voted by the House. [" Hear, hear ! "] The House adopted the same principle with reference to technical education, and, in the case of the whole system of grants in aid of local taxation out of the general taxation of the country, the House of Commons voted large sums for local purposes, the administration of which was left in the hands of the local authorities. The right hon. Gentleman might say that that was the philosophy of the transaction, but he himself did not think that it represented the true relations between that House and public expenditure. If they were to put the entire control of a denominational school into the hands of the representative body they would make it a Board School—they would destroy its denominational character, and he would say candidly that that would be unjust and unfair. [" Hear, hear ! "] But what they asked for was a representation upon that body. The right hon. Gentleman had said :—

> " You admit you are a minority, as a minority you would always be outvoted ; what, then, is the good of being upon that body ? "

That not only struck at the root of the representation of minorities, but it struck at the very principle of free constitutional Government. The House of Commons did not exist simply to carry out the views of majorities, although of course in the end the majority triumphed. The right hon. Gentleman had not been a Member of that House for 20 years, and sat on both sides of the House, above the Gangway and below the Gangway, without knowing the enormous influence which even weak and despised minorities could exercise. [*Cheers.*] He could remember the right hon. Gentleman with a very small number of comrades—[*laughter*]—one of whom was the representative of the Committee of Council in that House—[*cheers*]—he could remember that gallant body facing with undaunted courage a majority as large as that of the present Government, and far more united. [*Loud Opposition cheers.*] That minority was not powerless. Its opponents were beaten, though, if the right hon. Gentleman would pardon him for saying so, he took five years to beat them. [The FIRST LORD of the TREASURY : " No, no ! "] He did not wish to minimise the power of a minority—[*laughter*]—he was arguing rather against the proposition that a minority was a superfluity. Now, when his hon. Friend the Member for Carnarvon stated that a great many schools were in the hands of the clergyman, and the clergyman alone, there were some very indignant sounds of dissent, but the Report of the Conservative majority of the Royal Commission showed that one of the grievances of the Voluntary Schools was that in a large number of cases there was but one practical manager, and that manager was the clergyman. [" Hear, hear! "] He did not intend to say anything disrespectful of the clergyman *quâ* clergyman, but he asserted that, even if there were no representation of the ratepayers and parents to be considered, it was not in the public interest that one man should have the control of the education of a parish and have the control of a large sum of public money. [*Cheers.*] In the interest of education it was right that the House of Commons should insist that there should be a certain number of managers, and that those managers should be jointly responsible. Let them suppose that even if there was only one man representing the ratepayers or the parents—what did that man do? He threw the light of public opinion—[" hear, hear! "]—upon the working of the institution. [*Cheers.*] Things were said and done now which would not be said and done if that light were thrown upon the proceedings of the board of management. It might be asked, " What do you want; do you want to interfere with the denominational character of the schools?" No, they did not. The law would not allow them to do so. A denominational school must be carried on according to the trust on which it was founded. They wanted to secure what the Education Department, in consequence of the overpowering multiplicity of details, could not secure—they wanted to secure that not only this 5s. additional grant, but all grants spent in a school, should be fairly and honourably and honestly spent in the promotion of education—[*cheers*]—that there should not be extravagance, that there should not be parsimony, that there should not be injustice. Was that not a matter worthy of public discussion? There was no question of the local agitator as the noble Lord the Member for Rochester seemed to imagine there was. The local agitator was an individual of whom they heard a great deal when the Parish Council Bill was passing through the House, but they had never heard of him since. They had seen in the Parish Councils a union of all classes to promote the working of the Act, and if a representative of the ratepayers or parents were appointed in this case he would be found working with the other members of the Board of Management to do the best for the school. He came back to the question of the 8,000 parishes. He believed hon. Gentlemen opposite recognised fairly the fact that in those 8,000 parishes there was no choice of schools. He knew it to be true that Nonconformist children were forced by law into Roman Catholic schools. He did not think the noble Lord the Member for Rochester would like the law to force Anglican children into Nonconformist Schools. [" Hear, hear! "] He did not at the present moment complain of that state of things, but he maintained that they were entitled to exceptional and special consideration in consequence of that state of things. What did they ask? They asked that the conscience clause should be fairly and fully fulfilled in all its bearings. [VISCOUNT CRANBORNE: " It is; " *and* hon. MEMBERS: " No, it is not! "] The noble Lord said with truth, yesterday, that there was a small number of clergymen who were guilty of outrageous conduct in reference to the burial of the dead. Men who would be guilty of outrageous and intolerable bigotry with reference to the burial of the dead would not shrink from being guilty of the same thing with respect to the education of children. [*Cheers.*] He did not say that there was a general evasion of the Conscience Clause. But there were reported to the heads of the various bodies of Nonconformists a sufficient number of cases of evasion, and that made a grievance which ought to be removed. [*Cheers.*] There was such a thing as breaking the conscience clause in the spirit as well as in the letter. [*Cheers.*] It was against that they wished to protect the children. [*Cheers.*] It might be said that nothing was done in those schools which the law prohibited; that children were taught nothing to which their parents objected; but there were various little details of the management of a school which might be made, on the one hand, an honourable fulfilment, or, on the other hand, a dishonourable fulfilment of the conditions of the law. [*Cheers.*] Hon. Members who were acquainted with the great Secondary Schools of the country knew that boys attending them were not put to any disadvantage on account of the religious opinions of their parents; that there was no head master who could not carry out fully and completely the religious instruction he had to give without treating any boy unjustly. But that state of things did not prevail in the Voluntary Schools—[*cheers*]—and if they had on the management of those schools representatives of the parents or of the public to see that the Conscience Clause was fairly worked, it would remove a great deal of friction that at present impaired the results of our primary system of education. It was said that the Voluntary Schools were popular schools, that parents desired them and would have them. Surely they would be made more popular still if the parents had representation on their management? Surely, if they were linked with popular representation they would obtain an element of strength they did not now possess. [*Cheers.*] The hon. Member for the Warwick Division made a powerful speech in favour of the very thing against which he proposed to vote. The hon. Member declared that the doctrine of popular representation was always well received at diocesan meetings, and that the friends of the Voluntary Schools were not frightened by it. But the hon. Member had been put under pressure. [*Cheers and laughter.*]

COLONEL MILWARD: I beg the right hon. Gentleman's pardon, I am not put under pressure of any kind whatever. [*Laughter and cheers.*] I acknowledge the value, the extraordinary value, of the schools having popular representation, but I say the time is not yet come to apply it to the Voluntary Schools.

*SIR HENRY FOWLER said the hon. Gentleman had said in the course of his speech that, if this Instruction were carried, the Government would drop the Bill or resign —[*cheers*]—and that he therefore would not be a party to turning out the Government. [*Ministerial cheers.*] He did not quarrel with the hon. Gentleman's party loyalty. But had it come to this—that this great Government, with its unprecedented majority and with those European difficulties which they said, and rightly said, were of such supreme importance at the present moment, were prepared—unless their followers were ready to help them in preventing a discussion of the principle of representation—to throw up their offices and say, "We resign the Government of the country"? [*Cheers.*] The leaders of the great Tory party had at all events the courage of their convictions. They objected to popular representation. But their supporters could not go to the country and say they were in favour of popular representation. [*Cheers.*] Many hon. Members opposite had said they would vote against the Instruction because they were afraid the Government would resign. If Liberals had said such things what scornful denunciation would have been heaped upon them by the First Lord of the Treasury. [*Cheers.*] The right hon. Gentleman talked about time being wanted. This was only the 25th of February; the Session had hardly commenced. Was the Government reduced to such a state of Parliamentary impotency that with a majority of 150 behind them they could not carry a five-clause Bill if there were added to it one of the two more provisions that were likely to lead to some controversy? [*Cheers.*] But then, how many more Bills were they going to have? There was the Bill for the Board Schools, the Bill for Secondary Education; there was to be a Scotch Bill, and there was to be an Irish Bill. They should bring in a strong Bill and carry it. [AN HON. MEMBER: "A long Bill?"] He sat there for 30 nights with a small majority behind him, and they carried their Bill. ["Hear, hear!"] When they were half through with their Bill they were told to cut it in half and they would carry it. They refused to drop a line of it, and they carried it with their poor majority of 30 or 40. [*Cheers.*] Let the Government tell the country the real reason—namely, that they disliked this popular representation, and that they believed it would be injurious to Denominational Schools. [*Cheers.*]

THE SOLICITOR GENERAL (Sir ROBERT FINLAY, Inverness Burghs), who rose amid cries of "Gorst," said that the Government had brought in this Bill, and they meant to carry it. The right hon. Gentleman evinced a great disposition to take the management of the Bill out of the hands of the Government, but the Government preferred to retain the management of their own Measure. The right hon. Gentleman said they were at the beginning of a long Debate, and the experience of that evening had enabled them to judge that that was the case. As to the references to the speeches on that side of the House, there were many Gentlemen who would have expressed themselves strongly against this Instruction, but they had abstained from doing that—[*cheers and counter cheers*]—because by speaking they would be playing into the hands of the Opposition. ["Hear, hear!"] How long the Debate would be if the Instruction were carried he shrank from calculating. There was one touch of humour in the speech of the Member for Nottingham when he spoke of this Instruction as "the olive branch." An olive branch! It was an Instruction which would destroy the Bill. [VOICES: "Why?"] The Opposition were under no illusions with regard to that, and he could wish that some of his hon. Friends were as clear-sighted as the hon. Gentlemen opposite. He was afraid that one or two of his hon. Friends had been under an illusion, and that in airing their views they had been unconsciously playing into the hands of those who wished to destroy the Bill. The terms of the Instruction which he read showed what their object was. The Instruction referred to representation of parents. He would admit that, by voluntary arrangement, in many cases it might be very desirable to have associated with the clergyman and the other managers those who had the confidence of the parents. But would anyone who considered the question seriously say that it was possible to put into the form of an Act of Parliament a provision that such a fluctuating body as the parents of the children should, by election, be represented on the Board of Management?

MR. HERBERT LEWIS: It is done already in Wales.

The SOLICITOR GENERAL: Yes, by arrangement.

MR. HERBERT LEWIS: No, by scheme.

THE SOLICITOR GENERAL said that it was not done with reference to elementary schools. When the right hon. Member for Bodmin said that it was a figment of the imagination to suppose there was any difficulty in providing for this representation, he was allowing his own imagination to run away with him. [*Cheers.*] What would be the crop of Amendments which would spring up if such an attempt were made in the Bill? ["Hear, hear!"] The Instruction proceeded to say that there should be representation of local authorities. In many cases this worked admirably, no doubt. That independent gentlemen, resident in the locality, should voluntarily associate themselves with the management of the schools was one thing; but it was quite another thing to say that under the compulsion of the Education Department, acting under Parliamentary instructions, the local authorities were to put representatives on the Boards of Management. Voluntary association often worked admirably; but he was quite convinced that compulsory power given to the local authorities would have an effect the very opposite to that desired by all friends of Voluntary Schools. [*Cheers.*] It would produce intolerable friction. [*Cheers.*] The subscriptions to the schools came from the subscribers; the local authorities contributed nothing, and on what principle were they to have the right to representation? He believed that support from the rates would draw after it local control; and he was quite certain that, with any sense of justice, representation of local authorities must draw after it support from the rates. To give representation without support from the rates was a proposition totally inadmissible. [*Cheers.*] Reference had been made to the vagueness of the Instruction, and he would call attention to its insidious character. There was to be adequate representation of local authorities. What was to be regarded as "adequate representation"? The House was now told that it was representation which would always leave the local authority in the minority. But how long would that last? [*Cheers.*] Once the principle of compulsory representation admitted, how long would it be before there was a demand that the local authority should have the controlling voice? It was said that there was now abuse of the Conscience Clause. How could that be remedied unless the local authority had the controlling voice as to the appointment and dismissal of teachers? [*Cries of* "Public opinion."] Public opinion at present controlled these schools. [*Cheers and loud cries of* "No."] They were carried on under local scrutiny and under the pressure of local public opinion. [*Cries of* "No" *and ironical laughter.*] It was very easy to parade in the House a few very exceptional cases of things done which all regretted; but on the whole the management of the Voluntary Schools was carried on in the light of day and in a manner approved of by the public opinion of the House of Commons. [*Cheers and cries of* "No."]

MR. A. J. MUNDELLA (Sheffield, Brightside): What is the case in Scotland? [*Cheers.*]

THE SOLICITOR GENERAL said that surely the right hon. Gentleman knew that the School Boards in Scotland had the control of the schools, and contributed out of the rates for their support. If the right hon. Gentleman wished to apply the lessons he had learnt north of the Tweed let him apply them in their entirety. [*Cheers.*] Now, he would not add to the length of the Debate by elaborating arguments which might be adduced. He had endeavoured to deal with the salient points put forward and emphasised by the right hon. Member for Wolverhampton. He would only, in conclusion, call the attention of the House to the fact that this Instruction was one which, if adopted, would have the effect of wrecking the Bill. But of its being adopted there was not the slightest chance. [*Cheers.*] Hon. Gentlemen opposite might say that the Instruction was to be thrown out by votes. But he believed that if time permitted of every one of his hon. Friends speaking in the Debate, they would find it would be thrown out, not merely by votes, but by the vastly preponderating opinion of the whole House. [*Cheers.*]

MR. JOHN BRIGG (York, W.R., Keighley) said they had listened to no speech in the Debate with more respect than that of the hon. Member for North Islington, in which he urged the House to adopt the principle of the Instruction, leaving to be decided later how it could best be carried out. The difficulties which had been raised as to carrying out the Instruction had been fully met by Members on both sides of the House. There should be popular control of the Voluntary Schools, the management of which was often now anything but what it should be. Better managers were needed. It had been shown conclusively that Board Schools were always willing and able to earn 1s. per head more than Voluntary Schools. Although money was useful in the management of the schools, it was, after all, a question of school management, and for this better provision should be made.

MR. H. J. WILSON (Yorks, W.R., Holmfirth) remarked that stress had been laid on the fact that in 8,000 parishes in this country there was absolutely no choice for parents in the matter of schools. That was a very moderate statement of the case. Where was there adequate choice? Let them have plenty of room in the Board Schools, and let them see, then, how they would be filled up. In many cases there was no choice whatever. He had been for many years a Member of the School Board for Sheffield, and he had had to sit on the Appeal Committee, before which the question had been raised again and again, Where were the parents to send their children? and he had been obliged to tell parents that they must send them to Roman Catholic schools, because there was nowhere else to send them. Here was an opportunity of ascertaining whether denominational schools were really as popular with the people as hon. Gentlemen opposite averred. But this very moderate proposal that there should be a minority representation of the ratepayers or parents, or of both, was scorned and rejected by the Party opposite. The right hon. Member for Bodmin had tried to extract from the First Lord of the Treasury what was his true position in relation to this matter; but he had failed, in spite of his ingenuity. From the Solicitor General's speech, however, there could be no doubt that the occupants of the Ministerial Bench had a rooted objection to the representation of the parents. The hon. and learned Gentleman seemed to think that parents who were compelled to send their children to Voluntary Schools were persons of no importance.

The SOLICITOR GENERAL: No; I said that the representation of parents was an admirable thing, and could be effected by arrangement, but that to pass a law making it compulsory was impracticable, and would result in mischief. ["Hear, hear!"]

Mr. H. J. WILSON thought that when the hon. and learned Gentleman said that he must have been laughing in his sleeve. Reasonable clerical managers might very possibly welcome the assistance of parents; but how about the cases where they were not reasonable—cases where the parents desired representation and the clergy would not let them have it? They all knew of glaring cases of mismanagement and tyranny and violation of the Conscience Clause. If they referred to such cases in that House, they were at once called upon by hon. Members opposite to give names; but those hon. Members knew quite well that if the names were given, the unhappy victims of clerical tyranny would be made to suffer still more in the future than in the past. Hon. Members of that House had a free choice in regard to their children's schools, but poor people, not only in the 8,000 villages which had been mentioned but in many large towns as well, had no choice at all; and when it was proposed to give them a little representation the Government declared that the idea could not be entertained for a single moment. Right hon. Gentlemen opposite would find that they would be asked in the country how it was that at elections they expressed so much confidence in the people, but when in power refused to grant them any modicum of representation. [*Cries of* "Oh!" *and* "Hear, hear!"] The very moderate proposal of the Opposition was scorned and rejected by the Government—[*cries of* "Divide!" *and* "Order!"]—who seemed to think that the parents of the children were of no importance.

The First Lord of the Treasury and Mr. J. Morley rose simultaneously. The former having given way,

Mr. J. MORLEY (Montrose Burghs) said: I beg to move that this Debate be now adjourned. [*Loud Ministerial cries of* "Oh!" *and cheers.*]

*Mr. SPEAKER: Does any Gentleman second the Motion?

Sir W. HARCOURT: Yes, Sir, I rise to second it. [*Renewed interruption and cheers.*]

The FIRST LORD of the TREASURY: I hope the two right hon. Gentlemen who have associated themselves in so unusual a manner with this Motion—[*cheers*]—will not think of pressing it upon the House. We have now been discussing this Instruction for a whole night. Two right hon. Gentlemen have spoken from the Front Bench opposite, and two Gentlemen have also spoken from this Front Bench, and, according to the ordinary procedure of the House, had a third Gentleman desired to address us from the Front Opposition Bench he would have risen after my hon. and learned Friend the Solicitor General had spoken, and would have replied to his speech. I never in my whole Parliamentary experience—[*cheers*]—recollect a course being taken like that which the right hon. Gentlemen opposite have thought fit to take to-night. It is not in accordance with our ordinary practice. I do not like even to suggest that it was done in order unduly to prolong Debate—[*cheers*]—but, had that been the object which right hon. Gentlemen had in view, I do not know that there was any other course which they could have pursued. A similar Instruction to the one we are now discussing was moved on a somewhat similar ocasion, when my right hon. Friend the Member for the Dartford Division brought in his Bill for free education. It was then said that a grant of 10s. per child—not 5s.—supplied a proper occasion for dealing with the question of popular control. That was an occasion absolutely parallel to the present, and one night was thought sufficient by universal consent for dealing with the Amendment; and I confess I could not be a party to an attempt to prolong the present discussion. [*Loud cheers.*]

*Mr. JOHN ELLIS (Nottingham, Rushcliffe), who spoke amid Ministerial cries of "Divide," said he could give the right hon. Gentleman a good reason why the Debate should be adjourned—on the ground of ordinary Parliamentary procedure, to quote the expression just made use of by the Leader of the House. The House had not heard a word from the Vice President of the Council—["Oh, oh!" *and cheers*]—and he said they might search "Hansard" through in vain when a great Education Bill had been before the House to find that the Vice President of the Council, who was the Minister responsible to the House—[*cheers*]—had never been allowed to open his mouth. [*Cheers.*]

Mr. C. P. SCOTT (Lancashire, Leigh), who also spoke amid loud cries of "Divide" and interruption, said the more this question was discussed the more the country would be roused to a sense of its importance. [*Cheers.*] Why had the House been threatened on this occasion with the resignation of the Government? [*Ironical laughter.*] Was it not because the First Lord of the Treasury knew that he could not trust his supporters? [*Cheers and laughter.*] They had seen no more remarkable demonstration than that which took place that evening on the other side of the House. It had even taken the Opposition by surprise.

The FIRST LORD of the TREASURY rose just before midnight and claimed to move, "That the Question be now put." [*Ministerial cheers.*]

Question put, "That the Question be now put."

The House divided: — Ayes, 284; Noes, 133.

The announcement of the figures was received with Ministerial cheers.

Division List—No. 48—appended.

AYES.

Allhusen, Augustus Henry Eden
Allsopp, Hon. George
Arnold-Forster, Hugh O.
Ashmead-Bartlett, Sir Ellis
Atkinson, Rt. Hon. John
Baden-Powell, Sir Geo. Smyth
Bagot, Capt. Josceline FitzRoy
Baillie, James E. B. (Inverness)
Balcarres, Lord
Baldwin, Alfred
Balfour, Rt. Hon. A. J. (Manch'r)
Balfour, Gerald William (Leeds)
Banbury, Frederick George
Barry, A. H. Smith- (Hunts.)
Barry, Francis Tress (Windsor)
Bartley, George, C. T.
Bass, Hamar
Bathurst, Hon. Allen Benjamin
Beach, Rt. Hon. Sir M. H. (Bristol)
Beach, W. W. Bramston (Hants)
Beckett, Ernest William
Begg, Ferdinand Faithfull
Bemrose, Henry Howe
Bentinck, Lord Henry C.
Bethell, Captain
Biddulph, Michael
Bigham, John Charles
Bigwood, James
Bond, Edward
Bonsor, Henry Cosmo Orme
Boscawen, Arthur Griffith-
Bousfield, William Robert
Brassey, Albert
Brodrick, Rt. Hon. St. John
Brown, Alexander H.
Bucknill, Thomas Townsend
Bullard, Sir Harry
Butcher, John George
Campbell, James A.
Carew, James Laurence
Carlile, William Walter
Carson, Edward
Cavendish, R. F. (N. Lancs.)
Cavendish, V. C. W. (Derbyshire)
Cecil, Lord Hugh
Chaloner, Captain R. G. W.
Chamberlain, Rt. Hon. J. (Birm.)
Chamberlain, J. Austen (Worc'r)
Chaplin, Rt. Hon. Henry
Charrington, Spencer
Clare, Octavius Leigh
Clarke, Sir Edward (Plymouth)
Cochrane, Hon. Thos. H. A. E.
Cohen, Benjamin Louis
Collings, Rt. Hon. Jesse
Colomb, Sir John Charles Ready
Colston, Chas. Edw. H. Athole
Compton, Lord Alwyne (Beds.)
Cook, Fred. Lucas (Lambeth)
Cooke, C. W. Radcliffe (Heref'd)
Courtney, Rt. Hon. Leonard H.
Cranborne, Viscount
Cripps, Charles Alfred
Cross, Alexander (Glasgow)
Cross, Herb. Shepherd (Bolton)
Curzon, Rt. Hn. G. N. (Lanc. S. W.)
Curzon, Viscount (Bucks.)
Dalrymple, Sir Charles
Darling, Charles John
Davenport, W. Bromley-
Dickson-Poynder, Sir John P.
Dixon-Hartland, Sir Fred. Dixon

Donkin, Richard Sim
Dorington, Sir John Edward
Douglas, Rt. Hon. A. Akers-
Doxford, William Theodore
Drucker, A.
Duncombe, Hon. Hubert V.
Dyke, Rt.Hon. Sir William Hart
Egerton, Hon. A. de Tatton
Fardell, Thomas George
Fellowes, Hon. Ailwyn Edward
Fergusson, Rt.Hn.Sir J.(Mancr.)
Field, Admiral (Eastbourne)
Fielden, Thomas
Finch, George H.
Finlay, Sir Robert Bannatyne
Fisher, William Hayes
Fison, Frederick William
FitzGerald, Sir R. U. Penrose
Flannery, Fortescue
Fletcher, Sir Henry
Flower, Ernest
Folkestone, Viscount
Forster, Henry William
Foster, Colonel (Lancaster)
Foster, Harry S. (Suffolk)
Fry, Lewis
Galloway, William Johnson
Garfit, William
Gedge, Sydney
Gibbs, Hn. A. G. H. (City of Lond.)
Gibbs, Hon. Vicary (St. Albans)
Gilliat, John Saunders
Godson, Augustus Frederick
Goldsworthy, Major-General
Gordon, John Edward
Gorst, Rt. Hon. Sir John Eldon
Goschen, Rt. Hn. G. J. (St. G'rg's)
Goschen, George J. (Sussex)
Goulding, Edward Alfred
Graham, Henry Robert
Gray, Ernest (West Ham)
Green, Walford D. (Wednesb'ry)
Gretton, John
Greville, Captain
Gull, Sir Cameron
Halsey, Thomas Frederick
Hamilton, Rt. Hon. Lord Geo.
Hanbury, Rt. Hon. Robert Wm.
Hardy, Laurence
Hare, Thomas Leigh
Haslett, Sir James Horner
Havelock-Allan, General Sir H.
Heath, James
Heaton, John Henniker
Hermon-Hodge, Robert Trotter
Hickman, Sir Alfred
Hill, Rt. Hn. Lord Arthur (Down)
Hoare, Edw. Brodie (Hampstead)
Hoare, Samuel (Norwich)
Hobhouse, Henry
Holland, Hon. Lionel Raleigh
Hopkinson, Alfred
Hornby, William Henry
Houldsworth, Sir Wm. Henry
Houston, R. P.
Howard, Joseph
Howell, William Tudor
Hozier, James Henry Cecil
Hudson, George Bickersteth
Hutchinson, Capt. G. W. Grice-
Hutton, John (Yorks. N.R.)
Isaacson, Frederick Wootton
Jebb, Richard Claverhouse

Jeffreys, Arthur Frederick
Jenkins, Sir John Jones
Jessel, Captain Herbert Merton
Johnston, William (Belfast)
Johnstone, John H. (Sussex)
Jolliffe, Hon. H. George
Kemp, George
Kennaway, Rt. Hon. Sir John H.
Kenrick, William
Kenyon-Slaney, Col. William
Kimber, Henry
King, Sir Henry Seymour
Knowles, Lees
Knox, Edmund Francis Vesey
Lafone, Alfred
Laurie, Lieut.-General
Lawrence, Wm. F. (Liverpool)
Lea, Sir Thomas (Londonderry)
Lecky, William Edward H.
Lees, Elliott (Birkenhead)
Legh, Hon. Thomas W. (Lanc.)
Leigh-Bennett, Henry Currie
Leighton, Stanley
Llewelyn, Sir Dillwyn-(Swans'a)
Lockwood, Lt.-Col. A.R. (Essex)
Loder, Gerald Walter Erskine
Long, Col. Charles W. (Evesham)
Long, Rt. Hn. Walter (Liverpool)
Lopes, Henry Yarde Buller
Lorne, Marquess of
Loyd, Archie Kirkman
Lucas-Shadwell, William
Lyttelton, Hon. Alfred
Macaleese, Daniel
Macdona, John Cumming
Maclean, James Mackenzie
Maclure, John William
McCalmont, Col. J. (Antrim E.)
M'Hugh, E. (Armagh, S.)
McIver, Sir Lewis
McKillop, James
Malcolm, Ian
Maple, Sir John Blundell
Meysey-Thompson, Sir H. M.
Milbank, Powlett Charles John
Milton, Viscount
Milward, Colonel Victor
Monckton, Edward Philip
Monk, Charles James
Montagu, Hon. J. Scott (Hants)
Moon, Edward Robert Pacy
More, Robert Jasper
Morgan, Hn. Fred. (Monm'thsh.)
Morrell, George Herbert
Morrison, Walter
Mount, William George
Muntz, Philip A.
Murdoch, Charles Townshend
Murray, Rt. Hn. A. Grah'm (Bute)
Murray, Charles J. (Coventry)
Myers, William Henry
Nicol, Donald Ninian
Northcote, Hon. Sir H. Stafford
O'Brien, Patrick (Kilkenny)
O'Connor, Arthur (Donegal)
O'Neill, Hon. Robert Torrens
Orr-Ewing, Charles Lindsay
Parkes, Ebenezer
Parnell, John Howard
Pease, Arthur (Darlington)
Penn, John
Pierpoint, Robert
Platt-Higgins, Frederick

Plunkett, Hon. Horace Curzon
Pollock, Harry Frederick
Powell, Sir Francis Sharp
Purvis, Robert
Rankin, James
Rasch, Major Frederic Carne
Rentoul, James Alexander
Richards, Henry Charles
Richardson, Thomas
Ridley, Rt. Hon. Sir Matthew W.
Ritchie, Rt. Hon. Chas. Thomson
Rollit, Sir Albert Kaye
Round, James
Russell, Gen. F. S. (Cheltenham)
Russell, Sir George (Berksh.)
Russell, T. W. (Tyrone)
Rutherford, John
Samuel, Harry S. (Limehouse)
Saunderson, Col. Edw. James
Savory, Sir Joseph
Scoble, Sir Andrew Richard
Seely, Charles Hilton
Seton-Karr, Henry
Sharpe, William Edward T.
Sidebotham, J. W. (Cheshire)
Simeon, Sir Barrington
Sinclair, Louis (Romford)
Skewes-Cox, Thomas
Smith, Abel (Herts)
Smith, Abel H. (Christchurch)
Smith, Hon. W. F. D. (Strand)
Stanley, Lord (Lancs.)
Stanley, Edw. Jas. (Somerset)
Stock, James Henry
Stone, Sir Benjamin
Strauss, Arthur
Strutt, Hon. Charles Hedley
Sturt, Hon. Humphry Napier
Sullivan, Donal (Westmeath)
Talbot, Lord E. (Chichester)
Talbot, John G. (Oxford Univ.)
Taylor, Francis
Thornton, Percy M.
Tollemache, Henry James
Tomlinson, Wm. Edw. Murray
Tritton, Charles Ernest
Valentia, Viscount
Vincent, Col. Sir C. E. Howard
Warde, Lt.-Col. C. E. (Kent)
Warkworth, Lord
Webster, Sir R. E. (Isle of Wight)
Welby, Lieut.-Col. A. C. E.
Wentworth, Bruce C. Vernon-
Whiteley, George (Stockport)
Whiteley, H. (Ashton-under-L.)
Whitmore, Charles Algernon
Williams, Col. R. (Dorset)
Willoughby de Eresby, Lord
Willox, John Archibald
Wilson, John (Falkirk)
Wilson, J. W. (Worc'shire, N.)
Wodehouse, Edmond R. (Bath)
Wortley, Rt. Hon. C. B. Stuart-
Wyndham, George
Wyvill, Marmaduke D'Arcy
Yerburgh, Robert Armstrong
Younger, William

TELLERS FOR THE AYES, Sir William Walrond and Mr. Anstruther.

NOES.

Abraham, William (Rhondda)
Acland, Rt. Hon. A. H. Dyke
Allan, William (Gateshead)
Allen, Wm. (Newc. under Lyme)
Allison, Robert Andrew
Arch, Joseph
Ashton, Thomas Gair
Atherley-Jones, L.
Austin, Sir John (Yorkshire)
Baker, Sir John
Barlow, John Emmott
Bayley, Thomas (Derbyshire)
Beaumont, Wentworth C. B.
Birrell, Augustine
Bolton, Thomas Dolling
Brigg, John
Broadhurst, Henry
Brunner, Sir John Tomlinson
Bryce, Rt. Hon. James
Burns, John
Burt, Thomas
Buxton, Sydney Charles
Caldwell, James
Cameron, Robert
Campbell-Bannerman, Sir H.
Carmichael, Sir T. D. Gibson-
Causton, Richard Knight
Cawley, Frederick
Channing, Francis Allston
Clough, Walter Owen
Colville, John
Condon, Thomas Joseph
Cozens-Hardy, Herbert Hardy
Dalziel, James Henry
Davies, M. Vaughan- (Cardigan)
Davies, W. Rees- (Pembrokesh.)
Davitt, Michael
Dixon, George
Doughty, George
Dunn, Sir William
Ellis, John Edward (Notts.)
Evans, Samuel T. (Glamorgan)
Ferguson, R. C. Munro (Leith)
Foster, Sir Walter (Derby Co.)
Fowler, Rt. Hn. Sir H. (Wol'tn)
Fowler, Matthew (Durham)
Gilhooly, James
Gladstone, Rt. Hn. Herbert John
Goddard, Daniel Ford
Gourley, Sir Edward Temperley
Griffith, Ellis J.
Haldane, Richard Burdon
Harcourt, Rt. Hon. Sir William
Harrison, Charles
Harwood George
Hayne, Rt. Hon. Charles Seale-
Hazell, Walter
Hogan, James Francis
Holburn, J. G.
Horniman, Frederick John
Humphreys-Owen, Arthur C.
Hutton, Alfred E. (Morley)
Jacoby, James Alfred
Jameson, Major J. Eustace
Johnson-Ferguson, Jabez Edw.
Jones, David Brynmor (Swansea)
Jones, William (Carnarvonshire)
Kilbride, Denis
Kitson, Sir James
Labouchere, Henry
Lambert, George
Lawson, Sir Wilfrid (Cumb'land)
Leng, Sir John
Lewis, John Herbert
Lloyd-George, David
Lockwood, Sir Frank (York)
Logan, John William
Luttrell, Hugh Fownes
M'Hugh, Patrick A. (Leitrim)
McKenna, Reginald
McLaren, Charles Benjamin
McLeod, John
Maden, John Henry
Morgan, J. Lloyd (Carmarthen)
Morley, Charles (Breconshire)
Morley, Rt. Hn. John (Montrose)
Mundella, Rt. Hn. Anthony John
Norton, Captain Cecil William
Nussey, Thomas Willans
O'Connor, T. P. (Liverpool)
Oldroyd, Mark
Owen, Thomas
Paulton, James Mellor
Pease, Joseph A. (Northumb.)
Perks, Robert William
Pickersgill, Edward Hare
Pirie, Captain Duncan Vernon
Price, Robert John
Priestley, Briggs (Yorks.)
Provand, Andrew Dryburgh
Randell, David
Reckitt, Harold James
Rickett, J. Compton
Roberts, John Bryn (Eifion)
Roberts, John H. (Denbighs.)
Robson, William Snowdon
Roche, Hon. James (East Kerry)
Sandys, Lieut.-Col. Thos. Myles
Schwann, Charles E.
Scott, Charles Prestwich
Shaw, Charles Edw. (Stafford)
Smith, Samuel (Flint)
Souttar, Robinson
Spicer, Albert
Stanhope, Hon. Philip J.
Stevenson, Francis S.
Strachey, Edward
Thomas, Abel (Carmarthen, E.)
Thomas, Alfred (Glamorgan, E.)
Wallace, Robert (Perth)
Walton, John Lawson
Warner, Thomas Courtenay T.
Wayman, Thomas
Wedderburn, Sir William
Whittaker, Thomas Palmer
Williams, John Carvell (Notts.)
Wills, Sir William Henry
Wilson, Frederick W. (Norfolk)
Wilson, Henry J. (York, W.R.)
Wilson, John (Govan)
Woodall, William
Woodhouse, Sir J.T. (Hud'rsf'ld)
Yoxall, James Henry

TELLERS FOR THE NOES, Mr. Thomas Ellis and Mr. McArthur

Question put accordingly, "That the Debate be now adjourned."

The House divided:—Ayes, 133; Noes, 283.—(Division List—No. 49—appended).

AYES.

Abraham, William (Rhondda)
Acland, Rt. Hon. A. H. Dyke
Allan, William (Gateshead)
Allen, Wm. (Newc. under Lyme)
Allison, Robert Andrew
Arch, Joseph
Ashton, Thomas Gair
Atherley-Jones, L.
Austin, Sir John (Yorkshire)
Baker, Sir John
Barlow, John Emmott
Bayley, Thomas (Derbyshire)
Beaumont, Wentworth C. B.
Birrell, Augustine
Bolton, Thomas Dolling
Brigg, John
Broadhurst, Henry
Brunner, Sir John Tomlinson
Bryce, Rt. Hon. James
Burns, John
Burt, Thomas
Buxton, Sydney Charles
Caldwell, James
Cameron, Robert (Durham)
Campbell-Bannerman, Sir H.
Carmichael, Sir T. D. Gibson-
Causton, Richard Knight
Cawley, Frederick
Channing, Francis Allston
Clough, Walter Owen
Colville, John
Condon, Thomas Joseph
Cozens-Hardy, Herbert Hardy

Dalziel, James Henry
Davies, M.Vaughan-(Cardigan)
Davies, W. Rees- (Pembrokesh.)
Davitt, Michael
Dixon, George
Doughty, George
Dunn, Sir William
Ellis, John Edward (Notts)
Evans, Samuel T. (Glamorgan)
Ferguson, R. C. Munro (Leith)
Foster, Sir Walter (Derby Co.)
Fowler,Rt. Hon.Sir H. (Wol'tn)
Fowler, Matthew (Durham)
Gilhooly, James
Gladstone,Rt. Hn. Herbert John
Goddard, Daniel Ford
Gourley Sir Edward Temperley
Griffith, Ellis J.
Haldane, Richard Burdon
Harcourt, Rt. Hon. Sir William
Harrison, Charles
Harwood, George
Hayne, Rt. Hon. Charles Seale-
Hazell, Walter
Holburn, J. G.
Horniman, Frederick John
Humphreys-Owen, Arthur C.
Hutton, Alfred E. (Morley)
Jacoby, James Alfred
Jameson, Major J. Eustace
Johnson-Ferguson, Jabez Edw.
Jones,David Brynmor(Swansea)
Jones, William (Carnarvonsh.)
Kilbride, Denis
Kitson, Sir James
Labouchere, Henry
Lambert, George
Lawson,SirWilfrid(Cumb'land)
Leng, Sir John
Lloyd-George, David
Lockwood, Sir Frank (York)
Logan, John William
Luttrell, Hugh Fownes
McKenna, Reginald
McLaren, Charles Benjamin
McLeod, John
Maden, John Henry
Morgan, J. Lloyd (Carmarthen)
Morley, Charles (Breconshire)
Morley,Rt.Hon.John (Montrose)
Mundella, Rt.Hn.Anthony John
Norton, Capt. Cecil William
Nussey, Thomas Willans
O'Connor, T. P. (Liverpool)
Oldroyd, Mark
Owen, Thomas
Parnell, John Howard
Paulton, James Mellor
Pease, Joseph A. (Northumb.)
Perks, Robert William
Pickersgill, Edward Hare
Pirie, Captain Duncan Vernon
Price, Robert John
Priestley, Briggs (Yorks.)
Provand, Andrew Dryburgh
Randell, David
Reckitt, Harold James
Rickett, J. Compton
Roberts, John Bryn (Eifion)
Roberts, John H. (Denbighs.)
Robson, William Snowdon
Roche,Hon. James (East Kerry)
Sandys, Lieut.-Col. Thos. Myles
Schwann, Charles E.
Scott, Charles Prestwich
Shaw, Charles Edw. (Stafford)
Smith, Samuel (Flint)
Souttar, Robinson
Spicer, Albert
Stanhope, Hon. Philip J.
Stevenson, Francis S.
Strachey, Edward
Thomas, Abel (Carmarthen, E.)
Thomas, Alfred (Glamorgan,E.)
Wallace, Robert (Perth)
Walton, John Lawson
Warner, Thomas Courtenay T.
Wayman, Thomas
Wedderburn, Sir William
Whittaker, Thomas Palmer
Williams, John Carvell (Notts)
Wills, Sir William Henry
Wilson, Frederick W. (Norfolk)
Wilson, Henry J. (York, W.R.)
Wilson, John (Govan)
Woodall, William
Woodhouse,SirJ.T(Hudd'rsf'ld)
Yoxall, James Henry

TELLERS FOR THE AYES, Mr. Thomas Ellis and Mr. McArthur

NOES.

Allhusen,Augustus Henry Eden
Allsopp, Hon. George
Arnold-Forster, Hugh O.
Ashmead-Bartlett, Sir Ellis
Atkinson, Rt. Hon. John
Baden-Powell, Sir Geo. Smyth
Bagot, Capt. Josceline FitzRoy
Baillie, James E. B. (Inverness)
Balcarres, Lord
Baldwin, Alfred
Balfour,Rt. Hon.A. J.(Manch'r)
Balfour, Gerald William(Leeds)
Banbury, Frederick George
Barry, A. H. Smith- (Hunts.)
Barry, Francis Tress (Windsor)
Bartley, George C. T.
Bass, Hamar
Bathurst, Hon. Allen Benjamin
Beach,Rt.Hn. Sir M.H. (Bristol)
Beach,W.W. Bramston (Hants.)
Beckett, Ernest William
Begg, Ferdinand Faithfull
Bemrose, Henry Howe
Bentinck, Lord Henry C.
Bethell, Commander
Biddulph, Michael
Bigham, John Charles
Bigwood, James
Bond, Edward
Bonsor, Henry Cosmo Orme
Boscawen, Arthur Griffith-
Bousfield, William Robert
Brassey, Albert
Brodrick, Rt. Hon. St. John
Brown, Alexander H.
Bucknill, Thomas Townsend
Bullard, Sir Harry
Butcher, John George
Campbell, James A.
Carew, James Laurence
Carlile, William Walter
Carson, Edward
Cavendish, R. F. (N. Lancs.)
Cavendish,V.C.W. (Derbyshire)
Cecil, Lord Hugh
Chaloner, Captain R. G. W.
Chamberlain, Rt. Hon.J. (Birm.)
Chamberlain,J.Austen,(Worc'r)
Chaplin, Rt. Hon. Henry
Charrington, Spencer
Clare, Octavius Leigh
Clarke, Sir Edward (Plymouth)
Cochrane, Hon. Thos. H. A. E.
Cohen, Benjamin Louis
Collings, Rt. Hon. Jesse
Colomb, Sir John Charles Ready
Colston, Chas. Edw. H. Athole
Compton, Lord Alwyne (Beds.)
Cook, Fred. Lucas (Lambeth)
Cooke, C. W. Radcliffe (Heref'd)
Courtney, Rt. Hon. Leonard H.
Cranbourne, Viscount
Cripps, Charles Alfred
Cross, Alexander (Glasgow)
Cross, Herb. Shepherd (Bolton)
Curzon,Rt.Hn.G.N.(Lanc.S.W.)
Curzon, Viscount (Bucks)
Dalrymple, Sir Charles
Darling, Charles John
Davenport, W. Bromley
Dickson-Poynder, Sir John P.
Dixon-Hartland,SirFred. Dixon
Dorington, Sir John Edward
Douglas, Rt. Hon. A. Akers-
Doxford, William Theodore
Drucker, A.
Duncombe, Hon. Hubert V.
Dyke, Rt. Hon.SirWilliam Hart
Egerton, Hon. A. de Tatton
Fardell, Thomas George
Fellowes, Hon. Ailwyn Edward
Fergusson,Rt.Hn.SirJ. (Manch.)
Field, Admiral (Eastbourne)
Fielden, Thomas
Finch, George H.
Finlay, Sir Robert Bannatyne
Fisher, William Hayes
Fison, Frederick William
FitzGerald, Sir R. U. Penrose
Flannery, Fortescue
Fletcher, Sir Henry
Flower, Ernest
Folkestone, Viscount
Forster, Henry William
Foster, Colonel (Lancaster)
Foster, Harry S. (Suffolk)
Fry, Lewis
Galloway, William Johnson
Garfit, William
Gedge, Sydney
Gibbs,Hn.A.G.H.(City of Lond.
Gibbs, Hon.Vicary (St. Albans)

Gilliat, John Saunders
Godson, Augustus Frederick
Goldsworthy, Major-General
Gordon, John Edward
Gorst, Rt. Hon. Sir John Eldon
Goschen, Rt. Hon. G. J. (St. G'rg's)
Goschen, George J. (Sussex)
Goulding, Edward Alfred
Graham, Henry Robert
Gray, Ernest (West Ham)
Green, Walford D. (Wednesb'ry)
Gretton, John
Greville, Captain
Gull, Sir Cameron
Halsey, Thomas Frederick
Hamilton, Rt. Hon. Lord Geo.
Hanbury, Rt. Hon. Robert Wm.
Hardy, Laurence
Hare, Thomas Leigh
Haslett, Sir James Horner
Havelock-Allan, General Sir H.
Heath, James
Heaton, John Henniker
Hermon-Hodge, Robert Trotter
Hickman, Sir Alfred
Hill, Rt. Hon. Ld. Arthur (Down)
Hoare, Edw. Brodie (Hampstead)
Hoare, Samuel (Norwich)
Hobhouse, Henry
Holland, Hon. Lionel Raleigh
Hopkinson, Alfred
Hornby, William Henry
Houldsworth, Sir Wm. Henry
Houston, R. P.
Howard, Joseph
Howell, William Tudor
Hozier, James Henry Cecil
Hudson, George Bickersteth
Hutchinson, Capt. G. W. Grice-
Hutton, John (Yorks, N.R.)
Isaacson, Frederick Wootton
Jebb, Richard Claverhouse
Jeffreys, Arthur Frederick
Jenkins, Sir John Jones
Jessel, Captain Herbert Merton
Johnston, William (Belfast)
Johnstone, John H. (Sussex)
Jolliffe, Hon. H. George
Kemp, George
Kennaway, Rt. Hon. Sir John H.
Kenrick, William
Kenyon-Slaney, Col. William
Kimber, Henry
King, Sir Henry Seymour
Knowles, Lees
Knox, Edmund Francis Vesey
Lafone, Alfred
Laurie, Lieut.-General
Lawrence, Wm. F. (Liverpool)
Lea, Sir Thomas (Londonderry)
Lecky, William Edward H.
Lees, Sir Elliott (Birkenhead)
Legh, Hon. Thomas W. (Lanc.)
Leigh-Bennett, Henry Currie
Leighton, Stanley
Llewelyn, Sir Dillwyn-(Swans'a)
Lockwood, Lt.-Col. A. R. (Essex)
Loder, Gerald Walter Erskine
Long, Col. Charles W. (Evesham)
Long, Rt. Hn. Walter (Liverpool)
Lopes, Henry Yarde Buller
Lorne, Marquess of
Loyd, Archie Kirkman
Lucas-Shadwell, William
Lyttelton, Hon. Alfred
Macaleese, Daniel
Macdona, John Cumming
Maclean, James Mackenzie
Maclure, John William
McCalmont, Col. J. (Antrim, E.)
M'Hugh, E. (Armagh, S.)
McIver, Sir Lewis
McKillop, James
Malcolm, Ian
Maple, Sir John Blundell
Meysey-Thompson, Sir H. M.
Milbank, Powlett Charles John
Milton, Viscount
Milward, Colonel Victor
Monckton, Edward Philip
Monk, Charles James
Montagu, Hon. J. Scott (Hants.)
Moon, Edward Robert Pacy
More, Robert Jasper
Morgan, Hn. Fred. (Monm'thsh.)
Morrell, George Herbert
Morrison, Walter
Mount, William George
Muntz, Philip A.
Murdoch, Charles Townshend
Murray, Rt. Hn. A. Graham (Bute)
Murray, Charles J. (Coventry)
Myers, William Henry
Nicol, Donald Ninian
Northcote, Hon. Sir H. Stafford
O'Brien, Patrick (Kilkenny)
O'Connor, Arthur (Donegal)
O'Neill, Hon. Robert Torrens
Orr-Ewing, Charles Lindsay
Parkes, Ebenezer
Pease, Arthur (Darlington)
Penn, John
Pierpoint, Robert
Platt-Higgins, Frederick
Plunkett, Hon. Horace Curzon
Pollock, Harry Frederick
Powell, Sir Francis Sharp
Purvis, Robert
Rankin, James
Rasch, Major Frederic Carne
Rentoul, James Alexander
Richards, Henry Charles
Richardson, Thomas
Ridley, Rt. Hon. Sir Matthew W.
Ritchie, Rt. Hon. Chas. Thomson
Rollit, Sir Albert Kaye
Round, James
Russell, Gen. F. S. (Cheltenham)
Russell, Sir George (Berksh.)
Russell, T. W. (Tyrone)
Rutherford, John
Samuel, Harry S. (Limehouse)
Saunderson, Col. Edw. James
Savory, Sir Joseph
Scoble, Sir Andrew Richard
Seely, Charles Hilton
Seton-Karr, Henry
Sharpe, William Edward T.
Sidebotham, J. W. (Cheshire)
Simeon, Sir Barrington
Sinclair, Louis (Romford)
Skewes-Cox, Thomas
Smith, Abel (Herts.)
Smith, Abel H. (Christchurch)
Smith, Hon. W. F. D. (Strand)
Stanley, Lord (Lancs.)
Stanley, Edw. Jas. (Somerset)
Stock, James Henry
Stone, Sir Benjamin
Strauss, Arthur
Strutt, Hon. Charles Hedley
Sturt, Hon. Humphry Napier
Sullivan, Donal (Westmeath)
Talbot, Lord E. (Chichester)
Talbot, John G. (Oxford Univ.)
Taylor, Francis
Thornton, Percy M.
Tollemache, Henry James
Tomlinson, Wm. Edw. Murray
Tritton, Charles Ernest
Valentia, Viscount
Vincent, Col. Sir C. E. Howard
Warde, Lt.-Col. C. E. (Kent)
Warkworth, Lord
Webster, Sir R. E. (I. of W.)
Welby, Lieut.-Col. A. C. E.
Wentworth, Bruce C. Vernon-
Whiteley, George (Stockport)
Whiteley, H. (Ashton-under-L.)
Whitmore, Charles Algernon
Williams, Colonel R. (Dorset)
Willoughby de Eresby, Lord
Willox, John Archibald
Wilson, John (Falkirk)
Wilson, J. W. (Worc'sh. N.)
Wodehouse, Edmond R. (Bath)
Wortley, Rt. Hon. C. B. Stuart-
Wyndham, George
Wyvill, Marmaduke D'Arcy
Yerburgh, Robert Armstrong
Younger, William

TELLERS FOR THE NOES, Sir William Walrond and Mr. Anstruther.

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY claimed, "That the Original Question be now put."

Original Question put accordingly,

"That it be an Instruction to the Committee that they have power to insert Clauses in the Bill with a view to making provision for insuring adequate representation of local authorities or parents on the management of the schools in receipt of the aid grant."—(*Mr. Lloyd-George.*)

The House divided:—Ayes, 134; Noes, 270.—(Division List—No. 50—appended.)

AYES.

Abraham, William (Rhondda)
Acland, Rt. Hon. A. H. Dyke
Allan, William (Gateshead)
Allen, W. (Newc.-under-Lyme.)
Allison, Robert Andrew
Arch, Joseph
Ashton, Thomas Gair
Atherley-Jones, L.
Austin, Sir John (Yorkshire)
Baker, Sir John
Barlow, John Emmott
Bartley, George C. T.
Bayley, Thomas (Derbyshire)
Beaumont, Wentworth C. B.
Birrell, Augustine
Bolton, Thomas Dolling
Brigg, John
Broadhurst, Henry
Brunner, Sir John Thomas
Bryce, Rt. Hon. James
Burns, John
Burt, Thomas
Buxton, Sydney Charles
Caldwell, James
Cameron, Robert (Durham)
Campbell-Bannerman, Sir H.
Carmichael, Sir T. D. Gibson-
Causton, Richard Knight
Cawley, Frederick
Channing, Francis Allston
Clough, Walter Owen
Colville, John
Courtney, Rt. Hon. Leonard H.
Cozens-Hardy, Herbert Hardy
Cross, Alexander (Glasgow)
Dalziel, James Henry
Davies, M. Vaughan-(Cardigan)
Davies, W. Rees- (Pembrokesh.)
Davitt, Michael
Dilke, Rt. Hon. Sir Charles
Dixon, George
Doughty, George
Dunn, Sir William
Ellis, John Edward (Notts.)
Evans, Samuel T. (Glamorgan)
Ferguson, R. C. Munro (Leith)
Foster, Sir W. (Derby Co.)
Fowler, Rt. Hn. Sir H. (Wol'h'tn)
Fowler, Matthew (Durham)
Gladstone, Rt. Hn. Herbert John
Goddard, Daniel Ford
Gourley, Sir Edward Temperley
Griffith, Ellis J.
Haldane, Richard Burdon
Harcourt, Rt. Hon. Sir William
Harrison, Charles
Harwood, George
Hayne, Rt. Hon. Charles Seale-
Hazell, Walter
Holburn, J. G.
Horniman, Frederick John
Humphreys-Owen, Arthur C.
Hutton, Alfred E. (Morley)
Jacoby, James Alfred
Johnson-Ferguson, Jabez Edw.
Jones, David Brynmor (Swansea)
Jones, William (Carnarvonshire)
Kilbride, Denis
Kitson, Sir James
Labouchere, Henry
Lambert, George
Lawson, Sir Wilfrid (Cumb.)
Lea, Sir Thomas (Londonderry)
Leng, Sir John
Lewis, John Herbert
Lloyd-George, David
Lockwood, Sir Frank (York)
Logan, John William
Luttrell, Hugh Fownes
McKenna, Reginald
McLaren, Charles Benjamin
McLeod, John
Maden, John Henry
Morgan, J. Lloyd (Carmarthen)
Morley, Charles (Breconshire)
Morley, Rt. Hon. John (Montrose
Mundella, Rt. Hon Anthony John
Norton, Capt. Cecil William
Nussey, Thomas Willans
Oldroyd, Mark
Owen, Thomas
Paulton, James Mellor
Pease, Joseph A. (Northumb.)
Perks, Robert William
Pickersgill, Edward Hare
Pirie, Captain Duncan Vernon
Price, Robert John
Priestley, Briggs (Yorks)
Provand, Andrew Dryburgh
Randell, David
Reckitt, Harold James
Rickett, J. Compton
Roberts, John Bryn (Eifion)
Roberts, John H. (Denbighs)
Robson, William Snowdon
Roche, Hon. James (East Kerry)
Rollit, Sir Albert K.
Sandys, Lieut.-Col. Thos. Myles
Schwann, Charles E.
Scott, Charles (Prestwich)
Shaw, Charles Edw. (Stafford)
Smith, Samuel (Flint)
Souttar, Robinson
Spicer, Albert
Stanhope, Hon. Philip J.
Stevenson, Francis S.
Strachey, Edward
Thomas, Abel (Carmarthen, E.)
Thomas, Alfred (Glamorgan, E.)
Wallace, Robert (Perth)
Walton, John Lawson
Warner, Thomas Courtenay T.
Wayman, Thomas
Wedderburn, Sir William
Whittaker, Thomas Palmer
Williams, John Carvell (Notts.)
Wills, Sir William Henry
Wilson, Frederick W. (Norfolk)
Wilson, Henry J. (York, W.R.)
Wilson, John (Falkirk)
Wilson, John (Govan)
Woodall, William
Woodhouse, Sir J. T. (Hudd'rsf'ld.
Yoxall, James Henry

TELLERS FOR THE AYES, Mr. Thomas Ellis and Mr. McArthur.

NOES.

Allhusen, Augustus Henry Eden
Allsopp, Hon. George
Arnold-Forster, Hugh O.
Ashmead-Bartlett, Sir Ellis
Atkinson, Right Hon. John
Baden-Powell, Sir Geo. Smyth
Bagot, Capt. Josceline FitzRoy
Baillie, James E. B. (Inverness)
Balcarres, Lord
Baldwin, Alfred
Balfour, Rt. Hon. A. J. (Manch'r)
Balfour, Gerald William (Leeds)
Banbury, Frederick George
Barry, A. H. Smith-(Hunts.)
Barry, Francis Tress (Windsor)
Bass, Hamar
Bathurst, Hon. Allen Benjamin
Beach, Rt. Hn. Sir M. H. (Brstl)
Beach, W. W. Bramston (Hants)
Beckett, Ernest William
Begg, Ferdinand Faithfull
Bemrose, Henry Howe
Bentinck, Lord Henry C.
Bethell, Commander
Biddulph, Michael
Bigham, John Charles
Bigwood, James
Bond, Edward
Bonsor, Henry Cosmo Orme
Boscawen, Arthur Griffith-
Bousfield, William Robert
Brassey, Albert
Brodrick, Rt. Hon. St. John
Brown, Alexander H.
Bucknill, Thomas Townsend
Bullard, Sir Harry
Butcher, John George
Campbell, James A.
Carew, James Laurence
Carlile, William Walter
Carson, Edward
Cavendish, R. F. (N. Lancs)
Cavendish, V. C. W. (Derbyshire)
Cecil, Lord Hugh
Chaloner, Captain R. G. W.
Chamberlain, Rt. Hon. J. (Birm.)
Chamberlain, J. Austen (Worc'r)
Chaplin, Rt. Hon. Henry
Charrington, Spencer
Clare, Octavius Leigh
Clarke, Sir Edward (Plymouth)
Cochrane, Hon. Thos. H. A. E.
Cohen, Benjamin Louis
Collings, Rt. Hon. Jesse
Colomb, Sir John Charles Ready
Colston, Chas. Edw. H. Athole
Compton, Lord Alwyne (Beds)

Cook, Fred. Lucas (Lambeth)
Cooke, C.W. Radcliffe (Heref'd)
Cranborne, Viscount
Cripps, Charles Alfred
Cross, Herb. Shepherd (Bolton)
Curzon,Rt.Hn.G.N.(Lanc.S.W.)
Curzon, Viscount (Bucks)
Dalrymple, Sir Charles
Darling, Charles John
Davenport, W. Bromley-
Dickson-Poynder, Sir John P.
Dixon-Hartland, Sir F. Dixon
Dorington, Sir John Edward
Douglas, Rt. Hon. A. Akers-
Doxford, William Theodore
Drucker, A.
Duncombe, Hon. Hubert V.
Dyke, Rt. Hon.Sir WilliamHart
Egerton, Hon. A. de Tatton
Fardell, Thomas George
Fellowes, Hon. Ailwyn Edward
Fergusson, Rt.Hn. SirJ.(Manc.)
Field, Admiral (Eastbourne
Fielden, Thomas
Finch, George H.
Finlay, Sir Robert Bannatyne
Fisher, William Hayes
Fison, Frederick William
FitzGerald, Sir R. U. Penrose
Flannery, Fortescue
Fletcher, Sir Henry
Flower, Ernest
Folkestone, Viscount
Forster, Henry William
Foster, Colonel (Lancaster)
Foster, Harry S. (Suffolk)
Galloway, William Johnson
Garfit, William
Gedge, Sydney
Gibbs, Hn.A.G.H.(City of Lond.
Gibbs, Hon. Vicary (St. Albans)
Gilliat, John Saunders
Godson, Augustus Frederick
Goldsworthy, Major-General
Gordon, John Edward
Gorst, Rt. Hon. Sir John Eldon
Goschen,Rt.Hn.G.J.(St.G'rg's)
Goschen, George J. (Sussex)
Goulding, Edward Alfred
Graham, Henry Robert
Green,Walford D. (Wednesb'ry)
Gretton, John
Greville, Captain
Gull, Sir Cameron
Halsey, Thomas Frederick
Hamilton, Rt. Hon. Lord Geo.
Hanbury, Rt. Hon. Robert Wm.
Hardy, Laurence
Hare, Thomas Leigh
Haslett, Sir James Horner
Havelock-Allan, General Sir H.
Heath, James
Heaton, John Henniker
Hermon-Hodge, Robert Trotter
Hickman, Sir Alfred
Hill,Rt.Hn.Lord Arthur(Down)
Hoare,Edw.Brodie (Hampstead)
Hoare, Samuel (Norwich)
Holland, Hon. Lionel Raleigh
Hornby, William Henry
Houldsworth, Sir Wm. Henry
Houston, R. P.
Howard, Joseph
Howell, William Tudor
Hozier, James Henry Cecil
Hudson, George Bickersteth
Hutchinson, Capt. G. W. Grice-
Hutton, John (Yorks, N.R.)
Isaacson, Frederick Wootton
Jebb, Richard Claverhouse
Jeffreys, Arthur Frederick
Jenkins, Sir John Jones
Jessel, Captain Herbert Merton
Johnston, William (Belfast)
Johnstone, John H. (Sussex)
Jolliffe, Hon. H. George
Kemp, George
Kennaway,Rt. Hon. Sir John H.
Kenrick, William
Kenyon-Slaney, Col. William
Kimber, Henry
King, Sir Henry Seymour
Knowles, Lees
Knox, Edmund Francis Vesey
Lafone, Alfred
Laurie, Lieut.-General
Lawrence, Wm. F. (Liverpool)
Lecky, William Edward H.
Lees, Sir Elliott (Birkenhead)
Legh, Hon. Thomas W. (Lanc.)
Leigh-Bennett, Henry Currie
Leighton, Stanley
Llewelyn,Sir Dillwyn- (Swns'a)
Lockwood, Lt.-Col. A.R. (Essex)
Loder, Gerald Walter Erskine
Long,Col. CharlesW. (Evesham)
Long,Rt. Hn.Walter(Liverpool)
Lopes, Henry Yarde Buller
Lorne, Marquess of
Loyd, Archie Kirkman
Lucas-Shadwell, William
Macaleese, Daniel
Macdona, John Cumming
Maclean, James Mackenzie
Maclure, John William
McCalmont, Col. J.(Antrim, E.)
M'Hugh, E. (Armagh, S.)
McIver, Sir Lewis
McKillop, James
Malcolm, Ian
Maple, Sir John Blundell
Meysey-Thompson, Sir H. M.
Milbank, Powlett Charles John
Milton, Viscount
Milward, Colonel Victor
Monckton, Edward Philip
Monk, Charles James
Montagu, Hon. J. Scott (Hants)
Moon, Edward Robert Pacy
More, Robert Jasper
Morgan,Hn. Fred. (Monm'thsh.)
Morrell, George Herbert
Morrison, Walter
Mount, William George
Muntz, Philip A.
Murdoch, Charles Townshend
Murray,Rt.Hn.A.Graham (Bute
Murray, Charles J. (Coventry)
Myers, William Henry
Nicol, Donald Ninian
Northcote, Hon. Sir H.Stafford
O'Brien, Patrick (Kilkenny)
O'Connor, Arthur (Donegal)
O'Neill, Hon. Robert Torrens
Orr-Ewing, Charles Lindsay
Parkes, Ebenezer
Parnell, John Howard
Pease, Arthur (Darlington)
Penn, John
Pierpoint, Robert
Platt-Higgins, Frederick
Plunkett, Hon. Horace Curzon
Pollock, Harry Frederick
Powell, Sir Francis Sharp
Purvis, Robert
Rankin, James
Rentoul, James Alexander
Richards, Henry Charles
Richardson, Thomas
Ridley,Rt.Hon.Sir Matthew W.
Ritchie, Rt.Hon. Chas. Thomson
Round, James
Russell, Gen. F.S. (Cheltenham)
Russell, Sir George (Berkshire)
Russell, T. W. (Tyrone)
Rutherford, John
Samuel, Harry S. (Limehouse)
Saunderson, Col. Ewd. James
Savory, Sir Joseph
Scoble, Sir Andrew Richard
Seely, Charles Hilton
Seton-Karr, Henry
Sharpe, William Edward T.
Sidebotham, J. W. (Cheshire)
Simeon, Sir Barrington
Sinclair, Louis (Romford)
Skewes-Cox, Thomas
Smith, Abel (Herts.)
Smith, Abel H. (Christchurch)
Smith, Hon. W. F. D. (Strand)
Stanley, Lord (Lancs.)
Stanley, Edwd. Jas. (Somerset)
Stock, James Henry
Stone, Sir Benjamin
Strauss, Arthur
Strutt, Hon. Charles Hedley
Sturt, Hon. Humphry Napier
Sullivan, Donal (Westmeath)
Talbot Lord E. (Chichester)
Talbot, John G. (Oxford Univ.)
Taylor, Francis
Thornton, Percy M.
Tollemache, Henry James
Tomlinson, Wm. Edw. Murray
Tritton, Charles Ernest
Valentia, Viscount
Vincent, Col. Sir C. E. Howard
Ward, Lt.-Col. C. E. (Kent)
Warkworth, Lord
Webster, SirR.E.(Isle of Wight)
Welby, Lieut.-Col. A. C. E.
Wentworth, Bruce C. Vernon-
Whiteley, George (Stockport)
Whiteley, H. (Ashton-under-L.)
Whitmore, Charles Algernon
Williams, Colonel R. (Dorset)
Willoughby de Eresby, Lord
Willox, John Archibald
Wodehouse, Edmond R. (Bath)
Wortley, Rt. Hon. C. B. Stuart-
Wyndham, George
Wyvill, Marmaduke D'Arcy
Yerburgh, Thomas Armstrong

TELLERS FOR THE NOES, Sir William Walrond and Mr. Anstruther.

Bill considered in Committee.

Clause 1,—

Committee report Progress; to sit again upon Monday next.

MILITARY WORKS (MONEY) BILL.

Committee deferred till Monday next.

PUBLIC HEALTH (SCOTLAND) BILL.

Adjourned Debate on Second Reading [5th February] further adjourned till Thursday next.

LAW OF EVIDENCE (CRIMINAL CASES) BILL.

Second Reading deferred till Tuesday next.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ALDERSHOT AND FARNBOROUGH) BILL.

Second Reading deferred till Monday next.

BERRIEW SCHOOL BILL.

Second Reading deferred till Monday next.

MILITARY LANDS ACT (1892) AMENDMENT BILL.

Committee deferred till Monday next.

TRUSTS (SCOTLAND) BILL.

Committee deferred till Tuesday next.

OLD AGE PROVIDENT PENSIONS BILL.

Second Reading deferred till Thursday, 17th June.

OUTDOOR PROVIDENT RELIEF BILL.

Second Reading deferred till Thursday, 17th June.

TRUCK ACTS AMENDMENT BILL.

Second Reading deferred till Friday, 12th March.

STEAM ENGINES AND BOILERS (PERSONS IN CHARGE) BILL.

Adjourned Debate on Motion for Committal to Standing Committee on Trade, etc. [17th February] further adjourned till Monday next.

ARCHDEACONRY OF LONDON (ADDITIONAL ENDOWMENTS) BILL.

Adjourned Debate on Second Reading [24th February] further adjourned till Wednesday next.

LABOURERS COTTAGES (IRELAND) BILL.

Second Reading deferred till Wednesday next.

ESTATES TAIL BILL.

Second Reading deferred till Monday next.

LICENSING EXEMPTION (HOUSES OF PARLIAMENT) BILL.

Second Reading deferred till Tomorrow.

GOVERNMENT CONTRACTS (FAIR WAGES RESOLUTION).

Select Committee appointed to consider the working of the Fair Wages Resolution of February 1891, and its administration by the various Government Departments.

The Committee was accordingly nominated of—Mr. Allison, Mr. Austin, Mr. Banbury, Mr. Broadhurst, Mr. Buchanan, Mr. Sydney Buxton, Sir Charles Dilke, Sir Arthur Forwood, Mr. Jackson, Mr. Maclean, Mr. Morrison, Sir Matthew White Ridley, Sir Albert Rollit, Mr. Parker Smith, and Mr. Powell-Williams.

Ordered, That the Committee have power to send for persons, papers, and records.

Ordered, That Five be the quorum.—(*Sir William Walrond.*)

House adjourned at a Quarter before One o'Clock

HOUSE OF LORDS.

Friday, 26th February 1897.

SINCLAIR'S DIVORCE BILL.

Petition of Alfred Low Sinclair, of Holyhill, Strabane, County Tyrone, a Lieutenant-Colonel in the Indian Staff Corps, praying for leave to present a Bill: Considered (according to Order): Counsel called in: Moved that leave be given to present the said Bill; agreed to.

A Bill to dissolve the marriage of Alfred Low Sinclair, of Holyhill, Strabane, County Tyrone, a Lieutenant-Colonel in the Indian Staff Corps, with Isabella Sinclair, his wife, and to enable him to marry again, and for other purposes presented accordingly; Read 1ª; and to be read 2ª on Monday, the 28th of June next; the usual orders made.

EARL OF KINGSTON.

Petition of Henry Edwyn Earl of Kingston, in the Peerage of Ireland, claiming a right to vote at the elections of Representative Peers for Ireland. Read, and referred to the Lord Chancellor to consider and report thereupon to the House.

POST OFFICE CONSOLIDATION BILL [H.L.]

Referred to the Joint Committee on Statute Law Revision and Consolidation Bills; and a message ordered to be sent to the Commons to acquaint them therewith.

House adjourned at Half-past Four o'clock, to Monday next, a Quarter before Eleven o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

Friday, 26th February 1897.

PRIVATE BUSINESS.

EAST LONDON WATER BILL.

On the Motion for the Second Reading of this Bill,

MR. SYDNEY BUXTON (Tower Hamlets, Poplar) said he did not intend to oppose the Bill in any way, because it was essential that the company should have the powers they sought to carry out the projected works. But he felt constrained to express the regret which he believed the ratepayers of London felt that the question of the water supply of the metropolis was being dealt with piecemeal, thus involving great additional trouble and expense. It had been understood that the Government were prepared to deal with the whole question last Session, and that, not having done so, they would have introduced a Bill this Session. But it was evident that they did not intend to legislate on the matter. Under the circumstances, as representing an East End constituency, he should support the Second Reading, and he was glad to learn that the company had come to a satisfactory agreement with regard to land.

Bill read a Second time.

MR. J. M. PAULTON (Durham, Bishop Auckland) moved—

> "That it be an Instruction to the Committee to whom the East London Water Bill is referred that, having regard to the Resolution of this House of March 12, 1896, they do insert such provisions in the Bill as will insure the acquisition by the local authority of such a suitable area of open space as, in the judgment of the Committee ought fairly to be substituted for the common rights proposed to be extinguished under the Bill."

He remarked that he thought he was justified in moving the Instruction on two considerations—the protection of important public interests, and the fact that those interests could be protected without interfering with the purpose of the Bill. The Bill was introduced to enable the East London Water Company to obtain powers for acquiring certain lands in the neighbourhood of Tottenham to construct a new storage reservoir. Those lands, much of which was common land, were situated in the Lea Valley, and were in the midst of a growing population, and this made it all the more desirable that regard should be had to the preservation of open spaces. Last year the House not only rejected a Bill for the enclosure of certain common lands, but, on his Motion, unanimously passed a resolution declaring that they were not prepared to entertain any proposal for the enclosure of common lands within the metropolitan area. By this Instruction he sought to maintain the principle then laid down by Parliament. The circumstances in this case admitted of the view that these particular lands were required, and were especially suitable, for the purposes demanded by the company. The public interests involved would not suffer by the substitution of other land to be given by way of exchange for the common rights which were thus extinguished. The Board of Agriculture, in the excellent report they had made on this Bill, had said that, in their opinion, an amount of land equal in extent to the common land proposed to be taken under the Bill should be given by the promoters in substitution. Under the special circumstances of this case, he did not go so far as that, and his Instruction left it to the judgment of the Committee to say what, in their opinion, would be a fair and sufficient equivalent in the way of an open space in substitution for the common land to be taken. It was important to observe that this land should be acquired by the promoters and handed over to the local authority, who had long been desirous to acquire land for this purpose in this particular district. The promoters of the Bill had met them in a fair and reasonable spirit. They had in that spirit agreed to accept this Instruction; and he therefore did not offer any opposition to the Second Reading of the Bill, because the Instruction really carried out the object he had in view. He confidently believed that the result would be not only to maintain a very important principle of public policy, but to confer on the inhabitants of Tottenham a lasting benefit which they had long desired.

Mr. J. M. Paulton.

Colonel LOCKWOOD (Essex, Epping) said that, though this company still believed that the Government would bring in a Bill dealing with the water question, they thought, with the scarcity of water which occurred last year, they would not lose an hour in presenting a Bill to enable them to increase their storage. With regard to the common rights that must be extinguished by the taking of the site for their new reservoir, they were extremely anxious to provide an area for the commoners to replace them. They confidently left it to the Committee to state what should be done, and the company would endeavour to meet them in the most equitable and fair way. He had no doubt whatever that there would be no difficulty in providing such lands as could recompense the commoners for the rights they had given up.

Mr. JAMES BRYCE (Aberdeen, S.) said he had heard with the greatest pleasure of the arrangement made by which the company agreed to accept the Instruction. This question was one which used to cause a good deal of difference in that House. Some 12 or 15 years ago or more, when railway companies especially, and, to some extent, water companies also, were entitled to acquire common land, conflicts used to frequently arise in that House. In 1883 or 1884 a plan was devised, by which companies applying for power to take common land should be bound by an Instruction such as this to substitute land of an equal extent or equally well situated, so as to provide adequate compensation to the people of the neighbourhood for the land taken away. He believed that, although that was adopted in certain Bills, it had not been so in all cases, though he did not know why. He was all the more pleased that the principle should be revived on this occasion, and that the reasonable desires of his hon. Friend, acting on behalf of the commoners and of the people of Tottenham, should have been met in so frank and liberal a spirit by the company. He hoped that, now this principle had been revived, it would pass into a precedent, and that they would have it generally accepted that, where common land might be taken for a purpose of public utility, those who took it should be bound to have regard to the interests of the commoners and to provide equal land or equal convenience for the purposes of the community.

Motion agreed to.

QUESTIONS.

LEWES ASSIZES (CONVICTION FOR FRAUD).

Mr. E. H. PICKERSGILL (Bethnal Green, S.W.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, with regard to the fact that on the conviction at Lewes Assizes of a woman named Manning, on a charge of obtaining money by false pretences, a communication was received from the Home Office asking that the Court should be informed of a large number of warrants relating to other charges in different parts of the country which were out against the prisoner, so that they might be taken into consideration by the judge in aggravation of sentence, will he explain what steps does he propose to take in order to obtain the withdrawal of these warrants, or to prevent the execution of them when the woman comes out of prison, so that she may not be twice punished for the same offences?

The SECRETARY of STATE for the HOME DEPARTMENT (Sir Matthew White Ridley, Lancashire, Blackpool): I entirely repudiate the construction which the hon. Member puts upon the Home Office action in this case. The object of the communication, which was sent out in pursuance of a policy that is not a new one, and has been well considered and was recently discussed with Her Majesty's Judges, was in the interests of the prisoner, that, as far as possible, the various offences of the same kind committed by her might be taken into account at one time, and her repeated rearrest at the prison gates might be avoided. Having since learned that the Court, in passing sentence, took into consideration the fact that there were these other offences, I have informed the police authorities concerned that such was the case. I have no power, of course, to prevent the execution of the warrants for the other offences, but I have generally found that the steps which have been taken in the present case are effectual for the purpose of preventing repeated prosecutions for what is practically the same offence, and I hope they will be equally effectual in this case also. I should not hesitate, however, if I were satisfied that the prisoner was being punished twice for the same offence, in recommending the exercise of the prerogative of the Crown.

Mr. PICKERSGILL asked, with regard to the Instruction to which the right hon. Gentleman had referred, as it apparently sanctioned the practice of allowing hearsay evidence against a prisoner after conviction, so that it might be taken into consideration by a Judge in aggravation of sentence, if a copy of the Instruction would be laid on the Table?

Sir MATTHEW WHITE RIDLEY said he had issued the circular with the view of relieving prisoners who were convicted from being, after sentence, again arrested for actually the same offence. It was really in the interest, not against the interest, of prisoners. He did not know that he could do more.

Mr. PICKERSGILL pressed the right hon. Gentleman to lay a copy of the circular on the Table.

Sir MATTHEW WHITE RIDLEY said the circular had been sent all round to all the authorities, and he did not see there would be any advantage in laying a copy on the Table.

Mr. PICKERSGILL asked, would the right hon. Gentleman send him a copy?

Sir MATTHEW WHITE RIDLEY had not the slightest objection to do so.

LAND COMMISSION (IRELAND).

Mr. D. MACALEESE (Monaghan, N.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland if he can state when the decisions will be given in the land cases before the Sub-Commission Court which sat at Lisnaskea, County Fermanagh, on 8th November, 1896?

The CHIEF SECRETARY for IRELAND (Mr. Gerald Balfour, Leeds Central): I am informed by the Land Commission that the decision referred to in the Question will be announced at an early date.

Mr. D. SULLIVAN (Westmeath, S.): On behalf of the hon. Member for Carlow (Mr. John Hammond), I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of

Ireland when the Land Commissioners will visit Carlow to hear land cases there?

MR. GERALD BALFOUR: All the cases listed up to November in this county were disposed of recently, and the number of applications now pending from the county are comparatively few. A sitting will be arranged at as early a date as possible, having regard to the claims of other counties where more cases and of older date are pending.

MR. C. J. ENGLEDOW (Kildare, N.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether he can now state if the Land Commission has been able to fix a day for the holding of a Court in County Kildare for the fixing of fair rents?

MR. GERALD BALFOUR: A Sub-Commission Court will hold a sitting in this county on the 23rd March.

MR. JOHN DILLON (Mayo, E.): Might I ask the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary to the Treasury whether he will consent to postpone Vote 17 for the Irish Land Commission until the Return which has been frequently promised in relation to the new Commissioners is given to the House? He will notice that in that Vote there is an item of £11,337 for the additional Commissioners.

THE SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY (Mr. R. W. HANBURY, Preston): No, Sir. I do not think there will be any necessity for that. Any explanation which the hon. Gentleman requires can be given on the Vote.

MR. DILLON: Might I point out that the right hon. Gentleman cannot give the explanation, because the information is in the form of an elaborate Return, giving the qualifications for each of the new appointments?

WATER TRUSTEES.

MR. MACALEESE: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department the number and names of such Water Boards in the three kingdoms as are elected by the ratepayers for the sole and exclusive discharge of the office and duty of Water Trustees?

SIR MATTHEW WHITE RIDLEY: So far as I have been able to ascertain, there is only one such Board in the United Kingdom, namely the Belfast City and District Water Commissioners. There are several Boards for the sole and exclusive discharge of the duty mentioned, which are elected by local authorities, and I shall be happy to supply the hon. Member with a list of these if he wishes to have it.

VOLUNTEER CADET CORPS.

GENERAL LAURIE (Pembroke and Haverfordwest): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for War whether he can state the strength of cadet corps attached to Volunteer battalions which attended regular training and inspection during the past year; whether he is aware that these cadet corps receive no Government assistance other than the loan of unserviceable Martini-Henry rifles; that their officers only hold honorary rank and have no official status; that their services do not bring any financial assistance to their corps; that these corps are maintained at an annual expense to the members composing them of from 25s. to 35s. per head; and that when they go into camp at Aldershot or other military stations to learn their duties alongside regular troops, with whom they take their full share at field days, they incur a further expense of from 21s. to 25s.; and whether he would be prepared to consider, and if possible bring forward, proposals in next year's Estimates for recognising these corps in some substantial manner, as for instance by allowing the officers to hold commissions with substantive rank and with full grant for efficiency, and granting to non-commissioned officers and privates the authorised proficiency allowance as issued to effective Volunteers, and by requiring a special Report and establishing a high standard of efficiency, so that these corps could be looked on as very valuable educational institutions for furnishing officers and non-commissioned officers to the service Volunteer battalions?

*THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR WAR (Mr. BRODRICK, Surrey, Guildford): 4,321 cadets appeared at inspection in 1896. These cadet corps consist of school boys under 17 years of age. To treat them as suggested in the Question would involve a heavy annual expenditure, which is not recommended by the military authorities, although the Secretary of State fully appreciates the value of these juvenile corps as feeders for the Volunteers as the boys grow up.

"ALABAMA" CLAIMS.

Mr GIBSON BOWLES (Lynn Regis): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (1) whether Her Majesty's Government are aware that a sum of 8,000,000 dollars, out of the 15,500,000 awarded in 1872 by the Geneva Tribunal on the *Alabama* claims, to be paid by Great Britain to the United States as damages, is still in the hands of the United States Government undistributed to any claimants for compensation in respect of the acts of the *Alabama*, *Florida*, and *Shenandoah;* and (2) whether there is any prospect of the United States Government offering to repay to Great Britain the amount remaining unclaimed after all claims for compensation have been satisfied?

*The UNDER SECRETARY of STATE for FOREIGN AFFAIRS (Mr. G. Curzon, Lancashire, Southport): A similar Question was answered on February 17, 1891, by Mr. W. H. Smith, then First Lord of the Treasury, as follows:—"It was believed from accounts which had been published in the United States that a certain portion of the sum paid by Great Britain to the United States under the award of the tribunal of arbitration at Geneva still remained in the hands of the United States Government. It would be contrary to the engagements taken by this country in the Treaty of Washington of 1871 that Her Majesty's Government should request the return of this sum."

Mr. GIBSON BOWLES: May I call the right hon. Gentleman's attention to the second paragraph of my Question? I do not suggest that Her Majesty's Government should make the request, but ask whether there is any prospect of the United States Government offering it. Can the right hon. Gentleman answer that?

*Mr. CURZON: No, Sir; I cannot speak for the United States Government. [*Laughter.*]

PRISON OFFICERS.

Lord BALCARRES (Lancashire, Chorley): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether he is aware that, with the exception of clerks, all ranks of established prison officers including the storekeepers who give their whole time to the service, are provided with quarters or receive an allowance in lieu; and whether he can see his way to redress the inequality between the clerks and the other officers?

Sir MATTHEW WHITE RIDLEY: Yes, Sir, I am quite aware of this. The conditions of service of the prison clerks have always been considered separately from those of the prison officers strictly so-called, and their scale of pay has been fixed and from time to time revised with full knowledge of the fact that they were not provided with quarters or an allowance in lieu. I cannot admit that there is any such inequality as is suggested in the Question, nor am I prepared, in view of certain improvements which have recently been made in the pay and prospects of these officers, to make any recommendation on the point.

DRUNKENNESS (GLASGOW).

Mr. JOHN WILSON (Lanark, Govan): I beg to ask the Lord Advocate (1) whether his attention has been directed to the fact that while 18,572 persons were arrested as drunk and incapable, and many thousands more were arrested for being drunk and disorderly in the City of Glasgow during the year 1895, only two publicans were summoned for contravening the terms of their licences which render them liable for supplying intoxicated persons or permitting drunkenness on their premises; and (2) whether he will call the attention of the Magistrates of Glasgow and of the Chief Constable of that city to the extraordinary and striking discrepancy between the number of persons summoned for the two classes of offences named which are admittedly closely connected?

*The LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. Graham Murray, Buteshire): I must point out to the hon. Member that for the purposes of his Question a publican is in breach of his certificate only if within his house he permits a breach of the peace or riotous or disorderly conduct, or supplies excisable liquor to persons who are in a state of intoxication. I must refer the hon. Member to my previous answer that there can be no normal numerical relation between the two classes of offenders, and therefore no just inference to be drawn from their respective numbers. I cannot undertake to do as desired in the last paragraph of the Question, as I do not admit that the numbers referred to are in any way related in a legal or criminal sense.

SOLENT AND CLYDE (ARTILLERY FIRING).

Mr. D. NICOL (Argyll): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for War if he has received the Report of the Board of Trade Inquiry respecting the regulation of artillery practice in the Solent and on the Clyde, and, if he has, whether he can communicate same to the House?

*Mr. BRODRICK: The Reports on the Bye-laws both for the Solent and the Clyde are at present under consideration. I cannot yet make any statement as to them.

BISHOP OF PETERBOROUGH (CONFIRMATION OF ELECTION).

Mr. BRYN ROBERTS (Carnarvonshire, Eifion): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if his attention has been called to a statement in *The Manchester Guardian* of the 23rd instant, that the Vicar-General of the Province of Canterbury, in the recent proceedings at Bow Church on the confirmation of the election of the Bishop of Peterborough, omitted the decree to proceed, by which a public acknowledgment is made that the confirmation of the Bishop proceeds in obedience to the command of Our Sovereign Lady the Queen; whether such omission was made; and, if so, what was the reason of such omission, and what is its effect on the validity or otherwise of the confirmation; and whether the public acknowledgment of the supremacy of the Crown made in the decree to proceed can be omitted or altered without an alteration of the law?

Sir MATTHEW WHITE RIDLEY: Yes, I have seen the statement, and am informed by the Vicar-General that it is correct. The forms which are used at the confirmation of a Bishop, and of which the decree to proceed forms part, should certainly not be altered without proper authority, and but for a momentary inadvertence, as I understand, would have been strictly followed in the present case. They have never, however, received statutory sanction. I am informed that the omission of the decree will not affect the validity of the confirmation. The proceedings are based throughout on an acknowledgment of the Royal supremacy.

RURAL POSTMEN (IRELAND).

Captain DONELAN (Cork, E.): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury, as representing the Postmaster General, whether, in view of the fact that rural postmen in England who use their own bicycles are granted an allowance of 4s. a week, a similar consideration will be extended to rural postmen in Ireland?

Mr. HANBURY: Rural postmen in England or in Ireland who are required to use a cycle in the performance of their official duties are granted an allowance of 4s. a week. But there are a number of men who obtain permission to use their own cycles on posts which are laid down as foot posts, and in such cases no allowance is granted. The treatment of the postmen is the same whether in England or Ireland.

PUBLIC WORKS LOANS (IRELAND).

Mr. VESEY KNOX (Londonderry): I beg to ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer whether his attention has been called to the great hardship caused to various local authorities in Ireland, and especially to the Listowel Guardians, by the rigid application of Section 6 of the Public Works Loans Act, 1892, which exacts one shilling in the pound as receivers' fees on any instalment more than a month overdue; whether there is any similar provision affecting English local authorities; whether he is aware that, in the case of the Seed Potatoes Supply (Ireland) Act, 1895, the rule has worked with exceptional harshness owing to the fact that the loans were repayable by two instalments only, and the amount to be repaid at one time has consequently been proportionately large, while the money has had to be recovered by the local authorities, who in 1895 were unable through poverty and the failure of the potato crop to procure seed; and whether he will consult the Irish Law Officers as to whether Section 6 is applicable to the case, having regard to the words of Section 3 of the Act of 1895, which directs that the interest on the loan, or as much of it as is for the time being not repaid, shall be at the lowest rate fixed by the Treasury for interest on local loans in Ireland, and shall be paid out of the Church Fund?

Mr. HANBURY: Section 6 of the Public Works Loans Act, 1892, imposes a payment of 1s. in the pound as Receiver's fees (not interest) on instalments of loans not paid within 31 days of the date on which repayment is due. It applies to any Board of Works loan created after the passing of that Act, and therefore, of course, to the seed loans made under the Act of 1895. With knowledge of that fact, Parliament in 1895 required these seed loans to be repayable by two instalments. Interest on the loans is one thing and Receiver's fees are another; but there is a special necessity for imposing these Receiver's fees in the case of seed loans. The local authority does not pay interest on the loans—that being paid out of the Irish Church Fund—and it would, therefore, have little inducement to repay the instalments unless this penalty were imposed. There is no similar provision affecting local authorities in England, because, speaking generally, similar difficulty is not found in obtaining repayments in this country. On the other hand, I know of no class of loans in England in which the local authorities bear no charge for interest, as is the case with these seed loans.

Mr. E. CARSON (Dublin University) asked if the Treasury had any power to remit any portion of these Receiver's fees?

Mr. HANBURY said that he was not aware that they had.

Mr. KNOX asked, having regard to the fact that this provision was not fully understood, if the Government would reconsider the question of enforcing these fines?

Mr. HANBURY said in every case due warning was given to the local authorities that they should pay in 31 days.

Mr. J. C. FLYNN (Cork, N.) asked was the right hon. Gentleman aware that these charges in some instances amounted to an interest of 60 per cent. on the loan?

Mr. HANBURY said it was not interest at all; it was a charge for collecting instalments overdue.

BOGUS TELEGRAMS (IRELAND).

Mr. KNOX: I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury, as representing the Postmaster General, whether he is aware that a bogus telegram was twice delivered to Rev. D. Humphreys, P.P., Killenaule, on 4th February, purporting in the first case to have been sent from Clonmel, and in the second to have been sent from Clogheen; that the postmaster at Killenaule stated that he re-delivered the telegram as coming from Clogheen, in consequence of an inquiry made over the wires to Clonmel; that the officer in charge of the telegraph at Clonmel states that no telegram was sent thence, and no inquiry as to a telegram made from Killenaule on that day; and that the postmaster at Clogheen refuses all information; and whether the Postmaster General will direct an inquiry into this matter, with a view to discovering whether any postal official was responsible for giving this annoyance?

Mr. HANBURY: I can only answer the hon. Member's Question in part, as the matter to which it relates is under investigation in Ireland, and the facts are only partly known in London. It appears, however, that the telegram referred to was delivered to the Rev. D. Humphreys through an unfortunate error in telegraphing his name instead of that of the actual addressee. It is not known in London how the error occurred. The circumstances under which two copies of the telegram were delivered to Mr. Humphreys are as yet unknown, but a full explanation shall be sent to that gentleman on this point, and also as regards the refusal of the postmaster of Clogheen to furnish information. The cost of any telegrams sent by Mr. Humphreys in consequence of the mistake will be refunded to him.

NATIONAL TEACHERS' FUND (IRELAND).

Mr. KNOX: I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury whether the Report on the Irish Teachers' Pension Fund will be ready in time for the discussion on the Supplementary Estimate, Clause 6, Vote 7; and whether the sum to be voted will make the fund actuarially solvent, having regard to the claims of existing teachers to pensions on the present scale, and also to the liabilities likely to be incurred in respect to future teachers on the same scale?

MR. HANBURY: The Report cannot be circulated in time, but I shall be prepared to state the substance of it in discussing the Estimate. The Report will be in Members' hands before the discussion of the Estimate for 1897-8. The sum now asked for forms part of a scheme which, I believe, will restore the solvency of the fund, after providing for all its liabilities to present and future teachers.

CONVENT AND MONASTERY SCHOOLS (IRELAND).

MR. KNOX: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland how it is proposed to distribute the £12,600 to be voted by Supplementary Estimate to the convent and monastery schools, as representing their share of the arrears of the Irish fee grant?

MR. GERALD BALFOUR: The amount will be distributed to the capitation convent and monastery schools in proportion to the average daily attendance of pupils (over three and under 15 years of age) for each of the years concerned.

BRENNAN, JOHN (LATE 41ST REGT.).

MR. JAMES O'KELLY (Roscommon, N.): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for War whether his attention has been called to a Resolution passed unanimously by the Boyle Board of Guardians, in which they ask the Government to take into consideration the case of John Brennan, late 41st Regiment of Foot, who was wounded at Sebastopol, and attended by Dr. Reid in the hospital at Balaclava; and whether he will inquire into the circumstances of the case, and provide a remedy?

*MR. BRODRICK: The Resolution of the Boyle Board of Guardians was received two days ago, and will be duly considered.

CULLENAGH MOUNTAIN, COUNTY TIPPERARY.

MR. T. J. CONDON (Tipperary, E.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether the attention of the Irish Government has been called to the excitement caused in the County Tipperary by an attempt of Lord Lismore to enclose Cullenagh Mountain, and forcibly interfere with the rights on the mountain exercised from time immemorial by the tenants on the Lismore estate; and whether, having regard to the danger thus threatened to the public peace, the Government will take steps to prevent this interference with old established rights of the tenants, either by refusing police assistance in turning sheep and cattle off the mountain, or by introducing a short Act amending the Land Law Act, 1896, section 9, by giving to the tenant the right of election at any time, whether he will or will not exercise the easement previously enjoyed by him by the permission of the landlord as of right during a statutory term?

MR. GERALD BALFOUR: It appears that for a number of years past Lord Lismore let this mountain to his tenants for the grazing of their sheep at the rate of 8d. per head per annum, and that recently notices were served on the tenants that in March next the grazing would be taken up on behalf of the landlord. The service of these notices has been followed by several outrages, of which I would mention two, namely the malicious killing of eleven sheep the property of Lady Charteris in November last—the motive for this outrage being that some sheep had been sold by her to Lord Lismore—and the malicious destruction on the 18th instant of about 1,400 yards of wire fencing and wooden posts, which had been erected by Lord Lismore on the mountain referred to. The question of the ownership of the mountain or of the alleged rights of the tenants, is not one in which the Government can intervene, but they are bound to preserve the peace and prevent any breaches of the law, and this duty they will perform in any eventuality. It is not the intention of the Government to legislate in the direction suggested.

CAPTAIN DONELAN: Can the right hon. Gentleman say how long these grazing rights had existed?

MR. GERALD BALFOUR: No, Sir, I have no information upon that point.

DARDANELLES.

MR. BRYN ROBERTS: I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether, in or about November 1895, one of the Great Powers of Europe made a proposal to Great Britain, in conjunction with the other Great Powers, to enter the Dardanelles and to seize the Sultan; if so, what reply did Her Majesty's Government make to the proposal?

*MR. CURZON: No such proposal was made to Her Majesty's Government.

MR. BRYCE: Do I understand the right hon. Gentleman to say that the statement in the Question, which is taken from the speech of M. Hanotaux, is in fact incorrect?

*MR. CURZON: No, Sir, I have been asked here whether a proposal has been made to Her Majesty's Government, and that is the question I have answered. I do not understand that M. Hanotaux said anything about a proposal to Her Majesty's Government.

MR. BRYCE: Perhaps it would be beter to put another question to clear the matter up.

MR. BRYN ROBERTS: Was not part of the proposal made to Her Majesty's Government to enter the Dardanelles?

*MR. CURZON: I cannot bisect the proposal. No proposal of the kind was made to Her Majesty's Government. ["Hear, hear!"]

MR. BRYN ROBERTS: The right hon. Gentleman's answer is ambiguous. ["Oh, oh!"] He says he cannot bisect the proposal, but at the same time says that no such proposal was made. I wish to ask him whether a proposal to enter the Dardanelles by force was made to Her Majesty's Government?

*MR. CURZON: I have nothing to add to the answer I have already given. [*Ministerial cheers.*]

MR. BRYN ROBERTS intimated that he should repeat the Question.

LIGHTHOUSES (RED SEA).

MR. HENNIKER HEATON (Canterbury): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs what is the cause of delay in erecting lighthouses in the Red Sea, particularly at Mocha, and also Abu Ail, on the island of Jebel Tier?

*MR. CURZON: Funds have already been provided by the Egyptian Government for the construction of these lights, but, as the proposed sites are within Turkish territory, it will be necessary to make arrangements on the subject with the Porte. Her Majesty's Ambassador at Constantinople is in communication with his colleagues as to the nature of the representations which should be addressed to the Porte on behalf of the maritime States who are interested in the subject.

REFORM PRISONERS (PRETORIA).

MR. J. M. MACLEAN (Cardiff): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies if Mr. Sampson and Mr. Davies are still kept in prison at Pretoria; and if he will explain the reasons for the continued delay in the circulation of the Papers relating to their case, which were laid upon the Table more than a week ago?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES (Mr. J. CHAMBERLAIN, Birmingham, W.): So far as I am aware, Mr. Sampson and Mr. Davies are still in prison at Pretoria. The delay in issuing the Papers has arisen from the necessity of a reference to South Africa in connection with one of the documents.

MR. MACLEAN: Can the right hon. Gentleman say when the Papers are likely to be circulated?

MR. J. CHAMBERLAIN: No, Sir, I cannot. I am in the hands of other people.

FOREIGN PATENTS.

MR. C. E. SCHWANN (Manchester, N.): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade whether, in view of the fact that Section 22 of the Patent Act of 1883 does not specify any time within which a foreign patentee must work a patent taken out by him in this country, or grant licences in default of working it, and the scale upon which he must work is not fixed, and in view of the great differences of opinion which exist as to the English method of granting patents as compared with the American system, would he consider the desirability of appointing a Select Committee of this House to examine the question and report, with a view to the making of such changes in the Patent Laws as might be shown to be equitable and practicable?

THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF TRADE (Mr. C. T. RITCHIE, Croydon): The hon. Member proposes to open up the working of the whole of the Patent Laws in the investigation which he asks the

Committee to undertake. Until it is proved by experience that Section 22 of the Act is insufficient to effect the working of patents taken out by foreigners in this country, I am not prepared to support a Motion for a Select Committee.

FISHING PIERS (IRELAND).

MAJOR JAMESON (Clare, W.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland if he is aware that though a grant is made out of Imperial Funds for Fishing Piers in Scotland there is no similar grant in Ireland; and whether he will consider the possibility of making a similar provision in Ireland, and extending the same to Kilrush, Liscannor, and Carrigaholt, in County Clare?

***MR. GERALD BALFOUR**: It appears from the Estimates that a sum of £3,000 is provided for Fishery Piers in Scotland in the next financial year. The hon. Member does not appear to be aware of the fact that very large sums of money have already been expended on the construction of such piers in Ireland under various Acts of Parliament, and that, as regards two of the piers specially named in the Question, namely, Liscannor and Carrigaholt, sums amounting to £5,184 and £13,761 respectively, have been expended. It has not been the practice in recent years to provide in the Estimates for additional expenditure on piers in Ireland, generally, but of course the Government have always been prepared to inquire into any applications made to them and to consider each case upon its own merits.

MAJOR JAMESON: Will the right hon. Gentleman say whether this expenditure is out of Irish funds, and not out of Imperial funds?

MR. GERALD BALFOUR: No, Sir; the hon. and gallant Member is mistaken. It is out of Imperial funds that these charges are paid.

LIGHTHOUSE KEEPERS (IRELAND).

MAJOR JAMESON: I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade why the memorial of the Irish lighthouse keepers on the subject of their grievances in the matter of pay and pension, etc., to the Board of Commissioners of Irish Lights has been kept for two years without an answer?

MR. RITCHIE: I understand that the Commissioners of Irish Lights deferred the consideration of the memorial of the lighthouse keepers pending the Report of the Committee on the Mercantile Marine Fund, but that the Commissioners are now considering the matter.

MAJOR JAMESON: Does not the right hon. Gentleman consider that two years is too long a time for this investigation?

[No reply was given.]

JAMESON RAID (CAPE INQUIRY).

MR. BRYN ROBERTS: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies whether, in view of the interest taken in the British South Africa Company Inquiry, he will lay the Report of and Evidence taken before the Select Committee of the Parliament of Cape Colony with reference to the raid into the Transvaal upon the Table of the House?

MR. CHAMBERLAIN: It is my intention to lay the Report and Evidence mentioned on the Table of the House. In fact, the Committee have requested me to do so, but some time must elapse before it can be delivered, as it is a very lengthy document.

CRETE.

MR. CHANNING (Northampton, E.): On behalf of the hon. Member for the Eye Division (Mr. F. S. STEVENSON), I beg to ask the Under Secretary for Foreign Affairs whether the Foreign Vice Consuls at Retimo have sent a dispatch to the Consuls at Canea to the effect that the protraction of the present situation would entail grave consequences, that the Turks desire the re-establishment of order, and declare that they are ready to accept annexation to Greece?

***MR. CURZON**: No, Sir; no information has been received to that effect.

MR. FLYNN: I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether on Monday and Tuesday last the Turkish cannon on the Suda and Galata side of Akrotiri fired upon the Christian troops, who did not reply for fear of being shelled by the warships of the Powers; and whether a protest has been sent by the Cretan Christian troops to the foreign Admirals complaining of such action?

*Mr. CURZON: The following telegram has been received from Her Majesty's Consul at Canea:—

"No fire has been exchanged between Greek and Turkish troops on the western front since Sunday. On southern front Christians and Mussulmans had some desultory skirmishing. On Monday and Tuesday the insurgents were firing against Suda arsenal, and on Monday and Wednesday against Fort Izzedin. Turks replied with very few rifle shots and two or three shells towards village of Tsikalaria. Statement of newspaper correspondents that Turks fired shells on villages of Korakies Akrotiri without provocation disagrees with information of Colonel Chermside and British Arsenal."

I may, perhaps, be allowed at the same time, with reference to many questions which have been asked during the last few days in regard to alleged sallies from Canea, to read the folowing telegram which has also been received from Sir A. Biliotti:—

"Two companies, about 300 men, Turkish troops garrisoned during last four months Voukoulies to afford protection to the Turkish emigrants, who returned to their village in that commune; their block-house was destroyed by Greek regular artillery; the garrison sallied out at night, but was afterwards surrounded. Major and many killed, over 100 taken prisoners, about 80 found their way back; no sortie was made from Canea in connection with Voukoulies affair; the only offensive operation undertaken by the Turks was driving the insurgents from the heights dominating Halepa on the 14th of February."

Mr. CHANNING: Will the right hon. Gentleman state whether the operations in connection with this Turkish fort, which he states is several miles from Canea, were not the operations which led to the cannonading of the insurgent position by the allied fleet?

*Mr. CURZON: No, Sir; the hon. Gentleman is quite incorrect in his geography. Voukoulies Fort, about which I have just been reading, is considerably to the west and a little to the south-west of Canea. The operations of the insurgents against which the firing of the fleets was directed the other day were to the east and a little to the south-east of Canea, many miles from Voukoulies.

Sir E. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT (Sheffield, Ecclesall): I wish to ask the right hon. Gentleman if he can state whether the 3,000 Mussulmans besieged at Kandanos and Selinos have been relieved, or what is their fate?

*Mr. CURZON: I have had no notice of the Question, but as I anticipated that the hon. Gentleman would very legitimately ask it, I have brought the information. We have received the following telegram from the British Admiral:—

"The armistice at Selinos will last three days longer, till then no danger. Austrian ship gone there, am sending one as soon as can be spared. Have been consulting with colleagues plan of operations with a view of relieving beleaguered Mahomedans in other districts."

Sir E. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT: On that answer, may I ask whether that applies to the two beleaguered forces at Kandanos and Selinos, as it will be remembered that there were 2,000 Mussulmans in one place and 1,000 in the other?

*Mr. CURZON: Yes, Sir. Selinos is a port on the coast from which Kandanos, in the interior, is, as I understand, separated by a range of mountains, and the operations for relief which may be directed on behalf of the one will apply to the other. ["Hear, hear!"]

SUPPLY (NAVAL ESTIMATES).

Mr. GIBSON BOWLES asked the First Lord of the Treasury when the First Lord of the Admiralty would make his statement with regard to the Navy, and upon what Vote?

The FIRST LORD of the TREASURY (Mr. A. J. Balfour, Manchester, E.) replied that there had been an idea that his right hon. Friend would make his statement on Monday with the Speaker in the Chair, and that the Debate would then be adjourned. That was the course pursued last year, but on consultation with his right hon. Friend he had come to the conclusion that the statement should be made after the Speaker had left the Chair.

Mr. JOHN MORLEY (Montrose Burghs): When?

The FIRST LORD of the TREASURY: On Friday.

POLICE AND SANITARY REGULATIONS.

Ordered, That the Committee of Selection do appoint a Committee, not exceeding Nine Members, to whom shall be committed all Private Bills promoted by municipal and other local authorities, by which it is proposed to create powers relating to Police and Sanitary Regulations which deviate from, or are in extension of, or are repugnant to, the general law.

Ordered, That the Committee have power to send for persons, papers, and records.

Ordered, That Three be the quorum of the Committee.

Ordered, That it be an Instruction to the Committee in their Report, under Standing Orders 150 and 173A, to state their reasons for granting any powers in conflict with, deviation from, or excess of the general law.

Ordered, That it be an Instruction to the Committee not to insert in any Bill referred to them any provision which is already in force in the district to which the Bill applies under any public Act, or which might be put in force by adopting the provisions of any adoptive Act.

Ordered, That in the case of Bills reported from the Committee, Three clear days shall intervene between the date when the Report of the Committee is circulated with the Votes and the consideration of the Bill.—(*Mr. Jesse Collings.*)

LONDON WATER COMPANIES AMALGAMATION BILL.

Second Reading deferred from Wednesday next till Wednesday 10th March.

MOTIONS.

SOLICITORS (IRELAND).

Bill to amend and consolidate the Laws relating to Solicitors and to the service of indentured apprentices in Ireland, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Carson, Mr. Hemphill, and Mr. O'Neill; presented, and Read the First time; to be Read a Second time upon Wednesday next, and to be printed.—[Bill 145.]

APPOINTMENT OF HIGH SHERIFFS (IRELAND).

Bill to relieve persons required to serve in the office of High Sheriff in Ireland, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Carson, Colonel Saunderson, Mr. Horace Plunkett, Mr. John Redmond, and Sir R. Penrose FitzGerald; presented, and Read the First time; to be Read a Second time upon Wednesday next, and to be printed.—[Bill 146.]

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

SUPPLY.

Considered in Committee.

[The CHAIRMAN of WAYS and MEANS, Mr. J. W. LOWTHER, in the Chair.]

NAVY (SUPPLEMENTARY) ESTIMATES, 1896-7.

1. £507,000, Navy (Supplementary).

MR. VESEY KNOX (Londonderry) said this large Supplementary Vote amounted to an extraordinary Budget like the extraordinary Budgets of some Continental States, and surely the House was entitled to some explanation of it. He would like to know why £116,000 more was wanted for coal.

THE SECRETARY TO THE ADMIRALTY (Mr. W. E. MACARTNEY, Antrim, S.) replied that, owing to the exceptional circumstances of the current year, it had been necessary to keep a larger number of ships in commission than were provided for when the Estimates were framed. This accounted for the additional expenditure in coal and maintenance stores. It was also considered advisable, owing to the increased activity in the shipping industry in private yards and the large number of private orders which were being placed, to take advantage of a rising market in the interests of the economical administration of the service and "place" the Government orders as early as possible. It had been necessary to accelerate the completion of guns under construction, and the supply of ammunition that they might be ready for certain classes of ships, the building of which was being hastened. The £100 asked for on account of works, buildings, and repairs was merely a formal sum placed in the Estimate to bring under the notice of the House the magnitude of the work to be undertaken, which included the reconstruction of a jetty at Devonport, and foundations for 100-ton sheers, dredging, etc., in order to provide accommodation for large battleships, the total estimated cost being £20,000. No money would be spent on these objects during the current year.

MR. GIBSON BOWLES (Lynn Regis) said it was a remarkable thing that one-quarter of the amount originally asked for was being spent in coal. He presumed this was largely due to the state of affairs in the East, and the employment of more troops on active service than was contemplated. If so it might be possible to raise the whole of the Eastern question on this Estimate. [*Laughter.*] A Member who objected to the employment of Her Majesty's coal against the Greeks or the Christians in Crete might discuss the entire action of the Government in the matter. He presumed that the increase of £30,000 for guns related to the supply of wire guns. [Mr. MACARTNEY signified assent.] He was glad of it. He would be glad to see more money spent on these splendid armaments, which he believed were the finest that could be used by any navy in the world.

MR. JOHN DILLON (Mayo, E.), while admitting that the circumstances of the last 18 months had been exceptional, thought a fuller explanation should be given why so large a sum was wanted for coal. If it were possible and convenient to vote such sums as these on Supplementary or other Estimates, why were they asked to vote for enormous loan Bills?

MR. E. J. C. MORTON (Devonport) said that last year they specifically voted about half a million for harbour accommodation and purposes connected with Devonport Dockyard. That being so, why were they now asked for £100?

MR. MACARTNEY said the work had been considerably altered since the attention of the House was first directed to it, and it had been necessary to make provision for the larger class of battleships which could not get into the Keyham basin. In order to facilitate that it would be necessary to construct a new jetty. The Estimates had been revised, and amounted to a very much larger sum than was originally designed. In compliance with a rule of the Treasury, the nominal sum of £100 had been put in the Supplementary Estimate in order to call the attention of Parliament to the total estimated cost. The works which were to be carried out before the end of the current year would be provided for out of savings on Vote 10.

MR. MORTON asked whether the sum of about half a million, which was specially voted last year for the current year, had already been expended?

MR. MACARTNEY: No, it has not already been expended.

MR. EDMUND ROBERTSON (Dundee) said he was not surprised that hon. Members should have had some difficulty in understanding the exact position. As he understood it this was a new work of magnitude, and the Admiralty could not be allowed by the Treasury to spend money on it until it had been brought to the notice of Parliament and submitted to their approval. By means of the item of £100, the Admiralty would be enabled at the beginning of the financial year, before Vote 10 had been reached, to pay for the work out of the ordinary proceeds. What was specified here, however, but a series of works which did not seem to be connected necessarily with one another? His hon. Friend asked for some explanation in connection with this item and the Loan Act of last year. The Naval Loan Act of last year contained an item for harbours and approaches, which as far as he could gather was for Devonport. That was work which might be within the scope of the Naval Loan Act, but this was an extra item, the necessity for which had been discovered since. The amount would come on when the Navy Estimates were prepared. He did not know when they were to see the Navy Estimates.

THE FIRST LORD OF THE ADMIRALTY (Mr. GOSCHEN, St. George's, Hanover Square): Tuesday.

MR. DILLON said he thought the Secretary to the Admiralty had very clearly exemplified the enormous inconvenience of this double method of expenditure by loan and yearly Estimates. It was easy to carry out such works by the annual Votes instead of having recourse to the enormous loan Bills that had been passed during the last few years. The Secretary to the Admiralty could hardly claim to have carried out the Regulation of the Treasury. The Supplementary Estimate had only been circulated that morning, and, so far from the Treasury Rule being carried out, it was proposed to take the Vote in silence without a word of explanation.

MR. MORTON asked why the sum of half a million voted last year had not been expended.

THE FIRST LORD OF THE ADMIRALTY said that the £500,000 in the Loan Bill was intended to be spent over several years. That was for definite and specific works, and was not an annual Vote. This was a work of magnitude, but it did not enter into the general scheme; it was a separate work, and it would be contrary to Parliamentary procedure that any portion of the loan fund should be given for this particular item.

MR. KNOX reminded the Committee that the Secretary to the Admiralty stated that the rule was that as soon as any work was contemplated, even though it was not to be done in the present financial year, there was to be a separate Estimate for it.

MR. MACARTNEY: No, I never said that.

MR. KNOX said that, as he understood the matter, the whole of this £20,000, or at least a large part of it, was going to be spent in the present financial year, and he thought the Committee ought to be informed how much it was proposed to spend in the course of the present financial year.

MR. MACARTNEY said the work would be proceeded with with all due dispatch; but as the weather might interfere with its progress he could not say how much would be spent on it during the current financial year.

MR. EDMUND ROBERTSON: I presume there will be an Estimate.

MR. MACARTNEY: Of course there will.

MR. KNOX said that, on the principle the Under Secretary to the Admiralty had now laid down, there should never be an Estimate, because the weather might upset all calculations. He noticed that, under Sub-head B., for Metals and Metal Articles, the original Estimate was £1,149,000, and the revised Estimate £1,419,000. He understood that the Admiralty, apprehending a rise in pig iron, had laid in a larger stock of metals and metal articles than was required for the work in hand for the financial year. The Admiralty had, in fact, speculated in "metal futures." He did not object to reasonable speculation by the Department, but he thought the Committee should be told whether there had been a profit or a loss on the transaction.

MR. MACARTNEY said the metals and metal articles intended for ships in the course of construction had run short, and a large stock of these materials had been ordered. There could be no doubt as to the benefit that had accrued to the Department by the buying of these stocks.

Vote agreed to.

2. £5,775 13s., Naval Defence Act, 1889 (Excess Expenditure), 1896-7.

MR. KNOX said he should like to know how much of the original £10,000,000 for the construction of vessels, to which this vote was supplementary, had been spent in the dockyards of the north of Ireland?

*THE CHAIRMAN OF WAYS AND MEANS (Mr. J. W. LOWTHER, Cumberland, Penrith): Order, order! The discussion of that subject is not in order on this vote.

MR. KNOX said he understood that this sum of £5,775 13s. was supplementary to an original sum of £10,000,000 for naval construction. He therefore submitted that it was a fair question to ask how much of that £10,000,000 had been spent in the Irish shipbuilding yards? He knew that, when the money was voted in 1889, one of the Irish yards, that of Derry, was decided to be fit for this work, and he would like to know whether any work had been given to it?

*THE CHAIRMAN OF WAYS AND MEANS: I do not think that question can be properly raised.

MR. KNOX said, if that were so, he was in doubt what question could be raised except the small financial question of excess. Was he to understand that in all cases like this, if the total amount raised had been exhausted and the Department concerned came to the House for a supplementary Estimate, they were not obliged to explain to the House on what works the excess had been incurred?

MR. GIBSON BOWLES desired to know how it was there was any excess at all? Was it in consequence of non-efficient specifications having been sent by the Department to the contractors, of new demands made by the Department on the contractors during the progress of the work?

MR. DILLON said it was bad enough for the House to be asked to vote these large sums in a Loans Bill without being asked to increase the amounts by supplementary Estimates. It ought to be the policy of the Departments which get these large audits to keep within the margin, so that if they had not a surplus remaining after the completion of the work they would not, at least, have to ask the House for a supplementary Estimate to make up the deficiency.

MR. EDMUND ROBERTSON said he believed that this was the last time the Naval Defence Act of 1889 would appear on the Estimates.

MR. MACARTNEY: Yes.

MR. EDMUND ROBERTSON said the Naval Defence Act had now reached its final stage, and he thought it was a matter for congratulation that the original Estimate of £10,000,000 for that great work had only been exceeded by £500,000. Considering that the work had been in progress for seven years under three successive Boards of Admiralty, the fact that so small a sum as £500,000 was required to complete it reflected the greatest credit on the officials concerned, either in the preparation of the Estimate or in the carrying out of the work. ["Hear, hear!"]

MR. KNOX said the remarks of the hon. Member for Dundee were in part a laudation of his own administration. He should like to hear something on the subject from the hon. Gentleman at present in charge.

MR. MACARTNEY said he should have thought, after what had been said by the hon. Member for Dundee, that it was unnecessary for him to say anything further about the Naval Defence Act. Close on 22½ millions sterling had been issued under the Act. The money was devoted to three purposes. For the first, which involved ten millions, there was an excess expenditure of £5,775 13s., for which the sanction of the Committee was now asked. For the second, involving close on ten millions, there was an expenditure less than the Estimate of £2,000; and for the third, for which 2½ millions were asked, there was an expenditure less than the Estimate of £20,000. So that in the first case only was there a slight excess over the estimated expenditure.

MR. DILLON: What has become of the money in the cases where the expenditure was below the Estimate?

MR. MACARTNEY: It had to be surrendered to the new Sinking Fund.

Vote agreed to.

CIVIL SERVICES AND REVENUE DEPARTMENTS (SUPPLEMENTARY) ESTIMATES, 1896-7.

CLASS I.

3. £7,000, Supplementary, Public Buildings, Great Britain.—Agreed to.

CLASS II.

4. £1,000, Supplementary, Colonial Office.—Agreed to.

5. £40, Supplementary, the Mint, including Coinage.

MR. GIBSON BOWLES suggested that some alteration should be made in the sizes of the half-sovereign and the farthing, to prevent the laitter from being passed for the former; and also that every coin should bear its denomination on its face.

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Sir MICHAEL HICKS BEACH, Bristol, W.) said the Mint proposed to try whether it was not possible to secure that the colour of the farthing should be in the first place entirely different from the colour of the half-sovereign. ["Hear, hear!"]

Vote agreed to.

6. £25,000, Supplementary, Stationery and Printing.

MR. KNOX asked whether anything had been done with regard to the Fair Wages Committee, presided over by the hon. Member for East Donegal, and also whether the complaints of the printing operatives of Ireland in regard to the Queen's printers, Dublin, had been attended to.

*THE SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY (Mr. R. W. HANBURY, Preston) said the Committee presided over by the hon. Member for East Donegal only dealt with the wages paid in the stationery department. The new Committee that was now sitting would deal with all the Government departments. Whenever any tenders were now invited for Government contracts the Fair Wages Resolution of the House was brought more prominently under the eyes of those who tendered than hitherto, and the Treasury took care that the Resolution was strictly carried out by all contractors. That applied to Ireland as well as to England. Questions were raised before the former Committee as to the printing in Ireland connected with boards of guardians, in which it appeared the Resolution was not carried out; but, of course, these were not Government contracts.

Vote agreed to.

7. £80, Supplementary, Lunacy Commission, Scotland.—Agreed to.

CLASS III.

8. £17,500, Supplementary, Law Charges.—Agreed to.

9. £2,000, Supplementary, Supreme Court of Judicature.—Agreed to.

10. £10, Supplementary, County Courts.

MR. LLOYD-GEORGE (Carnarvon Boroughs) said he found on referring to the original Estimate that there was an increased expenditure in connection with the levying of processes in County Courts. He desired to know whether that was distributed over all the country, or was it to be ascribed to special circumstances arising in particular localities?

MR. HANBURY said that, though he was not responsible for the Vote, he could give the hon. Member the information he desired. The charges were very varied, and only a small portion of the Vote was connected with the Welsh question.

Vote agreed to.

11. £2,030, Supplementary, Register House, Edinburgh.

MR. J. H. DALZIEL (Kirkcaldy Burghs) said that for a long time the clerks employed in this office had had a deep-seated grievance with regard to their scale of pay as compared with that in the offices in London and Dublin. There was a discussion on this question two years ago, and he should like to know whether the Government had considered the matter.

*MR. HANBURY said that, as to all Second Division clerks, the scale was the same throughout the United Kingdom; but with regard to all other officials, the scale varied according to the cost of living in the town concerned. But, although the rate in Edinburgh might differ from that in London and Dublin, he had not been able to satisfy himself, having regard to the comparative cost of living in the different towns, that any injustice was done.

Vote agreed to.

12. Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That a Supplementary sum not exceeding £12,938 be granted to Her Majesty, to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1897, for the Salaries and Expenses of the Office of the Irish Land Commission."

MR. DENIS KILBRIDE (Galway, N.) said that some time ago the Chief Secretary promised a Return with regard to the recent appointments of temporary Sub-Commissioners. The hon. Member for East Mayo had asked the Government to postpone the Vote until the Return was in the hands of hon. Members; but, very unreasonably, the Government had refused this request. As it was, the Committee was asked to vote this money in the dark. They knew nothing about the persons appointed, and he protested against the Vote being taken in these circumstances. It was not a question whether the gentlemen appointed belonged to one Party or another; but they ought to have a practical knowledge of the work they were called on to perform, and they ought to understand all about the value of land. He moved to reduce the Vote by £5,000.

MR. DILLON said that he could not understand why the Government had refused to postpone this Vote until the Return was available. The Chief Secretary very well knew that these new appointments of assistant lay commissioners had given the greatest dissatisfaction in Ireland, and especially in Ulster among the Unionist tenant farmers. He did not state his personal views, because he knew nothing at all of the gentlemen appointed, except their names. He protested against the action of the Government in forcing this Vote on before the Return was issued; and he was only expressing the views of the constituents of the Attorney General for Ireland and of the Ulster farmers generally. The appointments had been condemned at meetings of both parties and at united meetings.

MR. EDWARD CARSON (Dublin University) said that the appointments of the new assistant lay Commissioners had given great dissatisfaction among the landowners. These new Sub-Commissioners were reducing rents at enormous rates, without giving any reasons for the reductions. Were they appointed by the day or by the year, and did their appointments depend on the number of cases which came in? Were they paid the same salaries as the *quasi*-permanent Commissioners, or were they paid smaller salaries which would not be so likely to attract men of independence? The appointment of these temporary Sub-Commissioners might be a necessity, but it was a deplorable necessity. He joined with hon. Gentlemen opposite in expressing great anxiety to see the qualifications of these gentlemen, about whom strange stories were told from time to time. There ought to be an opportunity given of going into the matter fully.

THE CHIEF SECRETARY FOR IRELAND (MR. GERALD BALFOUR, Leeds, Central) thought that it would have been more convenient if the hon. Member for North Galway and the hon. Member for East Mayo had raised this question in reference to the appointment of these Sub-Commissioners when the Estimates for the next financial year came on for discussion, by which time the Return would have been made and the matter might have been fully gone into. The unfortunate Chief Secretary for Ireland had to make some 40 or 50 of these appointments, and, no matter how conscientiously those appointments were made, they were necessarily subject to considerable criticism. He could assure the hon. Members opposite that he had spared no trouble in making these appointments in order to select the best men for the positions, and he should be sorry to say how much of his time had been occupied in interviewing the hundreds of gentlemen who had applied for the appointments. Complaint had been made that comparatively few of those who had been appointed were acquainted with the Ulster custom. It must, however, be remembered that a large proportion of the new appointments were in reality reappointments of Gentlemen who had previously held such posts, and who, therefore, were well acquainted with the Ulster custom. The figures before him showed that out of the 44 new appointments 25 were reappointments, 17 of whom were from Ulster or who had experience of fixing rents in Ulster. Of the 19 new appointments seven were from Ulster. This was exclusive of those who already held their posts when the present Government came into office. In answer to a question from one of the hon. Gentlemen opposite, he had to say that the appointments were for a year with the exception of four, whom he might term "emergency men"—[*ironical cheers and laughter from the Nationalist Benches*]—who were appointed by the day. ["Hear, hear!"]

MR. JAMES LOWTHER (Kent, Thanet) said that the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary took credit for having made so many reappointments of these Sub-Commissioners, but those were the men who were old hands at cutting down rents, and he should have thought that that was a good ground for never employing them again. ["Hear, hear!" *and laughter.*] What had occurred in Ireland during the last few months justified the doubts that had been expressed as to the justice of the legislation of last year. ["Hear, hear!"]

COLONEL SAUNDERSON (Armagh, N.) said that the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland had drawn a moving picture of the mental sufferings he had undergone in making these appointments. But if the right hon. Gentleman suffered so deeply under this infliction, he should like to ask what the feelings of the Irish landlords must have been when they knew that the right hon. Gentleman was engaged in Dublin Castle in appointing to the offices of Sub-Commissioners some 40 gentlemen, whose one and only object would be the further reduction of rents? In Ireland at the present moment, as far as he knew, the only qualification necessary for a Sub-Commissioner, who probably knew nothing about agriculture, was that he should be able to go to a farm, look at it, and, hearing that the rent had been reduced on a former occasion some 20 or 25 per cent., make a further reduction of 35, 40, and sometimes 50 per cent. The result, therefore would be that in some cases the rent would be reduced altogether by about 70 per cent. The House would see that at the present moment a system of absolute and deliberate confiscation was being adopted. The House, therefore, would understand that the Irish landlords looked with some suspicion upon the appointment of these Sub-Commissioners, who would have to decide whether they and their families should be allowed to remain in Ireland or be turned out of the country. He knew that the Government had expressed their opinion that a final settlement of the Irish Land Question could only be arrived at when the dual ownership ceased to be, and when the time arrived when public money would buy out the present landlords in order to put new landlords in their place. There was, of course, a cheap and easy way for the British Exchequer to settle the Irish Land Question, namely, by appointing a lot of Sub-Commissioners who were to understand that their appointments would depend upon the influx of Irish tenants into their Courts, and who, having received more or less their cue from the Government, the Sub-Commissioners would proceed to reduce the rents by 40, 50, 60, and sometimes by 70 per cent. In that case the Irish landlord who had no margin to live on would be an easy man to deal with. That might be an admirable plan, and might commend itself to the Chancellor of the Exchequer, and to his right hon. Friends the Chief Secretary and the Leader of the House, who thought that this was a final and happy solution of the Irish Land Question. But the House could not suppose that such a policy could commend itself to the Irish landlords. The recent action of the Land Commissioners in Ireland was to his mind absolutely inexplicable. Without giving any reasons at all they had reduced rents 40, 50, and even 70 per cent. ["Hear, hear!"] The Irish landlord was now in this happy position. He knew that at any time some of these gentlemen might come down and hold a Court, and he had not the least idea as to whether, when they had performed their functions, he would have a penny left to pay his passage out of Ireland. Was this realised by the House of Commons? The Irish landlords were a class who did not deserve this sweeping condemnation at the hands of Her Majesty's Government. ["Hear, hear!"] Their position was one against which the good sense and sense of justice of the House must in the end prevail. He did not object to the Vote, but he appealed to Her Majesty's Government to see whether they could not in some way create in Ireland a court presided over by men whose position would be permanent, and not dependent upon the fact that their decisions might bring an influx of new tenants into their Courts. ["Hear, hear!"]

Mr. T. P. O'CONNOR (Liverpool, Scotland) said the Chief Secretary was bound to appoint these Commissioners by the law of the country, and he was sure the hon. and gallant Gentleman would not wish the head of a department to be guilty of an illegality. He had never heard of reductions of 60 or 70 per cent. being made by the Commissioners, and he would ask the hon. and gallant Gentleman whether it was not a fact that the tenants of Ulster, including his own constituents, were up in arms against the decisions of the Commissioners?

Colonel SAUNDERSON: That is only natural to an Irishman. [*Laughter.*]

Mr. T. P. O'CONNOR supposed it was natural for a tenant to expect a large reduction and for a landlord to resent it, but when the hon. and gallant Gentleman spoke of the dissatisfaction among landlords it was just as well that the Committee should know that the dissatisfaction of the tenants with the insufficiency of the reductions was practically universal. ["Hear, hear!"] Agitation, disturbance, legislation, and the Sub-Commissioners had on the whole produced smaller reductions in Ireland than had voluntary arrangements in England.

Mr. CARSON: Can the hon. Gentleman say whether the interests in farms in Ireland sell for a larger sum than they do in England?

Mr. T. P. O'CONNOR said that had nothing to do with the matter, and there could be no comparison of the sort because of the simple and fundamental fact that all the improvements were made by the tenant in Ireland and by the landlord, speaking generally, in England. The hon. and gallant Gentleman seemed to think there was something odious and repulsive in the system of payment by the day of gentlemen employed in the important work of reducing rents in Ireland, but he would suggest that hon. Gentlemen opposite should join in the movement general among tenants in Ulster for allowing the compulsory purchase of his land by the tenant, and they would very soon get rid of these Sub-Commissioners. ["Hear, hear!"] The hon. Member for the Isle of Thanet had said that the Sub-Commissioners had acquired the name of Sub-Confiscators.

MR. JAMES LOWTHER said that the person who suggested that name to him was the late Lord Cairns.

MR. T. P. O'CONNOR said it would remain in the minds of the Irish people a very delicate historical question whether the title of founder of the Land League should be given to his hon. Friend near him or to the right hon. Gentleman whose occupation of the office of Chief Secretary was one of the chief causes of its foundation. [*Cheers and laughter.*]

MR. J. C. FLYNN (Cork Co., W.) said that, taking the whole of the revision of rents by the Sub-Commissioners down to last year, the average reductions were only 21·5 per cent., whereas voluntary reductions of 40, 50, and even 60 per cent., or three times as much, had been given in England. It was not only unfair but most unreasonable for the representatives of the landed interest to come down to the House and condemn the reductions given by the Sub-Commissioners. He feared that speeches like that of the hon. and gallant Member for Armagh might have an intimidating effect upon the Assistant Sub-Commissioners, who were liable to be dismissed at any moment.

MR. GERALD BALFOUR observed that in almost every case the appointment was for a year at least.

MR. FLYNN said that, at any rate, these gentlemen desired to retain their posts, and premature attacks upon them were greatly to be deprecated. The Return showing their qualifications ought to be supplied as soon as possible.

MR. J. A. RENTOUL (Down, E.) said that he was in possession of a good deal of information concerning the Commissioners who had been appointed, and he had reason to believe that the selection had been very well made. One gentleman had been appointed from his own division, having been recommended by himself, by the hon. Member for North Down, who was closely connected with the landlord interest, by the Marquess of Londonderry, and all the leading landlords of the division, and by the tenant farmers of the district, 200 of whom signed a memorial in his favour. He believed that when the qualifications of these Commissioners were submitted to the House it would be found that there was nothing to say against the appointments.

MAJOR JAMESON (Clare, W.) hoped the Chief Secretary would consent to postpone the Vote. At present the Committee were without information about the qualifications of these gentlemen. They could not tell whether the appointments were good, as the hon. Member for East Down averred, or whether they were bad, as the hon. and gallant Member for North Armagh declared.

COLONEL SAUNDERSON explained that all he had said was that nothing was known about them.

MAJOR JAMESON, referring to the Chief Secretary's statement that 17 out of 24 gentlemen appointed had knowledge of Ulster, asked for how long they had been in that province.

MR. GERALD BALFOUR replied that they were either natives of Ulster, or had had experience in valuing land there.

MR. SMITH-BARRY (Hunts, Huntingdon) said that if hon. Members opposite went to a division he should vote with them, as a protest against the way in which the Commissioners had done their work. If they proceeded as they had begun, a very large number of landlords must inevitably be ruined. These Commissioners were given no instructions to guide them in fixing rents. It was supposed that they had regard to the prices obtainable for agricultural produce, but, as a matter of fact, rents were being reduced at a rate entirely unwarranted by the prices prevailing in recent years. Upon what grounds had these enormous and unjustifiable reductions been made? The prices given for tenant right were increasing every day. The more the rent was cut down the higher, apparently, became the value of the tenant right. There was no analogy between the case of England and that of Ireland. Would they find a man in England ready to give a large sum of money for the right of taking a farm in Cambridgeshire, Wiltshire, Essex, or any of the other distressed counties? The hon. Member for the Scotland Division of

Liverpool had referred to tenants' improvements, but the highest prices paid for tenant right were paid in cases where there was grass land, and where there were no improvements at all. The existing state of affairs in regard to rent reduction was unsatisfactory and unjust, and must be reconsidered by Parliament if the landlords of Ireland were not to be reduced to absolute ruin.

Question put, "That a sum not exceeding £7,938 be granted for the said Service."

The Committee divided:—Ayes, 91; Noes, 188.—(Division List No. 51.)

Original Question put, and agreed to.

CLASS IV.

13. Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That a Supplementary sum, not exceeding £153,044, be granted to Her Majesty, to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1897, for Public Education in England and Wales."

*MR. F. A. CHANNING (Northampton, E.) wished to draw attention to the amount assigned to School Boards under Section 97 of the Education Act. The amount was £19,680. It seemed to him that that sum was inadequate to meet the undertaking given to School Boards by the Education Department under the Circular of 1881. According to a Return obtained by the right hon. Member for Rotherham, the total amount due last year to School Boards in the country under Section 97 was in England £27,523, and in Wales £7,192, making a total of £34,715. The Vote passed last year for this item was only £26,400. That left a deficit to be made good by Supplementary Estimate of £8,315 on the year. The Circular of the Department of 1881 gave an undertaking to School Boards that they should be entitled to a grant under Section 97, not only for the current year, but also for the year immediately preceding. He found that the amount of unclaimed grant for last year under the Section in question was, in England £10,388, and in Wales £4,334, or rather more than half the grant due in the Principality. The total of unclaimed grants for last year, therefore, was £14,722. The payment, therefore, of these grants for the second year, under the Circular, together with the deficit of £8,315 on last year, made up a total of nearly £4,000 greater than appeared in the Supplementary Estimate. That was the first point on which he wished for an explanation. Then there was the further point—that the amount of unclaimed grant was a minimum amount. It was probable that other School Boards had come on the list for these grants, so that the amount might be still greater. It had been the policy of the Department to keep the School Boards directly concerned in the dark about it. The subject, he might say here, was not at all one of a party character, for successive Vice Presidents of the Council of both parties had pursued the same course. No information was given to those necessitous School Boards that they were entitled to claim the money. He contended that Section 97 of the Act imposed no time limit whatever in respect to this grant. According to the wording of that section, any School Board which could establish the fact that a 3d. rate on their assessment would not produce 7s. 6d. per head of the children in average attendance, was entitled to the grant to have that amount made up, and as the section laid down no time limit the Boards could claim it for any past year. Since the matter was discussed last year a good many claims had been sent in to the Department based upon this view of Section 97, and the Department were asked to take the question into consideration. The Vice President dealt with it in a frank spirit last Session, and admitted that the circular of 1881 did not constitute a statutory bar to the claims for arrears—that if a School Board could show a legal claim the circular would be of no value to set aside that claim. Well, a number of those claims having been sent in, the Department consulted the Law Officers of the Crown, and afterwards addressed a letter to the School Boards informing them that the Law Officers had advised the Department that such claims "should not be entertained." Very considerable importance might attach to the wording of that legal opinion, and he invited the Vice President to give the Committee some further explanation as to its precise meaning. He was placed at some disadvantage by the discussion taking place on that day, because he had a question on the Paper next week, asking the right hon. Gentleman for some explanation of a case relating to a particular School Board, the Sutton-in-Ashfield Board, in which the terms of the Circular of 1881 were set aside by the Department, and in which the Department assigned to the Board in question, not only the amount due under the section for the current year, and for the school year immediately preceding, but also the arrears for a third year. In this instance, therefore, the Department admitted the principle and the right of claim by the School Board. In the particular case to which he referred, the School Board, as he understood, became aware of their ability to make the claim under Section 97. They sent in their claim for arrears, and, as he was informed, the officials of the Education Department replied that the circular of 1881 barred all such claims, and that, therefore, the Department was not legally in a position to entertain any claim except that for the current year. The School Board thereupon drew the attention of the Department to the wording of the Act, and to their position as a necessitous School Board. A deputation from the Board then waited on the Department at Whitehall in 1885. And, finally, the Department said that, after considering the case, they would admit the arrears claim of the Board for a third year, the three years being 1883, 1884, and 1885. Now the matter was one of importance to a large number of people in many parts of the country. The total amount of such arrears claimed by the poor School Boards concerned was not small, and, supposing the opinion given by the Law Officers of the Crown was not so clear and decided as to constitute an absolute bar to the claims, he thought those School Boards were entitled, as a matter of right, to the generous consideration of the Department. ["Hear, hear!"] They had been practically kept in the dark, as he had said, with respect to the claims, and there was a large sum now fairly due to them. Even if the claims for arrears could not be recognised by the Department in view of the opinion expressed by the Law Officers, still he urged that the position of the School Board in question constituted, under the circumstances, a strong reason for the Department dealing with them in a broad and generous spirit. ["Hear, hear!"] He had quoted one instance in which the Department had recognised the claim for the arrears, and he saw no reason why the same consideration could not be extended to School Boards in many other necessitous districts. He begged to move the reduction which stood in his name.

THE VICE PRESIDENT OF THE COUNCIL (Sir JOHN GORST, Cambridge University) said that the promises contained in the circular of 1881 would be fulfilled to the letter, and every Board School would receive the amount to which it was entitled. The hon. Member seemed to think that the Estimate of £19,680 would prove to be too small to meet the claims of the School Boards, but he would point out that the Estimates had been carefully prepared by officials of experience, and it was believed that the sum asked for would meet all such claims as would mature and become payable before March 31 next, and that was all they had to do in those Supplementary Estimates. With regard to arrears, that was not a question for him, but rather for the House of Commons and the Chancellor of the Exchequer. The Committee of Council had no jurisdiction at all. The Committee of Council had intrusted to them by Parliament certain sums of money, and they were bound to pay them according to law. When they were in doubt as to the payments they ought to make, they fortified themselves with the opinion of the legal advisers of the Government. In this particular matter the Committee of Council had consulted the Law Officers of the Crown, and, as the result of the advice which they had received, they came to the decision that they could not entertain applications from necessitous Board Schools for grants beyond the current year and the preceding year. Of course, if the Chancellor of the Exchequer saw fit to put on the Estimates a sum of money for paying all the arrears, it would be the duty of the Committee of Council to make the payments accordingly; but, as the case now stood, they were not able to pay out of the sums voted for the current year more than the grant for the current year and the arrears for the year preceding.

The right hon. Member referred to the case of the School Board of Sutton-in-Ashfield, where two years' arrears were paid. He thought that must have been a payment made by a Liberal Government, because he did not think such a payment was ever made in his time. If the hon. Member would put a Question down for next week, he would answer it, and if there were any particular reasons why Sutton-in-Ashfield was treated different to other places, he should be glad to give him an explanation. So far as the Government was at present advised, while they would fulfil to the letter the engagements of 1881, and while they would ask Parliament in the coming year for sufficient provision to meet the case of all School Boards which applied for the arrears to which under the circular of 1881 they were entitled, they considered that the provision which was now being asked for was ample to fulfil those obligations, and he hoped, therefore, the Committee would vote that sum.

Mr. HERBERT LEWIS (Flint Boroughs) said the statement of the right hon. Gentleman that this was a question for the House of Commons and the Chancellor of the Exchequer was a most important one. He would venture to ask the House to consider it very carefully, because it affected the interests of a very large number of Boards of the poorest character all over the country. He certainly thought this was a case in which sentiments of equity ought to prevail, and if the opinion of the Law Officers of the Crown precluded the Committee of Council from dealing with this matter according to an equitable view of the case, then the House of Commons, as the right hon. Gentleman had himself said, could take the matter into its own hands. He could not believe that the Government would, at a time like the present, refuse such a reasonable request as was now made. He felt a special interest in this question, because a very large proportion of these arrears were, unfortunately, due to the School Boards in Wales. He trusted the right hon. Gentleman would, on that ground, bring the weight of his influence to bear on the Chancellor of the Exchequer in order to have these grants made. If the Government declined to take this course, he hoped the House would take an independent view of the matter.

Mr. SYDNEY BUXTON (Tower Hamlets, Poplar) said he was sorry to hear the somewhat uncompromising line which the Vice President had taken up in this matter, because he was sure there was no desire on either side of the House to make any party capital out of the subject. He hoped that the Vice President would, on looking at this matter more carefully, see his way to make some suggestion to the House by which these poor districts might be able to claim the money to which they were unquestionably legally entitled. He understood the position the Vice President took up was that the Law Officers had advised that the claims beyond the current year and the year before were not legal. He could not say, judging by the terms of the circular letter, that the opinion expressed by the Law Officers was a very strong one, and he thought that, considering that public attention had been drawn to the matter, and that there were now a considerable number of these claims, they might fairly ask the Vice President to give his further and special attention to it, and see if the decision the Law Officers had arrived at might not be modified or altered. If it was not modified or altered, then they might press the Vice President to see whether, by legislation, or in some other way, he could not come to some just and satisfactory solution of this matter. If the arrears were paid beyond the current year and the past year in one case, it was done either legally or illegally. He could not think for a moment that a Vice President, whether he was a Conservative or Liberal Vice President, would commit an injustice, and if it was an illegality, it ought not to be permitted. It must be assumed that the Committee of Council, since they took legal advice, acted in a proper and legal manner; but if they were able, in the case of a single school, to give arrears beyond the past year, then it was clear that, under certain circumstances, they could do so in other cases. If, when the Vice-President came to consider the matter, he found that in one case arrears had been granted, that would go far to destroy the value of the legal opinion on the ratepayers' claim. The right hon. Gentleman would, he hoped, deal with this matter in a just, and even generous, spirit. The point of the case was, that it was not brought to the knowledge of these districts that they were entitled to this money, and there ought not to be any legal quibble in the way of their obtaining the grant.

*MR. CARVELL WILLIAMS (Notts, Mansfield) did not think the Education Department came out very handsomely in the discussion of this question. It appeared that the School Board were entitled to the money from the Education Department, but were kept in ignorance of the fact, and when, later, the Boards made the discovery, the Department said that, though the ratepayers of a few years ago were entitled to receive it, the ratepayers of the present day were not. The facts being what they were, and especially if the statement made in regard to the school at Sutton-in-Ashfield was correct, then the Department might well strain a point in favour of the schools. He hoped that two assurances would be forthcoming, first, that the Sutton-in-Ashfield case would be inquired into, and, if the facts in regard to it had been correctly stated, a similar course would now be pursued; and secondly, that in coming legislative proposals on behalf of Board Schools this matter would be satisfactorily dealt with. He did not think it was becoming in a great Department to do anything which bore the appearance of sharp practice, and this term might, he thought, be applied to the way in which this matter had been dealt with.

MR. LLOYD-GEORGE said the Committee had been told that an opinion had been given by the law officials, but the right hon. Gentleman did not convey to the Committee the exact terms of that opinion, and this, he thought, should be done. The question was, whether School Boards were entitled to these arrears or not, and upon this the Committee were entitled to some guidance. He called the attention of the Committee to the section under which the claim was made. When a School Board satisfied the Education Department that certain conditions obtained, such School Board was to be entitled to this particular grant. Thus the legal claim was established; and, he supposed, a School Board could, within the year, sue the Department or the Treasury for the amount. Was that so or not? The words were specific—"shall be entitled"—and if it was a legal obligation at all on the part of the Treasury or the Education Department, then, certainly two years was not the limit of the claim, the Statute of Limitations allowed six years. No statute imposed a limit of two years. The Committee were entitled to know what specifically was the opinion given by the legal advisers of the Department. It was not a case of a claim against the Crown by a litigant; it was the claim of a certain district to a certain sum of money under a statute, and in such a case, and on the public service, the Committee should know exactly what the opinion was. It might save the locality from indulging in litigation against a powerful Department, having at command the resources of the State. Such litigation might be crushing on a locality in which, perhaps, a shilling rate meant only a few hundred pounds. In the public interest he asked the right hon. Gentleman if he was prepared to lay the opinion of the Law Officers on the Table?

SIR J. GORST could not undertake to lay on the Table the opinion of the Law Officers. It was the universal custom, as he knew, having been a Law Officer himself, not to make these opinions public. Why it should be he did not know. In other countries it was not so. In the United States he believed the opinions of law officers were published. In this country it was never done; and it was not for him to act counter to the universal custom.

MR. SAMUEL EVANS (Glamorgan, Mid), on looking at the section of the Act, did not come to the conclusion at which the Law Officers arrived. Notwithstanding that precedents were against the publication of Law Officers' opinions, the Committee were entitled to ask the grounds upon which the opinion was given. It was plain that the proviso had been tacked on in Committee, and did not touch the first part of the section at all. There was nothing in the proviso to imply any limitation for any term of years. He invited the right hon. Gentleman to inform the Committee what his view of the section was, just as if there had been no Law Officers' opinion. The right hon. Gentleman had in view the interest of the Committee of Council, and he was perfectly certain the Committee of Council and the right hon. Gentleman would desire to pay these arrears, if allowed to do so by law. At the present time especially he should think they would be anxious to do so, for they were proposing to assist some classes of schools to a surprising degree. He did not think that the universal practice prevented the right hon. Gentleman from stating the grounds on which the opinion of the Law Officers was given. They constantly gave legal opinions to Members, but perhaps they were on a different footing to opinions given to the Government. There must be some remedy for the recovery of these arrears; the limitation of the recovery must be clearly expressed or necessarily implied from the provisions of the Act itself. The reason he asked the right hon. Gentleman to state his opinion was, that he believed the proper form for a School Board to adopt for recovery would be by Petition of Right to the Crown; and, no doubt, a School Board would be guided, in a large measure, by the opinion of the right hon. Gentleman.

Mr. GIBSON BOWLES suggested that the Vice President of the Committee of Council should take the opinion of all his colleagues on the point, and call them together to give it. ["Hear, hear!" *and laughter.*]

Mr. H. J. WILSON (York, W.R., Holmfirth) pointed out that, though the ratepayers changed, the School Board was a continuing body. He hoped the Attorney General would tell them why it should be lawful to recover one year's arrears and be illegal to go beyond it.

Mr. COURTENAY WARNER (Stafford, Lichfield) said there had been a hard case at Tamworth, where the School Board lost one year's arrears through the Education Department not making up its mind. When the Board tried to recover it subsequently they found they could not do so.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir Richard Webster, Isle of Wight) said that during the time he had had the privilege of holding the office he did there had not been the slightest difference of opinion as to the production of the opinions of the Law Officers. Under no circumstances had they been produced unless it was thought some public purpose would be served. He had heard Mr. Gladstone on more than one occasion refuse to produce the opinions of his Law Officers, and it would be absolutely impossible for the Law Officers to fulfil their duty of advising the Government in confidential matters if their opinions could be produced. The Vice President of the Council had been a Law Officer himself and knew what was the rule. Coming to the other point raised, no one could read Section 97 without coming to the distinct opinion that it was intended that the grants should be annual grants in respect of annual expenditure, and that School Boards could not be allowed to claim several years' arrears which, for their convenience, they had accumulated. The condition as "to the satisfaction of the Education Department" was intended to enable the Department to make reasonable and proper rules and enable School Boards to show that contributions to proper annual charges only were being asked for.

*Mr. CHANNING asked whether the Circular of the Education Department in 1881, promising a second year's arrears, was not a departure from the legal doctrine which the Attorney General had laid down?

The ATTORNEY GENERAL said he had carefully considered the Circular referred to. Prior to December 1881, there was not the strictness in regard to the matter that there ought to have been, and the Department, in the reasonable and proper exercise of its rights, laid down the Regulations which had been in force ever since.

*Mr. CHANNING submitted that there was no insuperable difficulty in the way of the Department issuing a Circular tomorrow, saying that owing to the circumstances they would consider the arrears not only for the immediately preceding year, but for the two or three previous years. The intention of Parliament clearly was that poor districts should have these sums of money allotted to them for the provision of school buildings, clearing off the sinking funds, and meeting all the necessities of education. There was a poor village in his own divison where agricultural land had been going down in value, while the school rate had grown up to 1s. 11d. in the pound. That School Board had been for many years past entitled to receive this amount, but was not aware of it. It seemed to him that, whatever might be the legal position, there was the strongest moral claim on the part of such a Board to have those arrears considered, as it was clearly the intention of Parliament that these sums should be given from year to year.

MR. SAMUEL EVANS explained to the Attorney General (who had been absent during the hon. Member's previous speech) that he had not questioned any opinion which had been given by the Law Officers of the Crown, but had asked what were the grounds for that opinion, as the matter did not seem quite clear from doubt. He would point out that the section appeared to divide itself into two distinct parts. The first part dealt with the conditions of the annual Parliamentary grant, and it did not appear to have any connection with the second part, which was in the nature of a proviso, and as to which he hazarded the opinion that it had been tacked on in Committee. The Attorney General said that only one year was recoverable here. He would ask the hon. and learned Gentleman this question: assume the Estimates were prepared for the year 1895-96, that would only contemplate a state of things up to the 31st March 1896. The school year for 1895-96 would be from September 1895 to September 1896. What was the date within which the School Board might claim the year's account if it should be limited to one year? Were they to be allowed to have another year from September 1896. If only one year was recoverable, was it recoverable at any time?

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL replied that all schools did not end their year on the 29th September, and it did not matter in the least whether the financial year of a school ended then, or on the 31st December, or on the 31st March. What was asked for by the Department was an account under the section in respect of the year, and which was recoverable, for the purpose of the Estimates. The Circular was issued in regard to the 29th September accounts, and provided that the account was a fair estimate for the year ending September 29 in any particular year. Then it could be made the subject of a claim for the purpose of the succeeding year's Estimate, and it was that which the Department had no doubt in view when they said they would allow a period of, practically speakng, another year, for the actual account to be made up; although the two years—the school year and the financial year—did not terminate on the same date, for practical purposes they would be treated as so doing, and the fact that the educational year ended on the 29th September created no difficulty. The Circular was to direct how the claims for the twelve months should be made up, and that was its only effect. The reason that difficulty had arisen was because there had been attempts to bring into the scheme for the one year the expenses or allowances which might have been claimed in past years.

Question put, "That a sum, not exceeding £153,034, be granted for the said Service."

The Committee divided:—Ayes, 42; Noes, 140.—(Division List, No. 52.)

Original Question put, and agreed to.

14. £10,000, Supplementary, Science and Art Department for the United Kingdom.—Agreed to.

15. £650, Supplementary, British Museum.—Agreed to.

16. £327, Supplementary, National Portrait Gallery.—Agreed to.

17. £20,110, Supplementary, Public Education, Ireland.—Agreed to.

MR. KNOX said he did not wish to raise any of the contentious questions, but item J, he thought, required some explanation. So far as he understood the matter the Government seemed to have arrived at a satisfactory settlement of a question which had occupied a good deal of their time last Session and part of this. But he thought it would be satisfactory if the Secretary to the Treasury would explain what the settlement was, as it evidently required serious consideration before they could discuss it.

*MR. HANBURY said this was only part of the whole contribution, which was about £108,000, including the payment to the Teachers' Pension Fund on another Vote. The whole sum was in respect of the arrears of the grant for the last four or five years, based on a capitation fee of 10s. The reason why the £12,600 in item J had been detached from the £95,000, which was to go towards the Teachers' Pension Fund, was that the convent and monastery schools had got no interest in the Teachers' Pension Fund, and it would be hardly fair to deprive them of their share of the arrears. The arrears in the case of all other schools interested in the Pension Fund would be devoted to putting that Fund on a sound footing.

Mr. KNOX asked if the Secretary to the Treasury could state whether or not the Pension Fund at present would be actuarially sufficient for the claims of existing teachers, because if the teachers understood that it was not sufficient to meet the claims of existing teachers it would modify their feeling as to the disposition of that money.

*Mr. HANBURY said he did not think he should be able to reply to the hon. Member on the present Vote, because the matter he had referred to was on a separate Vote, dealing with all the teachers who were not teachers in monastic schools.

Mr. KNOX thought it was not an unsatisfactory thing that they should have been able, by knocking somewhat repeatedly at the door of the Treasury, to extract something like £100,000, and hoped it was a foretaste of the other things which they were going to get by similar procedure.

Vote agreed to.

Class V.

18. £23,670, Supplementary, Diplomatic and Consular Services.

*Sir CHARLES DILKE (Gloucester, Forest of Dean) said he should not attempt to debate questions of policy, but some portion of the Vote related to the reception of Li Hung Chang, who came to this country last year in a capacity that was somewhat undefined. There was an impression that his visit was likely to have some influence which would be beneficial to this country in their dealings with China and questions of the China trade. He believed that impression had proved to be entirely erroneous. He desired to know whether on the Foreign Office Vote any statement would be made with regard to the Government's policy in connection with recent treaties and negotiations in China. The prestige of this country in that part of the world had apparently received a considerable blow, and he thought an opportunity should be afforded of debating that question, and questions connected with the present position of Korea, and other matters.

*The UNDER SECRETARY of STATE for FOREIGN AFFAIRS (Mr. George Curzon, Lancashire, Southport) said that, on the point regarding Li Hung Chang raised by the right hon. Baronet, it was not correct to say that he occupied an undefined position when he visited this country. He came here as a Special Envoy with special letters of credence from the Emperor of China to the Queen, and, whatever may have been the impression entertained in some quarters as to the benefits which might accrue to our trade in China from his visit, he did come for the purpose of laying specific proposals before Her Majesty's Government. The right hon. Baronet asked whether an opportunity would not be given at a later stage, perhaps on the Foreign Office Vote, of hearing something as to the Government's policy in the Far East. He thought that was a most reasonable demand, and he did not think the Secretary of State would have any other desire whatever than to comply with it. If no other opportunity occurred in the course of the next few weeks, the hon. Member for the Ecclesall division of Sheffield had got a Motion down at an early date for a discussion on the policy of the Government in that part of the world. But, if that opportunity did not occur, he did not think there would be any objection whatever to a statement being made, when the Foreign Office Vote came on, as to what was going on in that part of the world, and what were the views of the Government. The proposals made by Li Hung Chang were merely trading proposals.

Mr. HENRY LABOUCHERE (Northampton) thought they should have had a Blue-book upon this question. Vague statements which appeared in the newspayers were not sufficient, and as the question was urgent at the present moment, they ought to have adequate information. Surely sufficient time had elapsed. There was an item of £1,000 under the head "Manica Boundary." That was a boundary between some of the South Africa Chartered Company's possessions which was due to a war which took place between the Company and, practically, the Portuguese. If there was to be a boundary the Company ought to pay for it.

*MR. CURZON thought the hon. Member was mistaken, as this was territory administered by the British Crown. A treaty was signed in 1891 between Great Britain and the Portuguese as to the frontier of their possessions in that part of Africa, and the delimitation consequent upon that treaty was then begun. There was disagreement between the two parties' Commissioners, and the dispute was referred to arbitration. The arbitration resulted very decidedly in our favour.

Vote agreed to.

19. £36,700, Supplementary, British Protectorates in Uganda and Central and East Africa.

*SIR C. DILKE said this was money to cover the cost of operations in two wars which had taken place on the coast. As he had done on previous occasions, he protested against the Foreign Office carrying on wars of this description. Mr. Harding, and the other excellent Foreign Office clerks, were not the people to carry on these wars; in fact, the sooner the Foreign Office got out of this East African territory and handed it over to the Colonial Office the better for all concerned.

MR. HENRY LABOUCHERE asked what *quid pro quo* we got for the expenditure of £36,700? One of his strong objections to the expenditure of such large sums of money in Africa was that, not only was it unjust, but that we did not get anything for it. Could the Under Secretary show the Committee that in meal or malt we had got £30,000 or even £500 worth for our money?

*MR. CURZON said the object of the expenditure had been very clearly explained in a Blue-book laid before Parliament. What we had gained was the pacification of the Zanzibar Protectorate which we had assumed. Disturbances arose owing to the hostile attitude of important Arab chiefs, and in consequence a regiment was sent from India. The operations conducted were entirely successful, and now throughout that long strip of maritime territory over which we exercised supremacy and which we were governing there was perfect peace and tranquillity.

MR. LABOUCHERE said he should not divide the Committee, as the money had been spent, but he objected to the expenditure of a shilling of British money in establishing peace and tranquillity in any part of Africa. [*A laugh.*]

Vote agreed to.

20. £14,980, Supplementary, Colonial Services, including South Africa.

MR. DALZIEL asked for an explanation of the expenditure of £1,000, consequent on the transfer of buildings in Norfolk Island to the Government of New South Wales.

MR. T. LOUGH (Islington, W.) asked whether the Colonial Secretary would give some information as to the second item, one relating to the Transvaal?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES (Mr. J. CHAMBERLAIN, Birmingham, W.) said the condition of things in Norfolk Island had got as bad as it could. There was practically no proper administration of justice, and it was absolutely necessary to make a change. It was the opinion of the Government that it would be very much better that this dependency should be governed by New South Wales. The Government of New South Wales expressed their readiness to undertake the government, but, when doing so, represented that the administrative buildings had been allowed to get into a terrible state of repair. £1,000 was granted for the repairs, but he believed the expenses had been more than was calculated. The change which had taken place was apparently entirely satisfactory. The late British Agent stood in rather a different position. No archives were kept and there were no means of dealing properly with the business of the office. It was an arrangement made under totally different circumstances, before the post became of the great importance that it was at present. ["Hear, hear!"] When the new Agent was appointed it was necessary to provide him with a new residence. It was found that no house suitable could be obtained on lease, and it was necessary to purchase a house and make additions to it. When it was remembered that house property in Pretoria was, he thought, more expensive than in the West-end of London, he believed it would be felt that on the whole they had done the best they could. ["Hear, hear!"]

Mr. BUXTON expressed his satisfaction as to what had been done with regard to Norfolk Island and the way in which the transfer had been carried out.

Vote agreed to.

21. £1,200, Supplementary, Slave Trade Services.

Mr. DALZIEL asked for information as to the suppression of slavery in Zanzibar.

*Sir C. DILKE said there could be no doubt there had been a large increase in the shipping of slaves to the island.

*The CHAIRMAN of WAYS and MEANS thought that a discussion on slavery on this item, which was very limited, would be out of order.

Mr. DALZIEL said, in view of the fact that the late Government had been subjected to a vote of censure on this Question, he thought they ought to know whether anything had been done, or, at least, how soon the Government would make a statement on the subject. Would it be on the Foreign Office Vote?

Mr. CURZON thought that would be the proper course to pursue.

Vote agreed to.

22. £16,304, Treasury Chest Fund.

Mr. T. LOUGH asked for an explanation of this somewhat mysterious item.

*Mr. HANBURY explained that the deficiency chiefly arose in connection with one local Treasury Chest, and this was due to the quarterly rating of the Mexican dollar.

Vote agreed to.

Class VI.

23. £30,151, Supplementary, Trustee Savings Bank and Friendly Societies Deficiency.

Mr. G. C. T. BARTLEY (Islington, N.) thought this was a very important matter, and he regretted that the Chancellor of the Exchequer was not there to explain to them this very important new departure in connection with Savings Banks. For the first time a deficiency was shown, and it was necessary, in his opinion, for the Government to have some distinct policy. (The Chancellor of the Exchequer having come in.) He hoped they should have some idea given them of what the policy of the Government was to be. It was obvious that after giving 2½ per cent. there was absolutely no margin.

Mr. WALTER HAZELL (Leicester) hoped the Government would look carefully into the matter. Some extension might be made of the limits within which savings banks funds could be invested, and everything possible done to encourage the habits of thrift of the people.

Mr. LOUGH remarked that on the third item there was a considerable increase in the Estimate for the deficiency for friendly societies and savings banks.

*The CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER said the reason of the Vote was that the annual interest arising from sums invested was less than the interest paid to depositors and the expenses of management of the banks. The sums invested at the present rate at which Government securities had to be purchased, obviously produced a very low rate of interest indeed. Consols and other securities of the kind to which the investments of these banks were limited by law, stood at a very high rate last year, and consequently the profits of the banks fell in proportion. He had been asked to make a statement of policy. Last year he saw what was coming, and he had brought forward this Vote rather earlier than usual in order that the attention of the House of Commons might be directed to the matter. ["Hear!"] This was the first time it had been necessary to ask Parliament to subsidise the Post Office Savings Banks, and it clearly amounted to this—that the Government were paying depositors in those banks a higher rate of interest for their money than that money could really earn. That was not a thing which could continue. [*Cheers.*] He did not believe that depositors themselves would desire to receive from the State what he must call a kind of charity. He admitted that these banks were of the greatest value to the community; but it was not necessary to their value that they should pay more interest than they could earn. The public were induced to invest in Post Office Savings Banks far more by the sense of security given than by the particular rate of interest paid on their money. ["Hear,

hear!"] When he was asked whether he could suggest an extension of the limits at present imposed on investments by the banks, he was bound to say that he saw great difficulties in the matter. It must be remembered that the State was liable for this money, and it would be a very dangerous thing for the State to receive this enormous sum from depositors to whom it was actually liable and then invest the money in securities of a more or less speculative nature on which great losses might be suffered. Under the present law the investments were confined to securities guaranteed by the State, and he should be most reluctant to make a change in that direction. He did not wish to say anything more at present, because he had not made up his mind as to what was to be done in a matter which was full of difficulties and was of great importance. ["Hear, hear!"] He did not wish to move in the matter one single day sooner than was necessary. So long as the present rate of interest could be maintained he wished to maintain it; but he must warn the Committee that the time was rapidly coming when it must be considered whether it might not be necessary, perhaps not in all but in some cases, to reduce the present rate of interest. ["Hear, hear!"]

MR. T. P. WHITTAKER (York, W.R., Spen Valley) asked how the deficiency was arrived at? Was account taken of the redemption of Consols, which were now selling at 113 and which were liable to be redeemed at 100?

*THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER said that if the hon. Member would look at the Returns annually presented, he would find full particulars.

MR. BARTLEY explained that really the amount of interest paid varied very fractionally for most depositors, whether the rate were ½ per cent. higher or lower. The security was the great point. It was not necessary to consider the larger deposits, up to £200. A very large number of the deposits were of £5, £6, and £7, and in those cases it was obvious that the reduction of the interest by ½ per cent. would only mean to each depositor a difference of a fraction of a farthing a week. It would be a bad thing if it were to get about that a large Parliamentary Vote was necessary to balance the bank's accounts. As to enlarging the scope of investments, whatever security was permitted would be practically guaranteed by the State, its price would at once rise to the price of Consols, and the object of the Government would thereby be frustrated. There was no alternative to reducing the rate of interest. He had had long experience of a penny bank, in which the rate of interest had recently to be reduced; and no ill-effects to the popularity of the institution resulted.

MR. LOUGH hoped the Chancellor of the Exchequer would consider very carefully before he changed the rate of interest. While the Parliamentary grant was so small, it would be a pity to disturb a system which was of such value to the poor people; and there might be reason to think that the deficiency would not be permanent.

Vote agreed to.

24. £95,434, Teachers' Pension Fund, Ireland.

MR. J. H. YOXALL (Nottingham, W.) asked from what sources this money was to be drawn? Was it money due to the Irish schools, and, if so, had care been taken to ascertain whether the teachers who were entitled to these arrears were quite satisfied with the proposal to place the money in the Irish Teachers' Pension Fund? He was glad that something was being done to strengthen the Fund, but regretted that nothing had been done to redeem the promise to establish a similar fund for England and Scotland.

MR. FLYNN said that the Committee ought to know exactly the position of the fund. If there was a deficiency, it was not due to any fault of the teachers, but to a miscalculation on the part of the Treasury in 1885. The fund was started out of the Irish Church Fund, and in 1885 there was a valuation, when a surplus of £196,000 was declared. This was an important question for the teachers, as no male teacher was allowed to draw from the fund until he had given 40 years of service, and then he only received £6 a year. The Irish Teachers' Pension Fund ought not to suffer because the Treasury had made a mistake.

MR. DALZIEL said he wished to ask the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary to the Treasury from what sources the money necessary to place this Fund upon a sound financial basis was to come?

*Mr. HANBURY said that originally a large proportion of the Fund was derived from the Irish Church Fund. Owing to a miscalculation with regard to the Fund, arising out of an actuarial mistake, there was a large deficit in the amount of the Fund, and the Treasury felt themselves morally bound to do their best to make good that deficiency, and, therefore, it was that this £95,000 was now asked for. With regard to the actual position of the Fund, he was sorry to have to state that it was insolvent to the extent of a million and a quarter. That deficiency they had to face, and they were now endeavouring to put the Fund in a solvent position. The arrangement which they now asked the House to agree to was that this sum of £95,000 should be voted in respect of a readjustment of School Grants during the last three or four years, while a certain sum would be deducted from the teachers' salaries. By means of an additional sum to be derived from an annual Vote of that House, the whole of the amount necessary to make up the deficiency would be obtained, and the Fund would be restored to a position of solvency. With regard to the question which had been put to him by the hon. Member for West Nottingham, as to whether the Irish Teachers had been consulted before this arrangement was adopted, all he could say was that the National Education Commissioners in Ireland were perfectly satisfied with what the Government proposed to do in the matter.

Mr. GIBSON BOWLES said that, from the statement which the Secretary to the Treasury had just made, it appeared that the Committee were asked to vote this sum of £95,000 in order to make good a deficiency which had been made by an actuary of the Treasury. In that case they must take it that the Treasury themselves were to blame in this matter.

*Mr. HANBURY said that the mistake occurred some years ago.

Mr. GIBSON BOWLES said that might be so, but the principle remained the same. He thought that actuaries never made mistakes, and that they were regarded as being infallible in the accuracy of their calculations. It was clear that in this instance the Treasury actuary had not been infallible, and, therefore, the Treasury themselves were responsible. The truth was that the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary to the Treasury came down to that House and asked, not for a Supplementary Vote, but for a bill of indemnity on behalf of the Treasury. He recollected the time when the right hon. Gentleman sat on the other side of the House, and if this matter had been brought forward at that time he could scarcely say what might not have happened. The right hon. Gentleman would then probably have moved the adjournment of the House in order to call attention to it as a matter of urgency, and perhaps have followed that up by a Motion for the impeachment of the Ministry. [*Laughter.*] Without going to that extent, however, he thought that the Committee were entitled to have the whole matter cleared up.

*Mr. YOXALL said that he was not quite satisfied with the explanation which the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary to the Treasury had given the Committee in relation to this subject. He could not admit that these payments ought to come out of the arrears of the Fee Grants, neither could he admit that nothing was due to the Irish Teachers. He hoped that as the Treasury was to be generous to the Irish Teachers' Pension Fund, provided that the money did not come out of the arrears of the Irish Fee Grant, the Treasury would also be just to teachers in England and Wales and Scotland, by establishing a Pension Fund for them.

Vote agreed to.

Class VII.

25. £4,500, Supplementary, Temporary Commissions.

*Sir C. DILKE said that he thought that neither the Agricultural Commission nor the Commission on the Licensing Laws had done much good. With regard to the West India Commission, he thought that its attention should be directed to the question of manufacture rather than to economic questions.

Mr. J. CALDWELL (Lanark, Mid) said he desired to refer to the item for the Scottish University Commission, and to point out that the Commission ought to have expired long ago. It was a piece of absolute jobbery. The Commission was established in 1889, and had gone on ever since. Last year a Vote of £510 was obtained in the expectation that the whole thing would be wound up in a month or two, and now a Supplementary Vote for £620 was brought forward. The Commission had already cost £16,000. The reason why the Vote had been allowed to pass without remark for the last year or two was, that everybody interested expected that it would not be asked for again. He wished the Secretary to the Treasury to understand that the Scotch Members were very emphatic in this matter, and he hoped the right hon. Gentleman would take steps to bring the Commission to an end.

*MR. HANBURY said the hon. Gentleman was quite right in saying that a large sum was asked for in these Estimates, but it arose in this way. When the Estimates were framed at the beginning of the year it was expected that the work of the Commission would be completed by July 1 of last year. Unfortunately it was found that the Commission would have to sit, at any rate, till July 1 1897, owing to the great opposition offered by Lord Bute to the amalgamation of St. Andrew's University and University College, Dundee. It was necessary for the Commission to frame fresh ordinances for these two united bodies; and, meantime, it was absolutely necessary for the Commission to be continued.

Vote agreed to.

26. £16,617, Repayment to the Local Loans Fund.

In reply to Sir C. DILKE,

*MR. HANBURY said he had to defend this policy when the Bill by which these sums were written off was before the House last year, and he did not think he would be in order to go back to it. These arrears had now been written off by Act of Parliament, and the Government were bound by the Local Loans Fund Act, 1887, to bring in this Vote in order to make good the deficiency.

MR. CALDWELL was understood to complain that Scotland only got £65 out of this transaction.

Vote agreed to.

27. £20,500, International Exhibitions. Agreed to.

REVENUE DEPARTMENTS.

28. £6,800, Supplementary, Inland Revenue.

MR. WHITTAKER wished to ask for a little information as to the methods of selecting cases for prosecution adopted by the Department.

*THE CHAIRMAN OF WAYS AND MEANS: I do not see under what item the hon. Member can raise the question.

MR. WHITTAKER: The law charges for prosecutions.

*THE CHAIRMAN OF WAYS AND MEANS: That item refers to the fees paid to counsel and solicitors. The question whether the prosecutions were properly instituted does not arise on that.

MR. WHITTAKER: There is an item for cost of prosecutions in Inland Revenue Department.

*THE CHAIRMAN OF WAYS AND MEANS: Any question relating to prosecutions which have taken place might be dealt with under this item; but a question as to the future policy of the Department as to prosecutions could not.

MR. WHITTAKER: I wish to raise a question as to the present method of prosecution.

*THE CHAIRMAN OF WAYS AND MEANS: That is a matter which is in the discretion of the heads of the Department.

MR. WHITTAKER: Would it not arise on the amount of money incurred in prosecutions?

*THE CHAIRMAN OF WAYS AND MEANS: I think not. The heads of the Department apply for extra money to meet the expenses of prosecutions that have taken place. The general policy of the Inland Revenue could not be discussed on that.

MR. WHITTAKER: Can I not argue that it is not fair to select some cases for prosecutions and not others?

*THE CHAIRMAN OF WAYS AND MEANS: No, because that is a matter within the discretion of the Department. Counsel and solicitors do not have the selection of the cases.

MR. WHITTAKER: Very well, Sir, I will raise the matter on the General Estimates.

MR. GIBSON BOWLES asked whether there had been any large addition to what he might call the Statistical Department, and any diversion of work from other Departments. Could the right hon. Gentleman give him any information that would enable him to understand what the additions to the establishment were?

*MR. HANBURY said the additions arose almost entirely from the additions that had to be made in connection with the Death Duties.

Vote agreed to.

29. £10, Supplementary, Post Office.

MR. DALZIEL asked when a Report of Lord Tweedmouth's Commission would be circulated? He wished to bring to the right hon. Gentleman's attention the great dissatisfaction that was given to some steamship companies with regard to the American Mails. There was an especially strong feeling in the Argentine with regard to the few deliveries from this country, whence letters were only received once in 10 or 14 days. Of course the best way out of this difficulty was to send the Mails by all companies.

*MR. HANBURY said that the Vote referred to the cost of the boats which carried the Mails from Holyhead to Dublin, and he did not think the Question the hon. Member had put properly arose on this Vote. He thought the Report of Lord Tweedmouth's Committee was handed in at the end of last December. It was a long Report dealing with a large variety of points, and was very complicated. It also, as hon. Members knew, dealt with questions involving very great expenditure. It had, in the first place, passed through the hands of the Post Office Authorities, whose final recommendations had only reached the Treasury a week ago. The matter had still to be dealt with by the Treasury, and in the circumstances he could hold out no hope that the Report would be presented to Parliament before three weeks or a month at the least. The Government thought that the Report ought not to be presented until the Treasury had come to a conclusion as to what ought to be done.

Chai. man of Ways and Means.

Resolutions to be reported upon Monday next; Committee to sit again upon Monday next.

WAYS AND MEANS.

Committee deferred till Monday next.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT (1894) AMENDMENT BILL.

Second Reading deferred till Wednesday next.

SHOP ASSISTANTS (HALF-HOLIDAY) BILL.

Second Reading deferred till Friday next.

LICENSING EXEMPTION (HOUSES OF PARLIAMENT) BILL.

Second Reading deferred till Monday next.

MUSEUMS OF THE SCIENCE AND ART DEPARTMENT.

Ordered that a Select Committee be appointed to inquire into and report upon the administration and cost of the Museums of the Science and Art Department.

Committee accordingly nominated of,—Mr. Acland, Lord Balcarres, Mr. Bartley, Mr. Bhownaggree, Mr. John Burns, Dr. Farquharson, Sir John Gorst, Mr. Ernest Gray, Sir Henry Howorth, Mr. Kenrick, Mr. Herbert Lewis, Mr. Platt-Higgins, Sir Francis Powell, Mr. Donal Sullivan, and Mr. Yoxall.

Ordered, That the Committee have power to send for persons, papers, and records.

Ordered, That five be the quorum.—[*Sir William Walrond.*]

House adjourned at Five minutes after Nine o'clock till Monday next.

HOUSE OF LORDS.

Monday, 1st March 1897.

REPRESENTATIVE PEER FOR IRELAND. (LORD FARNHAM.)

Report made from the Lord Chancellor, that the right of Somerset Henry Maxwell, Baron Farnham, to vote at the elections of Representative Peers for Ireland has been established to the satisfaction of the Lord Chancellor; read, and ordered to lie on the Table.

PRIVATE BUSINESS.

CHRISTCHURCH INCLOSURE ALLOTMENTS BILL.

The LORD CHANCELLOR (**Lord Halsbury**), moved "That this Bill be now read a Second time."

Lord HOBHOUSE moved to leave out all the words after "That," and to insert

> "having regard to the policy of Parliament as declared by the Commons Act, 1876, especially with respect to fuel allotments, this House is not prepared to pass a Private Bill in order to enable the sale and inclosure of fuel allotments contrary to such policy."

His Lordship said that he made the Motion entirely on public grounds, and in support of the policy which was fixed in 1876, after a great deal of fluctuation. It was not necessary to enter into minute detail as to the early history of those lands. They formed part of a much larger tract of open land, which in 1802 was the subject of an Enclosure Act. By that Act the Commissioners were directed to award to the Lords of the Manors so much land as they considered proper for a turf common for certain described cottages, and the Lord of the Manor was to hold the land awarded to him in trust for the occupiers, for the time being, of the cottages as a turf common—that was to say, as fuel allotments. In pursuance of that order the Commissioners set out to the lord of the manor in the case in question 425 acres, about five acres a cottage, the maximum they were empowered to set out. The present lord of the manor was Sir George Meyrick; he was the owner of the soil as a trust common, but in trust for the occupiers of the cottages. The number of cottages had decreased to about 53 at the present time, and oddly enough, the acreage had decreased in almost exact proportion as the cottages. Railways had taken a small portion of the land, and the Corporation of Bournemouth had taken about 50 acres for a cemetery. The same public body had taken about 100 acres for a park, but this was taken in accordance with the Act, and to be kept as open ground. The result was that there were now left about 260 acres of open land, and that land it was proposed to sell, and, of course, to enclose. The policy laid down by the Legislature was clear enough. The views held in regard to the subject of enclosures had, as their Lordships knew, undergone very considerable alteration, and it was now maintained that the public—the people of the neighbourhood—had an interest in those questions of land enclosure, and that whenever it was necessary to come to the Legislature for extraordinary powers beyond the law, in order to enclose any common land, Parliament would have regard to those public interests, and particularly to those of the cottagers and others living in the neighbourhood. Those views found expression in the Commons Act of 1876, which laid down general principles, and also principles as regarded fuel allotments. The earlier part of the Act summed up the provisions of former Acts down to the year 1868, and showed that in determining upon enclosure regard was to be had to the health, comfort, and convenience of the local public, and in order to insure that the enclosures would be a benefit to the neighbourhood as well as to private interests, it directed the Inclosure Commissioners to make inquiries with that view. Then, as to fuel allotments, Section 19 of the Act recited that fuel allotments for the poor had, by words under the Inclosure Act prior to 1845, been set out and vested in divers persons as trustees. Except in regard to the words "for the poor," which were not in the Act, the present case was precisely similar. The Act of 1876 enacted that it should not be lawful to authorise the use of any such fuel allotments for any purposes other than those declared by the

Act of Parliament, and this involved a direct contravention of what the Bill under consideration sought to do. The words "the same as hereinafter mentioned" in the Act, referred to a power given to the Charity Commissioners to take fuel allotments as gardens or recreation grounds, and to make schemes for their administration accordingly. That seemed to him directly in the teeth of this proposal. Directions were given to the Inclosure Commissioners, and to the Charity Commissioners, and to the Board of Agriculture, which had succeeded the Inclosure Commissioners, not to allow the sale or inclosure of fuel allotments. In 1893 the same principles were affirmed. In that year the inclosures, under the Statute of Merton, were forbidden, except with the assent of the Board of Agriculture; and in considering whether it should give assent or not the Board was directed to have regard to the considerations laid down in the Act of 1876, and he thought that those enactments laid down a standard from which the House ought not lightly to depart. The only distinction he could understand —he did not know it was taken or not— between the case before the House and the case mentioned in the Act of 1876 was that the Act mentioned allotments for the poor. Can it be conceived that, if it was forbidden to aid the poor by turning the fuel allotments into something more valuable, it ever was intended that the rates should be aided by turning their fuel allotments into something more valuable? If the distinction were taken, that eliminated the question of charity altogether, and referred them to the general principles that the inclosure must be for the benefit of the neighbourhood and the public. No doubt the Bill came here under the sanction of the Court of Chancery; but, he asked, in whose interest was that sanction given? The Court of Chancery had jurisdiction to administer the settled estate of Sir George Meyrick, and it had jurisdiction to administer charitable trusts generally. But it had no jurisdiction to order an inclosure or sale of fuel allotments, and it was on that ground that this Bill came before the House. He took it that the Court's orders were excellent for those subjects under which it had jurisdiction, but the neighbours were not heard before the Court, the public were not heard, and, in all probability, not a single thought had been given to those interests. Their safeguard lay in this, that it was necessary to come here for the sale and inclosure of the lands. He did not doubt the omnipotence of Parliament. This and the other House might pass a Bill containing a provision quite contrary to anything that had been previously laid down by the Legislature, and he did not doubt there were instances in which it would be quite proper to depart from that policy. In the case of the Bournemouth Cemetery, part of these lands were taken; there was a great public object, and the fuel rights were taken. He could not find from the Bill that any attempt was made to show that in this case the Legislature was warranted in departing from the policy it had previously laid down. Judging from the Attorney General's report, and from certain communications coming from the local bodies, which were not before the House, he maintained that the case for departing from the general policy of the law was a very weak one. What interests were to be served by this proposed sale? He perceived that the Lord of the Manor was declared entitled to half of the value. The Lord of the Manor stood in the same position as every other Lord of the Manor who asked for inclosure— certainly no better—because this particular lord had rather smaller interests than others, for he was debarred by the Act of 1802 from pasturing the land, and he could not get minerals, because the land was devoted to turbary, and he must not disturb the surface. He did not know what interest the Lord of the Manor had in the land, beyond the important one of being the owner of the soil, and the unimportant one of being entitled to a right of sporting over the surface. He supposed they would hear that this was a charitable trust. If it was a charity, of course it fell within the Act of 1876. If some distinction was taken on that ground, he asked what the charity was? It was a charity only in a technical sense, because it was a trust for the benefit of a number of persons large enough and indefinite enough to be called the public, and such public trusts were called charities. If they made the distinction that was sought to be made here they would include such a number of cases as would go very far to repeal the Act so far as it related to fuel allotments. But he observed that the nature of the charity, calling it such, was simply to cut turf over, at most, five acres of land for each cottage. If he translated that into money value, 40s. a year would be the utmost value. There was now in the Court of Chancery the sum of upwards of £7,000 accruing on behalf of the fuel rights from the 50 acres taken for the Bournemouth Cemetery, and that alone, if it were divided amongst the 53, would yield an income considerably larger than anything they or their predecessors could possibly have had in fuel rights. He noticed that the increase contemplated was not for the objects of the Act of 1802. It was declared to be devoted indefinitely to general charitable purposes, and a scheme was to be made in which these particular objects were to have due regard shown to them. They would, therefore, have this result; not only were the lands to be diverted from the uses to which they were devoted by the Act of 1802 and the other general Acts, but they were to be diverted, he did not know to what extent, to certain uses—they did not know what uses. They knew nothing of them but this, that they must be something entirely different from any uses that were dreamed of by those who made the arrangement of 1802. He submitted, with some confidence, that that was an extremely weak case with which anybody could come to Parliament and ask it to depart from the declared policy of the law. What had they on the other side? They had an enormous rapid increase of population and building. If he might be a witness in the case, he could say that in his early youth one used to journey by coach from Christchurch to Poole for eight miles of almost continuous open moor, and now one made the same journey through eight miles of almost continuous lines of houses, each house with its inclosure, and every here and there a dense settlement behind a fringe of houses. This absorption of open land was going on with great rapidity, and he learned from the four local bodies who were opposed to the Bill that already recreation ground was lacking, and they were desirous of securing land. He asserted that the most charitable use that could be made of the lands for the neighbourhood, for the public, even for the 53 owners or occupiers of the cottages, was to leave the lands in the present state, of which the law approved. There were no reasons for departing from the practice, while there were strong reasons for them adhering to it, and he hoped their Lordships would refuse their sanction to the Bill.

*THE LORD CHANCELLOR said this Bill was promoted under the sanction of the Attorney General. The Lord of the Manor claimed to be substantially the owner, but various persons claimed to have an interest in the land. It was necessary for the Attorney General to intervene for the protection of the charity. The matter was carried from Court to Court, and in 1892 that House decided that the Lord of the Manor had a substantial interest, but subject to rights of turbary. That was the condition of things when the Attorney General entered into negotiations with those interested for the purpose of rendering this property for all time valuable to those whom it concerned. The original settlement was made in 1782, and there were four different occasions when portions of this land had been taken for railway and other purposes, and there remained 200 out of 421 acres. The only effect of the rejection of the Bill would be that nobody would be able to make the land valuable for anything. He wished to say one word as to the public park which had been obtained for Bournemouth. The noble Lord said something about somebody getting something. He did not know to whom the allusion was made, unless it was intended as an attack on the Lord of the Manor.

LORD HOBHOUSE denied that he made any attack on the Lord of the Manor.

*THE LORD CHANCELLOR asked what was the meaning of the references to the rich and the poor? The Lord of the Manor waived his right altogether, and Bournemouth obtained a public park on very cheap terms indeed, by reason of the Lord of the Manor giving up his interest for the benefit of the public. The noble Lord suggested that the interest of the Lord of the Manor was very small indeed, but that was not so; it was 18-20ths of the whole. He did not think the suggestion quite candid. Now what was the result of what had been done? The Attorney General reported, as their Lordships knew, on all matters affecting charities, and had recommended this scheme to their Lordships as an expedient thing for the charity. His noble Friend seemed to be very much shocked at the intervention of the Attorney General in order to settle the matter. His hon. Friend spoke as if he represented some great public body, but he thought there were only 53 of the turf claimants altogether. Before the Committee everyone could be heard, and show what interest they had. The Charity Commissioners could make no claim in respect of money paid under the Act if the Bill should pass, and under the 11th Section it was provided that due regard should be shown to the claims of those who had turbary rights. He had explained only why the Attorney General had intervened. He had intervened solely on behalf of the public, and the utmost care had been taken in dealing with the allotments. He thought it would be most unusual if their Lordships rejected this Bill at that stage. One portion of the land had been in litigation so long that the law costs had swallowed up everything, and this Bill would prevent further fighting. The offer of the Lord of the Manor was a very generous one, and one which the Attorney General was very glad to accept. Under these circumstances he trusted their Lordships would not take the unusual course of rejecting a Bill of that sort on the Second Reading. Everything that had to be urged could be urged in Committee. The Attorney General, in the exercise of his great office, had recommended this as a proper arrangement to be made in the interest of the public, and he trusted the House would not set the bad example of refusing the Second Reading.

Lord HERSCHELL said if he could agree with the premiss of the noble and gallant Lord he could agree with the conclusion at which he arrived. With all respect to the noble and learned Lord on the Woolsack he must say that the fallacy of his argument arose from the fact of his having mixed together two questions which were absolutely separate, namely, that which arose with regard to the portions of the land which had been sold, and that which arose with regard to that portion which remained unsold. The portion of the land which had been sold had been acquired by railway companies under their statutory powers, and by other parties, and the money which had been received for it was, of course, subject to the jurisdiction of the Courts of Law. The Amendment of the noble Lord, however, referred not to the sold portion of the land but to the unsold portion of it. He could not regard the Measure in the light that the noble and learned Lord looked at it, because it appeared to him that it dealt with a matter of public importance. If this subject were to be dealt with in a private Bill the door would be opened for numbers of such Bills being introduced with the object of contravening the avowed intentions of the Legislature with regard to these fuel allotments. In his view the Amendment of the noble Lord would not kill the Bill because it would merely operate as an Instruction to the Committee that they should strike out that part of the Bill which proposed to deal with the unsold portion of the land. By the 19th Section of the Commons Act of 1876 Parliament had said to the Inclosure Commissioners,

> "You are not to deal by way of inclosure with any land which has been appropriated to fuel allotments."

And Parliament had further said that when such fuel allotments were no longer required for that particular purpose, they were to be used as recreation grounds or for field allotments. No authority whatever was given to anyone to dispose of these allotments by way of sale, except under the powers that might be conferred by an Act of Parliament. Even those to whom fuel allotments belonged could not dispose of them by agreement between themselves. It was evidently the intention of Parliament that when the very limited user of these allotments came to an end the rights of the public in the land were to be considered, and the allotments were to be appropriated to recreation grounds if they were not required for field allotments. By this Bill it was proposed simply to sell the land and to divide the money which it realised. The argument of the noble and learned Lord on the Woolsack with regard to the litigation in reference to the land and to the compromise which had been arrived at appeared to him not to apply in any way to the unsold portion of the land. The parties concerned could not legally agree among themselves to sell that which they had no right to sell. There was, of course, nothing to prevent dealing with the money that formed the proceeds of the sold portion of the land. He confessed that he could see no reason why the policy that had been laid down by the Legislature in the Act of 1876 with regard to these fuel allotments should now be set aside. In these circumstances he hoped that their Lordships would accept the noble Lord's Amendment. ["Hear, hear!"]

*THE CHAIRMAN OF COMMITTEES (The EARL of MORLEY) said that he would venture to say a few words to their Lordships in reference to this Measure, although, of course, he was almost afraid to touch upon the legal question which it involved after the opinions which had been expressed with regard to it by such eminent legal authorities as the noble and learned Lords who had already spoken upon it. The reason why he had not moved the Second Reading of the Bill in the ordinary course was not because he objected to the Measure, but because he felt that as it involved an important legal question he ought not to move its Second Reading. The noble and learned Lord who had just spoken had objected to the Bill on the ground that it dealt with what, in his opinion, were fuel allotments under the Commons Act of 1876. But, with all submission, he understood from the speech of the noble and learned Lord upon the Woolsack, and from the report of the Attorney General, that the whole foundation of this Bill was that it did not deal with fuel allotments under that Act.

LORD HERSCHELL said that that could hardly be the case seeing that the noble and learned Lord upon the Woolsack had made no allusion whatever to the Act of 1876.

*THE CHAIRMAN OF COMMITTEES said that, as he understood the matter, the Court of Chancery had decided that these fuel allotments were a charitable trust, created by the Act of 1802, and could therefore only be dealt with by Parliament. The whole property, whether sold or unsold, appeared to him to be included in the compromise that had been arrived at, so it would not be right to exclude the unsold lands from the Bill. He ventured to hope that their Lordships would give a Second Reading to this Bill, because if they did not adopt that course litigation must necessarily go on and the whole value of the property whatever it might be would be swallowed up in law costs. In his opinion the Amendment, if adopted, would certainly kill the Bill, and would thus prevent the Measure from going before a Committee before whom the local authorities who were interested in the disposal of the land might be heard. For these reasons he hoped that their Lordships would reject the Amendment and would read the Bill a Second time.

*LORD THRING said that there had been no litigation and no compromise with regard to the unsold portions of this land which it was now proposed to deal with by this private Bill. The truth was that these 250 acres of land originally formed part of a large tract of waste land which was situated close to Bournemouth, and was now of the utmost possible value to that town and to the surrounding neighbourhood if kept open. In 1802 it was agreed to enclose the greater portion of this waste land and to leave these 250 acres as fuel allotments for the benefit of the poor. By this private Bill it was proposed to take power to sell the land and to hand over half of the proceeds to the Lord of the Manor, in spite of the tendency of legislation during the past 30 years. In his view that would be a most monstrous proceeding. If this Bill were not passed there would be no litigation with regard to this land. As a matter of fact no litigation was required. There was no dispute and no intricacy at all. He was sorry not to see Lord Cross in the House, for he was sure the opponents of the Bill would have his sympathy.

*THE LORD CHANCELLOR: I may inform the noble Lord that I only took possession of this Bill because Lord Cross could not be here to move the Second Reading. [*Laughter.*]

*LORD THRING said he was very sorry that Lord Cross was not in the House, for he had never known any Minister to take so much trouble to preserve common land. This, a private Bill, violated the express provisions of the Act of 1876 with regard to fuel allotments. That Act provided that they should not be appropriated except for the purposes of recreation grounds. It further provided that no inclosure should take place except it was determined by the authorities having jurisdiction over the inclosure of the common that it was for the benefit of the neighbourhood, it directed a local inquiry to be held by the Board of Agriculture to ascertain that fact, and, finally, even if an inclosure were made, it contained provisions for the protection of the public. In spite of all this legislation, this private Bill was brought in, without any provision for the protection of the public or of the neighbourhood, and giving one-half of the land to the Lord of the Manor. With the greatest submission to the Chairman of Committees, he contended that the Bill ought to have been disallowed as an inclosure Bill and not a private Bill. He could not conceive a Bill their Lordships ought more readily to throw out, seeing that it violated a practice that had existed for 30 years, as well as the express provisions of several statutes. He hoped their Lordships would declare that, so far as these 250 acres of land were concerned, they, at least, should be preserved for the benefit of the 60,000 people in Bournemouth and the neighbourhood.

Lord HOBHOUSE asked leave to make a brief personal explanation. His hon. and learned Friend on the Woolsack seemed to entertain the idea that he had mentioned poor people and rich people with the view to creating some prejudice. Such a thing never occurred to him. He never dreamt of it. The reason why he mentioned poor and rich was that the Act of 1876 spoke of allotments for the poor, and the particular Act under which this inclosure was made did not mention the poor.

*The LORD CHANCELLOR then put the Question as follows: The original Question was, "That this Bill be read a Second time," since which an Amendment had been moved to omit all the words after "That" in order to insert the following:—

> "Having regard to the policy of Parliament, as declared by the Commons Act 1876, especially with respect to fuel allotments, this House is not prepared to pass a Private Bill in order to enable the sale and inclosure of fuel allotments contrary to such policy."

The Question is that the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question.

Lord Thring.

On Question that the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Motion. The House divided:—

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Resolved in the affirmative; Bill accordingly read a Second time.

RETIREMENT OF VESTRYMEN AND AUDITORS (LONDON) BILL. [H.L.]

A Bill to amend the law relating to the retirement of vestrymen and auditors in London was presented by the Lord Monkswell; Read 1ª; to be printed.—(No. 17.)

CHURCH PATRONAGE TRANSFERS BILL. [H.L.]

A Bill to regulate the transfer of Church Patronage was presented by the Lord Archbishop of York ; Read 1ª ; and to be printed.—(No. 18.)

PARLIAMENTARY FRANCHISE (WOMEN) BILL. [H.L.]

Second Reading (which stands appointed for this day) put off to Monday next.

House adjourned at Half-past Five o'clock, till To-morrow, a Quarter past Ten o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

Monday, 1st March 1897.

STANDING COMMITTEES (CHAIRMEN'S PANEL).

Sir **HENRY CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN** reported from the Chairmen's Panel that they had appointed Sir James Fergusson to act as Chairman of the Standing Committee for the consideration of Bills relating to law, and Courts of Justice, and Legal Procedure ; Report to lie upon the Table.

QUESTIONS.

CASUAL WARDS (METROPOLIS).

Mr. **E. H. PICKERSGILL** (Bethnal Green, S.W.): I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board whether his attention has been called to a case heard at the Thames Police Court, on the 8th February, of one John Redmond, who having applied for admission on the previous day to the Strand Casual Ward, was told that it was full, and directed to the Rotherithe Casual Ward, a distance of three miles; on arriving there was sent on to the St. George's in the East Casual Ward, a further distance of two miles, and was thence again told to go to the Poplar Casual Ward ; whether the respective guardians of those unions, by thus sending an applicant wandering about over the Metropolis, fulfilled their statutory obligations ; and whether he will represent to the guardians the necessity to make provision for overflows, by giving direction to the relieving officer or otherwise ?

The **PRESIDENT** of the **LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD** (Mr. Henry Chaplin, Lincolnshire, Sleaford) : I have caused careful inquiry to be made with regard to the statements by Redmond at the Thames Police Court, and I am satisfied that his allegations as to his being sent wandering about over the Metropolis in consequence of the casual wards being full is without foundation.

MAGISTRACY (IRELAND).

Mr. **D. MACALEESE** (Monaghan N.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland (1) if he is aware that Mr. John Porter-Porter, J.P., adjudicated at the Lisbellaw Petty Sessions as a magistrate in September 1896; (2) is Lisbellaw in the district mentioned in this gentleman's commission as a place where he is entitled to adjudicate as a magistrate; (3) was the occasion referred to the first upon which Mr. Porter-Porter adjudicated as a magistrate at Lisbellaw Petty Sessions, and were ten persons on trial on that occasion for alleged participation in a party riot, which took place at Tempo in August 1896; (4) is this Mr. Porter-Porter the same Mr. Porter-Porter who was deprived for a time of the commission of the peace; and (5) will the Lord Chancellor of Ireland see to it that Mr. Porter-Porter be restricted for the future in his judicial operations to the districts limned in his commission of the peace.

The **CHIEF SECRETARY** for **IRELAND** (Mr. Gerald Balfour, Leeds Central): The gentleman named in the question was appointed to the Commission of the Peace for the County Fermanagh for the purpose of attending the Lisbellaw Petty Sessions, and he did as a matter of fact attend these Sessions on the occasion mentioned. The reply to the fourth paragraph is in the affirmative.

WRECK (INDIAN TROOPSHIP "WARREN HASTINGS.")

*MR. PERCY THORNTON (Clapham): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for India whether similar compensation for the loss of property will be allowed to the officers and crew wrecked in the Royal Indian marine ship *Warren Hastings* as that granted to the troops who were on board when the catastrophe occurred?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR INDIA (Lord GEORGE HAMILTON, Middlesex, Ealing): Compensation is admissible for loss of property by shipwreck, and will be allowed to the officers and men of the Royal Indian marine ship *Warren Hastings.* [*Cheers.*]

*MR. THORNTON: Whereas those most active in saving life suffered the most in loss of property, not having time to attend to such matters, I desire to ask a question regarding a concrete case which I can vouch for, and I believe not to be isolated. Will the hon. Gentleman give consideration to the case of Lieutenant Walter Windham, who was the first man to take a rope over the bow and reach the land, afterwards saving five lives from drowning, and being recommended for the Humane Society's medal by Commander Holland? He has lost all his property which was on the ship.

LORD GEORGE HAMILTON: No doubt the exceptional conduct of Lieutenant Windham will be considered, but I do not think it would entitle him to special compensation for the loss of his property.

*MR. THORNTON: These men have lost everything they had.

CARETAKERS (IRELAND.)

MR JOHN DILLON (Mayo, E.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether he can state the number of tenants who have been turned into caretakers by the seventh section of the Land Law (Ireland) Act, 1887; and, whether he can give an estimate of the number of such tenants who are now in occupation of their holdings as caretakers, and outside all benefit from the Land Law Acts?

MR. GERALD BALFOUR: The number of notices served throughout Ireland under Section 7 of the Act of 1887, between the date of the passing of that Act and December 31, 1896, was 58,626. There are no statistics available showing the proportion of tenants so served who were restored to their holdings either as caretakers or as tenants, nor has the Government any means at its disposal of obtaining reliable information on the subject. I may add that the number of tenants, actually evicted during the ten years ended December 31, 1896, was 14,489, and it may be assumed that in the great majority of the remaining 44,137 cases in which eviction proceedings did not follow the service of notices under Section 7 settlements were arrived at between landlord and tenant, though, as already stated, I have no means of ascertaining whether in these cases the tenants were restored as caretakers or as tenants.

MR. DILLON asked whether, where settlements were arrived at, in all cases the tenants would be shut out of their rights under the Land Act.

MR. GERALD BALFOUR said the position of the tenant in cases of settlement depended upon the agreement between landlord and tenant.

MR. DENIS KILBRIDE (Galway, N.) asked whether, where settlements had been arrived at, the tenants would not become "future tenants" and deprived of the benefit of the Land Act.

MR. GERALD BALFOUR: Not necessarily. There might be an arrangement to secure the continuation of its benefits.

ADMIRALTY CONTRACTS.

SIR HOWARD VINCENT (Sheffield, Central): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Admiralty if, in orders given out by the Admiralty, efforts have been made to insure that all goods ordered shall, as far as possible, be of British and Irish manufacture?

THE SECRETARY TO THE ADMIRALTY (Mr. W. E. MACARTNEY, Antrim, S.): The general principle upon which the Admiralty orders are given is to take goods of British and Irish manufacture in preference to similar goods of foreign manufacture. The cases in which goods of foreign manufacture or origin are taken are extremely few in number, and limited to a certain class of articles only produced abroad or under foreign patents. The Admiralty has been successful in cultivating the manufacture in this country by British firms of some articles which had previously been produced or manufactured only in foreign countries.

Sir HOWARD VINCENT: After that satisfactory answer, may I ask the hon. Gentleman if he takes care not to be ensnared by agents of foreign firms resident in this country?

Mr. SPEAKER: Order, order!

TRAMORE FISHERY PIER.

Mr. P. J. POWER (Waterford, E.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether he will direct an Inquiry to be held at Tramore, county Waterford, to ascertain whether something can be done under Clause 9 or any other clause of the Railways (Ireland) Act of last Session towards building a fishery pier at Tramore?

Mr. GERALD BALFOUR: There is no power under the Railways Act of 1896 to advance any money by way of grant or loan on any pier unless such pier forms part of a railway or of a scheme promoted under that Act. It appears, moreover, from a report received from the Inspectors of Fisheries, that they do not consider Tramore as of sufficient importance, from a fishery point of view, to justify the expenditure of any sum of money, even if such were available for the construction of fishery piers.

IRISH MAILS.

Mr. WILLIAM JOHNSTON (Belfast, S.): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury, as representing the Postmaster General, if he can state the reason why the mails are still conveyed from Downpatrick to Ardglass by car and not by the railway, which was opened on 8th July 1892; and whether, on the expiration of the existing contract, if any, the mails will be conveyed by train between Ardglass and Downpatrick?

The SECRETARY to the TREASURY (Mr. R. W. Hanbury, Preston): The reason for conveying the mails from Downpatrick to Ardglass by car and not by railway is that the mails reach Ardglass by car at 7.35 a.m., while the first train does not arrive there until 9.18 a.m. If, hereafter, the Company should run for their own purposes trains at hours suitable for the mail service, the question of sending the bags by railway can be further considered; but the case is not one in which special expense would be justified in order to secure the running of trains at times when they are not required for ordinary traffic.

MONEY ORDERS (COMMISSION).

Mr. L. R. HOLLAND (Tower Hamlets, Bow and Bromley): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury, as representing the Postmaster General, whether his attention has been called to the hardship which will be inflicted upon members of friendly societies, accustomed to send sick pay to their members and to receive their contributions through the Post Office, by the increased commission charged on money orders of under 20s. in value; and whether he will consider the expediency of reverting to the commission of 2d. on orders under 20s. hitherto charged?

Mr. HANBURY: I must refer my hon. Friend to the answer which I gave on Tuesday last to the hon. Members for South Somerset and the Leominster Division of Herefordshire.

KOREA.

Sir CHARLES DILKE (Gloucester, Forest of Dean): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (1) what is the present position of affairs in Korea; (2) whether the King is still under Russian protection; (3) whether Russian officers are engaged in drilling local troops; and (4) whether the position is consistent with the Russian pledge communicated by China to Her Majesty's Government at the time of the abandonment of Port Hamilton, and afterwards laid before Parliament.

*The UNDER SECRETARY of STATE for FOREIGN AFFAIRS (Mr. G. Curzon, Lancashire, Southport): In answer to the first question, Her Majesty's Consul General has reported that the King left the Russian Legation and removed to his own Palace on February 20th. In answer to the third question, some of the Korean troops are, it is believed, undergoing a course of instruction by Russian officers. And in answer to the fourth question, such a proceeding does not appear to be inconsistent with the assurance given by Russia in 1886, which was a guarantee that in the future she will not take Korean territory.

MR. R. MCKENNA (Monmouth, N): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether he has any information which would confirm or contradict the published reports of a Treaty between Russia and Japan relative to Korea, and particularly as to that alleged term of the Treaty, or Memorandum accompanying the Treaty, whereby Russia and Japan agree to exclude from the territory of Korea all foreign troops other than their own.

*MR. CURZON: Her Majesty's Government have been for some time past aware of the existence of an arrangement between Russia and Japan in regard to Korea. They have not had the text of the agreement, but the version published by the Russian *Official Messenger*, and reproduced by *The Times*, does not appear to bear the construction placed upon it in the Question. It declares the object of the contracting parties to be the removal of foreign troops from Korea; the reference, as the context indicates, being to the guards which Russia and Japan have up to the present date maintained at their respective legations.

BARROW DRAINAGE.

MR. D. SULLIVAN (Westmeath, S.): On behalf of the hon. Member for North Kildare (Mr. C. J. ENGLEDOW), I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland if the disastrous effects of the floods in the River Barrow during the last 12 months has been brought to his notice, when the low-lying portions of many of the towns on its banks were flooded, and the produce of a very large area of the adjoining lands destroyed; and whether he will consider the urgent necessity that exists for the adoption of some scheme for the drainage of that river?

MR. GERALD BALFOUR: Representations of the nature indicated have been made to Government, but I can only repeat what I have already stated on more than one occasion, that the evidence in the matter of the proposed drainage has been carefully looked into, with the result that I am forced to the conclusion that the cost of the work would be largely in excess of the estimate formed by the Allport Commission, and that even if the Treasury were willing to ask Parliament to provide the large sum necessary, it could probably be applied to more useful purposes in Ireland.

KING'S ROYAL RIFLE CORPS (8TH BATTALION).

MR. D. SULLIVAN: On behalf of the hon. Member for North Kildare, (Mr. ENGLEDOW), I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for War whether the Officer commanding the 8th Battalion of the King's Royal Rifle Corps has sent in his resignation; and if so, in the interests of the regiment, will he recommend for the consideration of the Field Marshal Commander-in-Chief the appointment of a Commanding Officer who has formerly served in the Regular Army?

*THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR WAR (Mr. BRODRICK, Surrey, Guildford): The Commanding Officer has resigned. It rests with the Field Marshal Commanding in Ireland to recommend a successor.

SUTTON-IN-ASHFIELD SCHOOL BOARD.

MR. F. A. CHANNING (Northampton, E.): I beg to ask the Vice President of the Committee of Council on Education whether he is aware that the Sutton-in-Ashfield School Board in 1885 made an application for arrears of grants under Section 97 of the Elementary Education Act, 1870; that the Department then replied that, owing to the Circular of 1881, they were unable to pay more than the grant for the then current year, 1885, and the preceding year, 1884; and that after further correspondence the Department received a deputation from the Board, and ultimately allowed the Board the grant for a third year, the year 1883; and whether he will lay the Correspondence and the Minutes of the interview with the deputation, and any other documents in the case, upon the Table of the House?

THE VICE PRESIDENT OF THE COUNCIL (Sir JOHN GORST, Cambridge University): The application of the Sutton-in-Ashfield School Board was made in December, 1884, for the grant for the year ending 29th September, 1884, and for the previous year. The School Board alleged that the accounts for the previous year had not been audited till April 1884. The application for the year ending 29th September, 1883, was twice refused, but after an interview, which took place in April, 1885, and of which no memorandum appears to have been kept, was granted. I can show the hon. Member the correspondence in which the arrears were refused, but there is no record of the reasons for which it was ultimately granted.

MR. CHANNING: May I ask the right hon. Gentleman whether he can state on what grounds the grant was given originally?

SIR J. GORST: No, Sir, I cannot state on what grounds, because the interview took place first in the year 1885, that is 12 years ago, and of that no record appears to have been kept in the office. Therefore I am in the dark as to the reason.

MR. CHANNING: I am not speaking of the interview, but of the refusal by a letter of the Department.

SIR J. GORST: I will show the hon. Member the letter if he wishes; it was a refusal on the ground that it could not be paid.

MR. H. J. WILSON (York, W.R., Holmfirth): Has the right hon. Gentleman any objection to tell the House as well as to show the correspondence?

SIR J. GORST: Not the slightest. I stated the other night that it was declined on the ground that, under the circular of 1881, the grant for 1883 could not be paid, because it was not asked for in time.

MR. CHANNING: If I move for the correspondence, will it be put on the table?

SIR J. GORST: Certainly.

NORTH ATLANTIC LOAD-LINE.

MR. JOHN BAIRD (Glasgow, Central): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade whether representations have been received from various shipowners and from Chambers of Commerce in Philadelphia, Boston, and elsewhere, complaining of the unfair discrimination which the operation of the Load-line Rules gives in favour of the ports of Baltimore, Newport News, and Norfolk for winter loading, and urging that all Atlantic ports north of Cape Hatteras be put on one footing; whether the Board propose to take any steps in this direction; and, whether the Board will furnish as a Parliamentary Paper all the communications which have been received from or sent to shipowners, Register Societies, Chambers of Commerce, Consuls, and others during the past three years on the subject of the winter North Atlantic Load-line?

THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF TRADE (Mr. C.T. RITCHIE, Croydon): Yes, Sir; the Board of Trade have received representations to the effect stated by my hon. Friend, and have carefully considered them. Before approving modifications of the Load-line Rules, the Board of Trade are bound by Statute to have regard to the representations of the several approved load-line authorities, and, in this instance, those representations have not been of such a nature as to enable the Board to take any steps at present. I should have no objection to the presentation of the correspondence, provided the other parties to it agree, and I will communicate with them on the subject.

COLLISIONS AT SEA (FISHING BOATS).

MR. J. W. CROMBIE (Kincardineshire): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade whether he is aware that the requirements of Article 10, b, c, of the Regulations for Preventing Collisions at Sea (1884) have been found impracticable in the case of small fishing boats, and are not complied with; whether the recommendations of the Washington Conference (Article 9) on this subject were, at the request of the Board of Trade, left out of consideration by the Committee of 1890; and whether anything has since been done, or is now being done, to amend these Regulations?

MR. RITCHIE: I am aware that small fishing boats have sometimes experienced difficulty in complying with the requirements of the Regulations hitherto existing. But the recommendations of the Washington Conference, together with other proposals on the subject of fishing vessels' lights, have (with the concurrence of the Powers) been held over pending the settlement of the main code of Rules of the Road at Sea. Now that that code has been settled, no effort will be spared to deal with the subject to which the hon. Member refers, with a view to such amendment of the Regulations as may be found advisable.

MR. GIBSON BOWLES (Lynn Regis): Will the right hon. Gentleman say whether the Board of Trade is likely to arrive at any conclusion as to the fishing vessel regulations?

MR. RITCHIE: I do not think I can add anything more to what I have said. These matters stood over with the general consent until the settlement of the main code had been concluded. That is now agreed upon.

MR. GIBSON BOWLES was understood to ask whether they would see the code of rules before they were proposed to be enforced on the fishing vessels.

MR. RITCHIE: That I cannot say.

QUEEN'S REIGN (COLONIAL TROOPS).

MR. J. F. HOGAN (Tipperary, Mid.): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for War, what arrangements have been made or are in contemplation for the reception and quartering of the Colonial troops visiting England in connection with the celebration of the 60th anniversary of Her Majesty's reign?

*MR. BRODRICK: Arrangements will be made, and are at present under consideration.

AMERICAN MAIL SERVICE.

MR. HOGAN: I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury, as representing the Postmaster General, whether he is aware that the British and Irish mails delivered in New York by the White Star steamer *Adriatic* on 23rd February were 16 days en route; what was the cause of this delay; and whether the Postal Authorities will put a stop to the practice of dispatching letters by steamers that are notoriously unable to satisfy the requirements of a fast mail service?

MR. HANBURY: No, Sir. The English, Scotch, and Irish mails were embarked on board the packet *Adriatic* at Queenstown, at twenty minutes to 1 p.m. on the 11th of February; and the Packet arrived in New York at half-past 3 a.m. on the 22nd, thus occupying less than 11 days on the voyage, and not 16 days as the hon. Member suggests. The cause of the delay which did take place was unusually heavy weather. The *Adriatic* is only used occasionally, when one of the better steamers has to be withdrawn for overhaul. Such withdrawal is expressly provided for in the Mail Contract, and as the Company are fulfilling the terms of their Contract in employing the fastest steamer belonging to them available, the Postmaster General would have no ground for taking the course suggested.

EVICTED TENANTS (IRELAND).

MR. W. ABRAHAM (Cork, N.E.): On behalf of the hon. Member for East Limerick (Mr. J. FINUCANE), I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland (1) whether he is aware that negotiations are proceeding upon the estate of Captain Coote, Mount Coote, county Limerick, which are confidently expected to end in the restoration of the evicted tenants on this property to their homes; (2) if he will cause inquiry to be made into the conduct of Sergeant J. O'Brien, of Kilmallock, who is trying to persuade one of the tenants named O'Connell to sell the goodwill of his holding for £150; and (3) if this police sergeant will be instructed that it is no part of his duty to interfere in any way between evicted tenants and their landlords in the matter of pending settlements?

MR. GERALD BALFOUR: I have no knowledge of any negotiations, as alleged, between the landlord of this estate and the tenants who are out of possession. With regard to the second and third paragraphs, it appears that Sergeant O'Brien, at the request of O'Connell, an evicted tenant, spoke to the agent of the estate in O'Connell's behalf, and the result of the sergeant's mediation was that O'Connell received the sum of £150 for the goodwill of his holding, from which he was evicted upwards of 14 years ago. O'Connell has thanked the sergeant for his good offices and expressed his satisfaction at having this sum of money in his pocket. The sergeant did not exceed his duty in this case; what he did was at the instance of and with the consent of the parties, and by his action he has succeeded in bringing about a settlement which is apparently as satisfactory to all concerned as it is in the interests of peace.

Mr. W. ABRAHAM: Are we to understand that the Constabulary in Ireland are to act as mediators between landlords and evicted tenants in the matter of pending settlements?

Mr. GERALD BALFOUR: No, Sir, that would not naturally be part of the official duty of the constable. But when a constable has succeeded in bringing the parties together, as in this instance, I do not think he ought to be blamed.

JUDICIAL RENTS (IRELAND).

Sir THOMAS LEA (Londonderry, S.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether the Return of Judicial Rents fixed in November last is to be taken as representing the rents fixed by the Sub-Commissioners or as the rents decided on appeal by the Head Commission; if the former, how are the results in those cases where appeals were taken to be known; if the latter, how is the variation in the rents made by the Head Commission to be ascertained; and, in view of the state of feeling in Ulster in regard to the work of the Chief Land Commission, and the fact that newspapers publish the results of their proceedings, he will take steps to allow Members to ascertain accurately what has been the result of the procedure of that Court?

Mr. GERALD BALFOUR: The Return referred to is to be taken as representing rents fixed by the Sub-Commissioners, and not as rents fixed by the Land Commission on appeal. It does not purport to show the variation of Sub-Commission rents made by the Appeal Court. In the annual report of the Land Commission to March, 1896, page 41, such a Return, showing variation, county by county, is given for the year, and this has been the practice followed since 1881. It has not been the practice to show the variation in individual cases in Returns of the Land Commission. The results of individual appeals can be given monthly, but, as before stated, to do so will cause considerable additional trouble and expense, as the information could not be included in the present tables, but must be set forth by adding additional tables to the Returns.

Mr. JOHN MORLEY (Montrose Burghs): I should like to ask the right hon. Gentleman whether there is really any difficulty in securing a report of the results of these appeals? Surely the results are recorded, and there can be no real difficulty in adding the reports of the Sub-Commissioners. Is the right hon. Gentleman aware that there is considerable urgency in Ireland as regards these appeals?

Mr. GERALD BALFOUR: Certainly it would not be impossible, and, if a wish is expressed for them, I will ask the Land Commissioners to make such a Return. I may point out to the right hon. Gentleman, and I think he will appreciate the remark, that the Returns referring to appeals to the Land Commissioners would not have reference to the rents as fixed by the Sub-Commissioners in the same month. It would be probably five or six months afterwards before such Returns could be published; but, if it is pressed for, I will ask the Commissioners to give the information.

INDIAN FAMINE (GODAVERY CANAL).

Mr. R. J. PRICE (Norfolk, E.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for India whether his attention has been drawn to the statement of Sir Arthur Cotton, as published in *The Friend of China*, that the Godavery River might at this moment be pouring rice into the famine districts of the North in immense quantities, at a nominal cost of carriage of one penny a bushel, if only the several pieces of canal in the 1,000 miles between were united, which they might be for the cost of 20 miles of railway; and whether the Indian Government will consider the advisability of shortly undertaking the necessary works?

Lord GEORGE HAMILTON: The Godavery River Navigation Works, to which the hon. Member's Question relates, were carefully considered by the Government of the Central Provinces, the Government of India, and the Secretary of State in Council in 1871, and all these authorities agreed that the works should not be proceeded with. The large expenditure involved would have been out of all proportion, not only to the prospects of traffic, but to the amount of protection from famine which the undertaking might have afforded. There is no reason to believe that the Government of India have any intention of now proceeding with the scheme.

NATIONAL SCHOOL TEACHERS' PENSIONS (IRELAND).

Mr. J. C. FLYNN (Cork, N.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether his attention has been called to a resolution adopted by a committee of the National Teachers' Organisation, in which that body declines to recognise the payment of £10,000 a year to the pension fund for the benefit of future teachers as an adequate compensation for the loss of their share of the school grant; and in view of the general dissatisfaction of the National Teachers, he will represent to the Treasury the necessity of meeting the teachers' claim for the arrears of school grant.

Mr. GERALD BALFOUR: This question is based on a misapprehension of the proposals of the Government. These proposals were explained last Friday by my right hon. Friend the Secretary to the Treasury; and were, I think, of a nature, that will be generally recognised as liberal.

SCOTTISH FISHERY CRUISERS.

Captain PIRIE (Aberdeen, N.): I beg to ask the Lord Advocate whether it would be possible to arrange that the two small cruisers, about to be ordered for the Scottish Fishery Board, shall be built in private yards in order to give Scottish shipbuilders an opportunity to tender for their construction?

Mr. JAMES BRYCE (Aberdeen, S.): I beg to ask the Lord Advocate whether the Secretary for Scotland has yet determined to invite tenders for the two new vessels to be provided for the Scottish Fishery Board for the service of the East Coast, with a view to enabling private firms in the East Coast ports to compete; and, if so, when it is likely that an announcement regarding the sending in of such tenders will be made?

*The **LORD ADVOCATE** (Mr. Graham Murray, Buteshire): It is certainly the intention of the Fishery Board to invite tenders from private firms in the first instance for the larger boat, and no time will be lost in getting specifications prepared and tenders advertised for.

HAMPTON COURT GREEN.

Sir FREDERICK DIXON-HARTLAND (Middlesex, Uxbridge): I beg to ask the First Commissioner of Works whether he is aware that a large number of people, often between 10,000 and 20,000, assemble on Hampton Court Green on Sundays and Bank Holidays, and that absolutely no sanitary arrangements exist there; and whether he will make provision in his Estimates for providing such sanitary arrangements there as may be necessary?

The **FIRST COMMISSIONER of WORKS** (Mr. Akers-Douglas, Kent, St. Augustines): I am prepared to admit that some provision of this kind has become necessary. It is, however, too late now to deal with the matter in regard to the Estimates for 1897-98. I will promise to consider it in connection with the local authorities, with a view to proposing to the Treasury the insertion of a sum on account of the work in the following year's Estimates.

Sir F. DIXON-HARTLAND: Is the right hon. Gentleman prepared to put up some temporary shed for accommodation, because it is very necessary?

Mr. AKERS-DOUGLAS: I should wish to see the local authorities before giving such a pledge, as I am of opinion that some share in any such building should be borne by the locality.

HORSE-BREEDING (IRELAND).

Colonel McCALMONT (Antrim, N.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland (1) whether the terms of reference to the Horse-breeding Commission in Ireland allow of any expression of opinion as to the action and working of the Congested Districts Board; (2) whether about one-fifth of the whole income of the Board and of the £6,000 voted annually by

Parliament in aid of its expenses is being and has been absorbed by their horse-breeding operations, and the greater part spent in the neighbourhood of Dublin; and (3) if the Congested Districts Board misapplies its funds, what remedy has the public or the congested population for whom it holds its funds in trust?

MR. GERALD BALFOUR: As regards the first paragraph of the question of my hon. and gallant Friend, it will be for the Commission to put its own interpretation upon the terms of reference. Of the total expenditure of the Congested Districts Board on all purposes to the 31st March 1896, about one-eighth was spent on horse-breeding operations, and nearly one-half of this was capital expenditure on buildings and the purchase of horses. A comparatively small portion of the outlay on horses is spent in Dublin. The sum of £5,944, provided in the current year's Estimates in aid of the Board's expenses, is appropriated to the payment of the salaries and general administrative expenses of the Board, and the clerical labour employed in connection with the horse-breeding scheme would not absorb more than £200 of this amount. As regards the last paragraph, the accounts of the Board are audited by the Comptroller and Auditor General, who, no doubt, would detect any irregularity in the event of the misapplication of the Board's funds.

MALL (CYCLISTS).

MR. WOOTTON ISAACSON (Tower Hamlets, Stepney): I beg to ask the First Commissioner of Works whether he will consider the advisability of opening this year the two avenues in The Mall, from Buckingham Palace to the Horse Guards, for cyclists, taking into consideration the small amount of traffic there?

MR. AKERS-DOUGLAS: No, Sir. I regret to say that I cannot undertake to do this. Apart from any other considerations, I would point out to my hon. Friend that these avenues are set aside as footpaths, and it would be dangerous to pedestrians and not in accordance with general law to allow cycling traffic on footways. The exclusion of foot passengers from these walks, even if practicable, would not, I feel sure, meet with general approbation.

NAVAL MANŒUVRES (REPORT).

SIR CHARLES DILKE: I beg to ask the First Lord of the Admiralty when the Report on last year's Naval Manœuvres will be published?

THE FIRST LORD OF THE ADMIRALTY (Mr. GOSCHEN, St. George's, Hanover-square): The narrative of the Naval Manœuvres shall be presented to Parliament, as it has been in previous years, when asked for.

CRETE.

MR. BRYCE: I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether Turkish transports, carrying Turkish troops from one part of the coast of Crete to another, have been escorted by British ships of war?

*MR. CURZON: Inquiry has been made of the British Admiral in Crete, and he has replied that no such incident has occurred.

MR. H. LABOUCHERE (Northampton): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (1) whether Her Majesty's Government will instruct by telegraph the Admiral commanding the British Fleet in Cretan waters to send by telegraph a full account of the international bombardment that took place on 22nd February, and a reply to the questions: Whether any Turkish vessel took part in that bombardment; whether the Turkish land forces were firing upon the Cretan position when that bombardment commenced; and how often Turkish troops have issued from Canea since the occupation of that town by the Great Powers, and have, after attacking Cretan forces, returned there; with a view to place this House in full possession of the above facts; and (2) whether the notification that has been issued by the Admirals of the Fleets of the Great Powers in Cretan waters in regard to acts of hostility taking place in sight of the foreign war vessels applies alike to Turkish and Cretan forces. The hon. Member added: Perhaps the right hon. Gentleman will say whether the Government have received the Dispatch from the Great Powers, dated February 24, the text of which appears in *The Daily Chronicle* to-day, and contains full details of the Note.

*Mr. CURZON: With regard to the last question, I feel bound to say that it is not supplementary to that on the Paper. I believe the Dispatch contained in *The Daily Chronicle* has not been received by the Government. In reply to the question on the Paper, the Admiral has been instructed to send a full report of the incidents of February 21st, but from the telegrams hitherto received, the substance of which I have communicated to the House, a sufficiently clear account of the proceedings and an answer to the main points raised in the question appear already to be in our possession. It does not appear from them that any Turkish vessel took part in the bombardment. The second question I cannot answer, because I do not understand to what Turkish land forces, or to what Cretan position, the hon. Member refers. Both parties occupy several positions and have been firing intermittently at each other for a fortnight. No Turkish troops have sallied from Canea since the occupation of that town by the Great Powers, and consequently none have returned there. The instructions to the British Admiral lay stress upon the desirability that each combatant in the island should as far as possible be prevented from aggressive action against the other, and the Admirals of the Allied Squadrons have issued a proclamation to the inhabitants announcing their intention to oppose any hostile act in presence of their ships in any part of the island.

Sir E. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT (Sheffield, Ecclesall): I wish to ask the right hon. Gentleman the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs a question of which I have given him private notice—namely, whether his attention has been called to a Dispatch in *The Daily News* this morning, in which the critical condition of the 3,000 Mussulmans at Candano and Selino is pointed out, and whether the Great Powers have been able to take any effective steps for their relief?

*Mr. CURZON: I have not seen the Dispatch to which my hon. Friend refers, but I believe it is quite right in describing the situation of those beleaguered garrisons as most critical. The information I have to give in answer to the question is this—that a squadron of four ships of the allied fleet has been sent to the towns on the coast where there are beleaguered garrisons or populations. I gather from our telegrams that an international escort is being sent to facilitate the process of relief, that two ships of the squadron have gone to Selino, and that Her Majesty's ship *Scout* has also proceeded to the same destination. At the same time Colonel Vassos has promised the Admirals to send a Greek officer to induce the insurgents to allow the free departure of the garrisons. ["Hear, hear!"]

Sir E. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT: I wish to ask the right hon. Gentleman if Her Majesty's Government has authorised the British Admiral to carry out the advice of the three Consuls that the fleet should land a force of 300 men to protect these beleaguered Mussulmans?

*Mr. CURZON: The Admiral, in concert with his colleagues, has full authority to take such steps as he thinks necessary; but of course he must be a better judge of the circumstances than we are.

Sir E. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT: Then he has got authority to land a force?

*Mr. CURZON: Yes.

BRITISH TROOPS IN INDIA (HEALTH)

Captain PIRIE: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for India if he can give any information as to the precise date of publication of the Report of the Departmental Committee on the health of the British troops in India, which is at present under his consideration?

Lord GEORGE HAMILTON: I have nothing to add to the answers which I have already given to this Question.

ADULTERATION OF FOOD.

Mr. D. KILBRIDE (Galway, N.): I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board whether a Bill dealing with the adulteration of food will be introduced this Session by the Government; and, if so, when; and, whether the Bill will embody the recommendations of the Committee which considered the question of food adulteration, or whether it will deal with an Amendment to the Food and Drugs Act as distinct from the Margarine Act?

MR. CHAPLIN: I am afraid that the only answer I can give to the Question of the hon. Member is this, that the introduction of a Bill dealing with the question of the adulteration of food must depend on the progress of public business. The object and provisions of the Bill will be explained when it is introduced, and I could not enter into any details of the contemplated Measure now, but I may say this—we propose to deal with the matter as a whole.

AGRICULTURAL RATE (IRELAND).

MR. KILBRIDE: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether his attention has been directed to the public statement recently made by the parish priest of Sneem, County Kerry, that the agricultural rates (county cess and poor's rate) in that district are almost ten shillings in the pound valuation; and, whether, in view of this fact, the Government will reconsider the question of affording relief to the occupiers of land in Ireland on similar terms to those given last Session to the English occupier under the Agricultural Rating Act?

MR. GERALD BALFOUR: I am informed that the county cess and poor rate combined in this district amounted last year to nine shillings in the pound on the valuation. I have already stated that it is not the intention of the Government to introduce an Agricultural Land Rating Act for Ireland.

TELEPHONE SYSTEM.

MR. HENNIKER HEATON (Canterbury): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury, as representing the Postmaster General, whether his attention has been called to a letter of the late Postmaster General, Mr. Arnold Morley, to the hon. Member for Canterbury, in which the writer officially laid down the right of the Post Office to take over the telephone system of this country, without conditions in the year 1911; whether he has detailed information as to the enormous development of the National Telephone Company's system and business, of the vast increase in the amount of capital invested therein, and of the claim of the Company to receive ultimately full payment for all such expenditure and investments from the Post Office; whether he is acquainted with the presnt value of the capital invested in the Company's operations; whether he will call for an estimate of the value of such capital in the year 1911; and of the sum which will then be claimed by the Company; and, whether at an early date, he will be able to state (in order to avert misunderstanding and financial trouble) the policy of the Government on the question?

MR. HANBURY: I assume that the letter referred to is the one which was published in *The Times* on 9 July 1894, and which ran as follows:—

> "On the termination of the licence in December 1911, the right of the National Telephone Company to carry on telephone exchange business will cease and determine. All they will have to sell will be their plant, and even this the Government will be under no obligation to buy. Believe me yours very truly, ARNOLD MORLEY."

I have nothing to add to this statement. The Postmaster General has seen from time to time the published accounts of the business of the Company, but he is not aware that the Company have made the claim which the hon. Member describes. As Mr. Arnold Morley's letter shows, no such claim could be admitted by the Government. The Postmaster General is not acquainted with the present value of the capital invested in the Company's operations. It would clearly be useless for him to call for an estimate of its value in 1911. I hope to be able at an early date to state the Government's policy on the general question, but I may say at once that the Government has no intention of buying up the Company's business, and will, therefore, give no notice to purchase, which it has the power to do, on or before 30 June 1897.

MR. HENNIKER HEATON: I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury, as representing the Postmaster General, whether his attention has been called to the increasing dissatisfaction with the telephone service in London, its cost, and the errors and delays by which it is attended; whether the Post Office is making any efforts to supply the public with an independent State service, characterised by greater speed, accuracy, and economy; whether the Post Office authorities have and exercise any power of compelling the National Telephone Company to improve their service in the above respects; and whether he is prepared to grant licences to companies which may be willing to afford a cheaper and better telephone service?

Mr. HANBURY: No, Sir; the Postmaster General has no reason to believe that there is an increasing dissatisfaction with the telephone service in London. The Post Office has not attempted to establish a telephone exchange system in London. The power which the Department possesses is that of licensing fresh companies or of competing itself. The question whether licences should be given is one of policy, and, as I have already said, the policy of the Government will be stated at an early date.

Mr. G. C. T. BARTLEY (Islington, N.) asked whether it was not a fact that the National Telephone Company were unable to supply persons with telephones, and kept them waiting for them sometimes for months?

Mr. HANBURY replied that the Post Office had not had any complaints to that effect.

RAILWAY TRAFFIC (ENGLAND AND IRELAND).

Mr. PATRICK O'BRIEN (Kilkenny): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury, as representing the Postmaster General, whether, seeing that Section 3 of an Act passed in 1855 for improving the postal and passenger communication between England and Ireland takes cognizance of the third class passengers, and fixes the weight of luggage which might be carried by them on Irish mail trains between London and Dublin *viâ* Holyhead, he will draw the attention of the London and North Western Railway Company to the powers vested in him by this Act, with the view of providing accommodation for third class passengers on Irish mail trains and boats between London and Dublin under the new mail contract?

Mr. HANBURY: The Act of 1855 was passed to enable the London and North Western Railway Company, the Chester and Holyhead Railway Company, and the City of Dublin Steam Packet Company to make combined arrangements for the conveyance of mails and passengers between Holyhead and Kingstown or Howth; and the provisions of the Act ceased to have any immediate operative effect when, in 1883, the Government made separate contracts with the railway and with the steam packet companies for the train and boat services respectively. I am not prepared to admit that the third section of the Act gave the Postmaster General any power to call upon the companies to provide third class accommodation for passengers; but there can be no doubt that, whatever the effect of the enactment, it does not apply to the altered circumstances which have existed since 1883. Be that as it may, the Postmaster General will use his good offices with the company in the direction indicated by the hon. Member.

NORTH EASTERN RAILWAY DISPUTE.

Sir EDWARD GOURLEY (Sunderland): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade whether his attention has been called to the disputes which have arisen between the North Eastern Railway Company and certain classes of their employees, and which is creating serious dislocation of the trade of the districts affected; and whether he intends to inquire into the nature of the disputes, with a view to friendly mediation on the part of the Board of Trade?

Mr. RITCHIE: I am happy to state that circumstances have occurred which encourage the hope that the dispute will be settled without any mediation on my part.

CLONGOREY ESTATE (CO. KILDARE).

Mr. J. L. CAREW (Dublin, College Green): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether the agreement between the trustees representing the landlord of the Clongorey Estate, County Kildare, and the tenants thereon for the purchase of their holdings, has yet been carried out; and, if not, what is the cause of the delay?

Mr. GERALD BALFOUR: It does not appear that any applications for advances under the Land Purchase Acts have been received by the Land Commission in respect of the estate referred to in the Question.

TELEPHONE SERVICE (SCOTLAND).

SIR WILLIAM WEDDERBURN (Banffshire): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury, as representing the Postmaster General, whether the Postmaster General has received memorials from Keith and other towns asking for an additional telephone line passing through Huntley, Keith, Dufftown, Craigellachie, and Aberdour; whether he is aware that on the understanding that such line would be constructed exchanges were established at various localities along this route, and that for this object wayleaves along the county roads were granted by the Upper District Committee of the Banffshire County Council; and whether he will endeavour to meet the wishes of the memorialists?

MR. HANBURY: The Postmaster General has received the memorials to which the hon. Member refers. He is not aware that telephone exchanges have been established and wayleaves obtained on the understanding that an additional line passing through Huntley and the other towns mentioned would be constructed, but he will make inquiry on the subject. The exchanges have been established by the National Telephone Company, and the Postmaster General is in communication with that Company as to the arrangements for affording them trunk wire facilities. The claims of the district must, however, be considered in connection with the claims of the country generally, and with due regard to the probable revenue and expenditure.

CAHIR ESTATE (IRELAND).

MAJOR JAMESON (Clare, W.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether, in reference to the Cahir estate disturbances and the strong local feeling against the conduct of Mr. P. O'Dwyer, the Government would consider the advisability of bringing some pressure to bear on Mr. O'Dwyer, who is an excise officer, in order to terminate the dispute and save extra expense to the county?

MR. GERALD BALFOUR: I am aware that outrages have been committed in this district, and that strong local feeling exists against Mr. O'Dwyer, but Mr. O'Dwyer is acting within his legal rights, and the Government cannot intervene, as suggested in the Question.

RABIES.

MR. JAMES BIGWOOD (Middlesex, Brentford): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Agriculture whether his Department is now prepared to adopt the recommendation of the Departmental Committee and make a determined effort to stamp out rabies by exercising directly the powers which they already possess under the Diseases of Animals Act.

*THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF AGRICULTURE (Mr. WALTER LONG, Liverpool, West Derby): There appears to me to be great force in the recommendations of the Committee to which my hon. Friend refers, and I am now engaged in the consideration of the practical questions which the adoption of those recommendations involves. I hope to be in a position to make some further announcement on the subject at no distant date.

MR. BIGWOOD: Within ten or fourteen days?

*MR. LONG: Yes, I hope so.

BEQUEST TO NATION BY LADY WALLACE.

MR. MASSEY-MAINWARING (Finsbury, Central): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether the Hertford House collection of objects of art has been bequeathed to the nation by Lady Wallace, and if he can state whether there are any conditions attached to such bequest; and when he will be able to inform the House what is the decision of the Government with reference to the above collection?

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR, Manchester, E.): This magnificent collection has been bequeathed to the nation, but I am not able to make any further definite statement on the subject now. Perhaps my hon. Friend will put a question at some later day.

CUBA.

MR. PATRICK O'BRIEN: I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury (1) whether the Government have entered into communication with the United States Government, or any of the Great European Powers, concerning the disturbed state of Cuba; and (2) whether the Governments have used, or intend to use, their good offices with the other Great Powers with the object of securing independence for the people of Cuba?

Mr. CURZON: As this is a Foreign Office Question, perhaps the hon. Member will allow me to reply. The answer to the first paragraph of this question is in the negative, and to the second that Her Majesty's Government are not aware of any such intention.

Mr. PATRICK O'BRIEN Are we to understand that although all the Powers are interesting themselves in Crete, they take no notice of the fact that in Cuba——

***Mr. SPEAKER**: Order, order! The hon. Member cannot ask that.

BUCKIE—CONNECTION WITH TRUNK TELEPHONE LINES.

Sir Wm. WEDDERBURN: I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury as representing the Postmaster General, whether the Postmaster General is aware that Buckie is a most important fishing centre; that, including the neighbouring villages, it has a population of about 10,000, mostly employed in the fishing industry; and that it has constant business communications with Fraserburgh and Peterhead; and whether he can make arrangements to connect Buckie with the Trunk Telephone Line?

Mr. HANBURY: The Postmaster General is aware of the importance of Buckie as a fishing centre. He is giving his attentive consideration to the question whether that place can be connected with the Trunk Telephone system, and it will afford him pleasure if he finds it possible to meet the wishes of the inhabitants.

CRETE.

PROCEDURE OF THE HOUSE.

Mr. JOHN DILLON who had on the Paper a Notice to call attention, on going into Committee on the Civil Service Estimates, to the policy of the Government in relation to the insurrection in Crete, and move a Resolution, said: Mr. Speaker, I desire to withdraw the Notice of Motion which stands on the Paper in my name. [*Ministerial cries of* "No" *and laughter.*]

Sir WILLIAM HARCOURT (Monmouthshire, W.): It was my intention to move the Adjournment of the House this afternoon upon the statement made by the Government on Thursday last as to their policy, but it has come to my knowledge since I entered the House that there are technical difficulties in the way of my proceeding. But I gave notice of that intention to the right hon. Gentleman the Leader of the House on Saturday, and I have reason to believe that, so far from objecting to that course, he thinks it desirable that it should be taken. I would, therefore, appeal to the right hon. Gentleman whether I am correct in that view of the case, and whether, if so, the difficulties which have been stated can be removed, so that the question may be raised, and the explanation we desire, and which I understand the Government are also desirous of making, may be made To-morrow.

The FIRST LORD of the TREASURY: As the House will remember, a statement was made by me on Thursday last with regard to the policy of the Government in relation to the present position of affairs in Crete. It would have been in the power of the right hon. Gentleman opposite on Thursday to have moved the Adjournment of the House in order to discuss that statement, and such a course would have been strictly in acordance with the practice of the House. The right hon. Gentleman, however, quite rightly, in my judgment, thought it would be for the general advantage that the discussion should be deferred, and publicly across the floor of this House I said, on the part of the Government, that I was prepared to discuss with him what day would be most convenient for the discussion which I recognised as legitimate. The right hon. Gentleman appealed to me on Saturday that the day that he fixed should be to-day. I did not think it my business to raise any objection, and it was not until I came down to the House that I learned, as the right hon. Gentleman has learned, that there is a technical difficulty in carrying out that object. If, however, the hon. Member for East Mayo carries out his intention of withdrawing his Notice of Motion which he has on the Paper, there will be no objection to raising this Debate tomorrow, and I would suggest that that would probably be the most convenient course. I trust—at any rate, so far as I am concerned, I shall use such influence as I possess in that direction—that no technical difficulty will again arise tomorrow of the nature we have had to-day. I trust that that statement will be not only in accordance with the technical and strict rules of procedure which govern us in this House, but that it will also meet with the general approval of both sides as the best way out of the difficulty. [*Cheers.*]

MR. JAMES LOWTHER (Kent, Thanet): May I ask my right hon. Friend whether it would not be the more convenient course that the House should modify the Standing Order which applies to cases of this kind? ["Hear, hear!"] Because I would remind my right hon. Friend that I for one have a perfect right, if I think fit, to put down a Notice on all fours with the Notice of the hon. Member for Mayo, which would land the House in the same fix as to-day. [*Laughter.*] Therefore, I venture to ask whether it would not be desirable that some modification of this Rule should be adopted, whereby, if in the opinion of the Chair, any question arises which he considers of sufficient urgency, it might be brought forward notwithstanding the interposition of any Motion of the kind referred to. ["Hear, hear!"] If my right hon. Friend likes I will repeat that question tomorrow.

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY: I have no difficulty whatever in giving my right hon. Friend, at all events, a provisional answer to that question. I do not think that the present system of dealing with questions of urgency is a very satisfactory one, and undoubtedly there is a certain inconsistency in leaving the House bound and helpless before the will of one single and irresponsible individual—["hear, hear!" *and laughter*]—as might happen under our existing Rules. ["Hear, hear!"] But I would point out to my right hon. Friend that it would take a considerable time probably to frame a satisfactory substitute for our existing Rule, and, in the meanwhile, we have not in practice found that much difficulty arises, for the good sense of Members on both sides of the House has hitherto in my experience always prevented any such *impasse*, or such insuperable difficulty as in theory undoubtedly might arise at present, although in practice it has not arisen.

MR. JAMES LOWTHER: I am afraid I cannot associate myself with my right hon. Friend's experience as to no inconvenience having occurred in the past. [*Laughter.*] I have known cases of considerable importance—

*MR. SPEAKER: Order, order! There is no question before the House. ["Hear, hear!"]

MR. JAMES LOWTHER: I will, then, ask a question. [*Laughter.*] Do I understand that my right hon. Friend will take steps with a view to the modification of the Rule, because, if not, I must consider whether another object-lesson should not be forthcoming. [*Laughter.*]

MR. DILLON: On a point of order, Mr. Speaker, I would ask whether I am not within my right in withdrawing the Motion now; and whether the object of the Rule is not to prevent a Motion standing in the name of an hon. Member being anticipated by a Motion for the adjournment of the House. If an hon. Member withdraws his Motion, does it not cease to operate? ["Hear, hear!"]

*MR. SPEAKER: The ordinary Rule of the House is, that, when a Motion such as that of the hon. Member has been put on the Paper, it operates, so far as the question of anticipation goes, until it ceases to appear on the Paper. The hon. Gentleman's statement that he intends to withdraw has not, under the existing procedure of the House, any effect.

SIR HENRY FOWLER (Wolverhampton): On a question of order, Mr. Speaker, may I ask whether there is any Standing Order of the House that lays down this rule, or whether it is not the practice that has grown up without any sanction from the House? [*Cheers.*]

*MR. SPEAKER: I think there is the Standing Orders. [*Opposition cheers.*] It is a practice of the House which has been acted upon, and the practice of the House, as the right hon. Gentleman knows, when acted upon for years, is as binding upon the House as a Standing Order. [*Ministerial cheers.*]

MR. DILLON: May I ask whether, if it is only a practice of the House and not a Standing Order, it must depend on precedent and ruling, and has any ruling on the subject been given from the Chair? [*Cries of* "Order!"]

SIR W. HARCOURT: May I ask, with reference to what my right hon. Friend the Member for Thanet has said, whether you, Sir, will take into consideration that this really seems to be a rule which has grown up without the authority of a Standing Order, and how far it had better be modified? I think everyone must feel that, if any such rule were acted upon rigorously, it would reduce the House to impotency, and the great affairs of the nation would have to be transacted elsewhere. [*Cheers.*]

*MR. SPEAKER: Of course, it is obvious that there are occasions when the practice would operate inconveniently. It is not for me to say whether, on the whole, it operates inconveniently or not. Certainly, if the House thinks fit to alter the rule, I shall not offer any advice to the contrary. ["Hear, hear!"]

SIR W. HARCOURT: But, as there is no rule, what course can the House take in the matter? As I understand, the House has never made a rule to this effect. It is simply, as I understand, an accidental judgment, and there is no rule on which the House can act.

*MR. SPEAKER: I think there is more than that. The right hon. Gentleman will find that there is such a consensus of practice upon the point for many years past that it is one of the ordinary Rules of the House, and part of the ordinary procedure of the House. The right hon. Gentleman well knows that many of our rules are not to be found in print or in Standing Orders; and this is a practice which has become part of what I may call the common law of Parliament. To alter a long-continued practice at common law requires a statute; and in the same way an alteration in the common law of Parliament cannot be effected on the sole authority of the Speaker, who is not the maker, but only the administrator, of the laws of this House. [*Cheers.*]

MR. JAMES LOWTHER: What course can the House adopt? Would it be by way of Resolution to move a modification, or by Standing Order?

*MR. SPEAKER: Where you want to alter the practice of the House it would be more convenient to do so by Standing Order. At the same time the House has sometimes acted upon Resolutions. It is a matter for consideration what course should be followed.

MR. JAMES LOWTHER: As far as I am personally concerned, having regard to the assurance that the matter shall receive consideration, I shall not take action in the direction of an object-lesson. [*Laughter and cheers.*]

BRITISH TROOPS IN INDIA (HEALTH).

MAJOR RASCH (Essex, S.E.) gave notice that on the first opportunity he would call attention to the health of the British Army in India, and move a Resolution. [*Cheers.*]

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

VOLUNTARY SCHOOLS BILL.

Considered in Committee.

[The CHAIRMAN of WAYS and MEANS, Mr. J. W. LOWTHER, in the Chair.]

[FIRST DAY.]

Clause 1:—

"(1) For aiding Voluntary Schools there shall be annually paid out of moneys provided by Parliament an aid grant, not exceeding in the aggregate five shillings per scholar for the whole number of scholars in those schools.

"(2) The aid grant shall be distributed by the Education Department to such Voluntary Schools and in such manner and amounts as the Department think best for the purpose of helping necessitous schools and increasing their efficiency, due regard being had to the maintenance of voluntary subscriptions.

"(3) If associations of schools are constituted in such manner in such areas and with such governing bodies representative of the managers as are approved by the Education Department, there shall be allotted to each association while so approved,

"(*a*) a share of the aid grant, to be computed according to the number of scholars in the schools of the association at the rate of five shillings per scholar, or, if the Department fix different rates for town and country schools respectively (which they are hereby empowered to do), then at those rates; and

"(*b*) a corresponding share of any sum which may be available out of the aid grant after distribution has been made to unassociated schools.

"(4) The share so allotted to each such association shall be distributed as aforesaid by the Education Department after consulting the governing body of the association, and in accordance with any scheme prepared by that body which the Department for the time being approve.

"(5) The Education Department may exclude a school from any share of the aid grant which it might otherwise receive if, in the opinion of the Department, it unreasonably refuses or fails to join such an association, but the refusal or failure shall not be deemed unreasonable if the majority of the schools in the association belong to a religious denomination to which the school in question does not itself belong.

"(6) The Education Department may require as a condition of a school receiving a share of the aid grant that the accounts of the receipts and expenditure of the school shall be annually audited in accordance with the regulations of the Department."

"(7) The decision of the Education Department upon any question relating to the distribution or allotment of the aid grant, including the question whether an association is or is not in conformity with this Act, and whether a school is a town or a country school, shall be final."

MR. HERBERT LEWIS (Flint Boroughs) moved, "That clause 1 be postponed." He said he thought they ought to know exactly what would be done with Clause 2, which proposed to repeal the 17s. 6d. limit, before they could properly proceed to consider Clause 1, because any change in Clause 2 would profoundly modify the attitude of the House towards the various points which arose under Clause 1. The Government had departed from the order which had hitherto obtained by providing for the grant first and the machinery of administration next. The framework of the clause was such that it was necessary for the Government to have an opportunity of reconsidering it.

MR. REGINALD McKENNA (Monmouth, N.) seconded the Amendment. In the Resolution on which the Bill was founded there was no definition of the term "voluntary"; and the consequence was that the House had decided that an undefined amount should be allotted to helping undefined schools. Before Clause 1 was considered the Committee ought to have a definition of "Voluntary School."

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY said it was, no doubt, unfortunately the fact that whenever a Bill was brought in, one clause must precede another. [*Laughter.*] There must, too, be something in the second clause which had a bearing on something in the first, and until it was certain what was to be done with the second clause it was impossible to be sure about the first. That was true whatever were the clauses; and, with a few verbal alterations, he could adduce the very same arguments as those of the hon. Member for postponing the second clause. The first was the most important and far-reaching clause in the Bill, and it was in accordance with the practice of draftsmen that it should be put first.

MR. A. H. DYKE ACLAND (York, W.R., Rotherham) said that if the money were granted in the first clause, and the authorities were set up in the second, the Bill would be in harmony with most Acts of Parliament dealing with these questions. Clause 1 was most unusual compared with other education and local government Bills; and this was a local government Bill in part, for it set up compulsory local authorities. The authority should be set up first, and the money grant should be provided for afterwards.

*THE CHAIRMAN OF WAYS AND MEANS: That is not the proposal before the Committee. The proposal is to postpone the first clause to the end of the Bill.

MR. ACLAND said that it was very difficult to raise what was an extremely important point. The grant and the authority were both dealt with in a single clause, which was almost without precedent.

*THE CHAIRMAN OF WAYS AND MEANS: Anyone who introduces a Bill is entitled to draft it as he thinks best. There is no precedent for an Amendment to postpone parts of a clause. That would be a most inconvenient course. Indeed, there is no machinery for working a Bill in that way.

MR. HERBERT LEWIS rose to speak again, when

SIR W. HART DYKE (Kent, Dartford) rose in his place and claimed to move "That the Question be now put." [*Cries of "Oh!" and laughter.*]

*THE CHAIRMAN withheld his assent, and declined then to put the Question. Debate resumed.

MR. LEWIS, continuing, said that the First Lord of the Treasury had only partly answered his arguments, and he should press the Amendment.

MR. D. F. GODDARD (Ipswich) urged that the machinery of this Bill was most important. A number of new bodies were created with delicate and important duties, and everything ought to be clearly defined.

Question put:—The Committee divided, Ayes, 94; Noes, 244.—(Division List, No. 53.)

MR. E. H. PICKERSGILL (Bethnal Green, S.W.) moved at the beginning of the clause to insert the words

> "During the continuance of this Act, that is to say, the period of two years after the thirty-first day of March next, after the passing of this Act."

*THE CHAIRMAN OF WAYS AND MEANS said the Amendment was out of order.

MR. PICKERSGILL said he hoped that before the Chairman finally ruled the Amendment out of order, he would allow him to state very respectfully the grounds upon which he submitted it was not out of order at this point; and might he express his great regret that the communication which he sent to the right hon. Gentleman on Saturday, giving the references to the precedents on which he should rely, had, unfortunately not reached him. The Standing Order passed in 1849 provided that the precise duration of every temporary law should be expressed in a distinct clause at the end of the Bill, but he respectfully submitted that there was a long line of precedents which showed that the Standing Order had been interpreted in this sense—that it was passed by the House of Commons, as lawyers said, *ex abundanti cautela*, that was, to secure that in a matter so all-important as the duration of an Act of Parliament there should be no ambiguity or doubt, but that it did not in any respect preclude that House from deciding and limiting a statute at any point which might be convenient. One of the precedents, which he submitted was on all fours with the present case, occurred no longer ago than last Session. He referred to the Agricultural Lands Rating Bill. When this Bill was considered in Committee, with the Chairman in the chair, the President of the Local Government Board proposed to insert, at the commencement of the Bill—precisely where he proposed to insert the present Amendment—these words:—"During the continuance of this Act—that is to say, for a period of five years." With the substitution of two for five his Amendment was based on that precedent. His second precedent was the Statute passed in 1888 for the Better Protection of Sand Grouse. In that case the duration of the statute was enacted in the principal enacting clause, and there was no distinct clause limiting the duration of the Act. The third precedent was very much like the present Bill, in that it was a grant of public money. The Glebe Lands (Ireland) Act, 1870, the third clause of which said, "It shall be lawful for the Commissioners of Public Works of Ireland, during the continuance of this Act." His last precedent was in 1865—The Locomotives on Roads Act, the first section of which provided that the Act should not come into operation before the 1st of January 1865, and should cease to have effect on the 1st of September 1867. There was also a technical point which he thought he was entitled to take. In this first line it was provided that a grant "shall be annually paid." The words "annually paid" would imply a payment year by year for ever. There would, he submitted, be a repugnancy in first enacting that this grant should be annually paid, and then at the end of the Bill introducing a limit into its duration. He submitted, therefore, that the words introduced by the draughtsman, "annually paid," distinctly raised the duration of the Bill and let in his Amendment.

*THE CHAIRMAN OF WAYS AND MEANS said he thought it rather an unusual thing to argue the point, but as he unfortunately did not receive, prior to coming into the chair, the communication to which the hon. Member had referred, he thought it right he should state his case. It seemed to him it was perfectly clear. There was a Standing Order which said that the precise duration of every temporary law should be expressed in a distinct clause at the end of the Bill. He could not get over that. The hon. Member proposed to make this a temporary law, and he proposed to state the precise duration of it by his Amendment. That being so, it was perfectly clear, according to the order of the House, which he had no authority to set aside even if he wished to do so, that the clause must come in at the end of the Bill. The hon. Member had referred to precedents. He could not answer for those in which he was not concerned, but the hon. Member quoted the precedent of last Session. His attention was not called to the wording of the Standing Order when that Amendment was moved, and he could only say it must have slipped into the Bill, as the lawyers said, *per incuriam.* [*Laughter.*] He was not then so familiar with the Standing Orders as he had since become, and probably if the proposal were made again from any quarter of the House, it would not be admitted. He felt obliged to rule the Amendment out of order.

Sir HENRY FOWLER (Wolverhampton, E.) presumed the Chairman would not rule the Amendment out of order if it were proposed in the form of a new clause?

*The CHAIRMAN of WAYS and MEANS said certainly not. It would probably be in order as a new clause at the end of the Bill. The Amendments in the names of the hon. Member for Carnarvon (Mr. Lloyd-George)—to leave out the words "For aiding," and to insert the words, "in order to establish a fund out of which the Education Department may aid necessitous"—and the hon. Member for West Derbyshire (Mr. Herbert Roberts)—to leave out the words "For aiding," and to insert the words "To necessitous"—appeared to be precisely the same as that standing in the name of the hon. Member for the South Molton Division (Mr. Lambert). The two hon. Members first mentioned had very ingeniously attempted to raise the question before the proper time, he therefore proposed to call upon the hon. Member for South Molton. The Amendment of the hon. Member for Bethnal Green ought properly to be raised on line 12, subsection 2. The Amendment immediately following to leave out "aiding" and insert "supplementing voluntary subscriptions constituted towards," and the Amendment of the hon. Member below the Gangway ought to come in on line 13.

*Mr. GEORGE LAMBERT (Devon, South Molton) moved, after the word "Aiding" to insert the word "necessitous." He said it seemed to him an extraordinary thing that the grant of public money about to be made to Voluntary Schools should not be restricted to necessitous schools, for the reason, that if they were not necessitous he did not see why they wanted money. He could point to many instances where Voluntary Schools were in an extremely flourishing condition, schools which did not require any grant whatever, in addition to the annual and fee grant, schools that were altogether outside anything like a condition requiring an extraordinary grant such as the Bill proposed for the benefit and efficiency of education. There was only one reference in the Bill to the case of necessitous schools, the aid grant was to be distributed in manner and amount—

> "as the Department think best, for the purpose of helping necessitous schools and increasing their efficiency."

It was important to notice that it was impossible for the Education Department to distribute or exercise efficient control over the distribution of this grant to the various schools. In the Debate on the Education Bill of last year the Vice President of the Council said it was impossible for the Central Department to discriminate between schools and schools, that it was impossible for that body to make selection of those schools that really required aid, that could only be done by local authorities. That being so, the Education Department was precluded entirely according to the statement of the right hon. Gentleman from the ability to discriminate as to schools being necessitous or not. As he understood the Bill the Education Department would have no power whatever to withhold money from an association provided that the association was constituted in a manner of which the Department approved. Suppose 100 schools in an association, 75 being non-necessitous and not requiring aid, and 25 necessitous. If the association did distribute the money according to the needs of the schools, then the necessitous schools would receive at the rate of £1 a head of scholars, and the 75 non-necessitous schools would get nothing. If that was to be the case, what was the use of inserting in the Bill an annual grant at the rate of 5s. per scholar. It seemed to him, it would be a waste of public money to put into the hands of an association a grant they would have to distribute among schools necessitous or not, and there would be no security for economy. In several districts, and in such a constituency as South Molton, where there were 47 Voluntary Schools and 31 Board Schools, if the grant went to all Voluntary Schools, non-necessitous as well as necessitous, there would be very great jealousy on the part of the 31 schools getting nothing at all. School Boards might be quite willing that necessitous schools should secure the 5s. grant, but there would be a strong sense of the injustice of the proceeding if non-necessitous schools were relieved while they received no assistance. He could give many instances of the flourishing condition of Voluntary Schools. Some of them received very few subscriptions, and according to the latest Return there were 1,061 Voluntary Schools with no subscribers. If that was so it proved that these schools were in a flourishing condition, for if they were not their friends would rally round and subscribe for their assistance. Then there were nearly 5,000 schools having subscriptions of less than 5s., and there the same argument applied; if these schools were necessitous then the friends of the Church of England or other schools would increase their subscriptions. In larger schools, having the largest number of scholars, there were the smallest subscriptions, the subscriptions to Voluntary Schools in the Lancashire boroughs averaged only 3s. 2½d. per head. If his Amendment were carried and only necessitous schools were aided, there would be something like half this money saved, and he regarded that as a very important matter indeed. The House had been told by the Secretary for the Colonies the other day, that the Government were pledged, and if only reasonable time were given them they would deal with Board Schools. By this proposal the Government would have money as well as time, for according to the best calculation he could make, a very considerable sum would be saved for the assistance of other than non-necessitous Voluntary Schools.

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY said there were one or two statements made by the hon. Gentleman which might, under different circumstances, call for some comment, as indeed they excited considerable surprise in the minds of those who heard them. He laid down the proposition, that where subscriptions were small, schools were more flourishing.

MR. LAMBERT said they ought to be.

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY said that was an educational and financial paradox the hon. Gentleman would find it hard to sustain in argument. The hon. Gentleman went on to say that his right hon. Friend the Vice President of the Council, said the Education Department had not the means of determining whether Voluntary Schools were necessitous or not, but inasmuch as he proposed by his Amendment to confine the grant to necessitous schools it seemed an odd way to recommend it, to say there was no way by which necessitous schools could be discovered. But he passed by this as being part of the outworks of the hon. Gentleman's position, and came to the citadel or central strength of the proposal. The hon. Gentleman wished to limit the amount of the grant which would be given to Voluntary Schools, and wishing to do that he had set to work in exactly the right way to do it. No doubt there were a certain number of Voluntary Schools which could not be described as necessitous, and if they were excluded from all claim to it the total amount of the grant would be diminished to that extent. Upon this the Government joined issue with the hon. Gentleman, he wished to diminish the amount of money to relieve the necessities of Voluntary Schools, the Government desired to make it even greater if possible. This being the fundamental difference of opinion, he, thinking that the grant of 5s. per head for children in necessitous schools would be sufficient, while the Government did not, there being this broad difference of opinion, it was hardly possible to carry on the argument with profit. If the hon. Member however would consider the amount thought absolutely necessary for education in Board Schools, and the amount Voluntary Schools had the power to spend, he should come to the conclusion to which the Government had already arrived, that this round sum of £600,000 odd was nothing too large for the needs of the schools which would receive the benefit of the grant. The hon. Gentleman said School Boards would feel a great sense of injustice and ill-usage if Voluntary Schools in districts which needed nothing received grants from the public funds. He was as anxious as the hon. Member that none of this money should go to Voluntary Schools that did not require it, but this was not the part of the Bill where this point should be raised. The Committee were now discussing the total sum to be applied, and he felt bound to oppose an Amendment which proposed to dimish that amount.

MR. R. B. HALDANE (Haddingtonshire) remarked that the right hon. Gentleman had assured them on one point which arose in connection with this Amendment, and that was as to the purpose of the Bill, which, the right hon. Gentleman said, was to aid those Voluntary Schools which were necessitous. If that were so he could not help thinking that, as a matter of clearness and convenience, and perhaps as a matter of substance, it would be well that this Amendment should be accepted. The Chairman had ruled that they could not re-draft section one so as to enable them to discuss the machinery—the hand which was to be kept over the machinery—of this grant until they came to that part of the clause. That being so, one did not like to start the commencement of the Section with the words as to aiding Voluntary Schools. They had it now from the First Lord that the purpose of the Bill was to aid necessitous Voluntary Schools, and why should not that purpose be expressed in the very initial words? It looked as if the draftsman of the Bill had further and ulterior purposes than that of aiding necessitous schools, and as if the Bill were meant to be a fulfilment of those very wide promises which were given in the course of the discussion in the country to the supporters of Voluntary Schools—not merely "necessitous," but Voluntary Schools generally—that some special consideration would be given to them by the Government which had received great support from them at the time of the General Election. The words "for aiding Voluntary Schools," would seem to have reference rather to this promise than the promise expressed in the Bill. He could not see why the Amendment should not be accepted so as to make the clause run "for aiding necessitous Voluntary Schools." Then at the end of the clause they could introduce the limiting words they wished, and could make provision as they went on, which would render clear what was intended. He was confirmed in that view by the extraordinary language which had been used in the drafting of Sub-Section 2:—

> "The aid grant shall be distributed by the Education Department to such Voluntary Schools and in such manner and amounts as the Department think best for the purpose of helping necessitous schools."

Surely that was extraordinary language in which to instruct the Department to help necessitous schools. It looked as if the purpose were to enable the Department to grant money to the richer Voluntary Schools on terms that they should send the poorer scholars to necessitous schools. That could not be the purpose of the clause, and he thought there was a great deal to be said in favour of making the governing words of the Bill quite clear at the very commencement.

Mr. LLOYD-GEORGE (Carnarvon Boroughs) understood there was a perfect agreement that the money was to be appropriated entirely to the relief of Voluntary Schools which were necessitous. If that were so why should not the money be paid in proportion to the necessities of these schools? The Amendment proposed that the money should be paid to the necessitous Voluntary Schools.

The FIRST LORD of the TREASURY: In proportion to their necessities? Is that what it means?

Mr. LLOYD-GEORGE said that might come afterwards. What the right hon. Gentleman proposed, however, was not that the schools should be subsidised in proportion to their necessities, but in proportion to the measure of the prosperity of their neighbours. If there were half-a-dozen schools in a district, five not being necessitous and the sixth being really necessitous, then they would pay that necessitous school, not in proportion to its real need, but in proportion to the amount of prosperity of the other five schools. That was a principle that had been incorporated in no other Act of Parliament, and was one which was absolutely indefensible. He objected to the Government's proposal on another ground, namely, that it treated Voluntary Schools unfairly. Something had been said about necessitous Board Schools. Necessitous Board Schools were to be subsided. Were they to be subsidised in proportion to the number of scholars in School Boards where there was no need for an aid grant? If not, why should there be a distinction drawn between Board Schools and Voluntary Schools in this respect? They should subsidise both in proportion to their needs. The only argument which had been adduced in support of this proposal was that it placed Board Schools and Voluntary Schools practically on the same basis, and that it enabled Voluntary Schools to compete with Board Schools. But he would point out to the Committee that in several counties in North Wales the result of this proposal, if carried, would be that, by giving 5s. per child in average attendance at Voluntary Schools, they would be paying more to Voluntary Schools than to Board Schools—while the income of the Voluntary Schools would be greater than that of the Board Schools—by something like 2s. 6d. per child. That was to say, that in these School Board districts the people would be penalised for their great sacrifices on behalf of education. What the Government were going to do by their proposal was to give this 5s. per head indiscriminately, whether the schools were necessitous or not. [*Ministerial cries of "No!"*] Could hon. Gentlemen opposite point to a single provision in the Bill which would enable the Education Department to enforce the provision which was made subsequently, that this money should go to the pocket of necessitous schools alone. There was absolutely no provision of any sort or kind which would insure this. There was a sort of indication of the intention of the Government that the money should go to necessitous schools, but the whole clause was very loosely worded, and, unless at the very outset they confined the benefit of this clause to the necessitous Voluntary Schools alone, there was nothing that would enable the Department to compel these associations afterwards to limit the amount of the grant and subsidy to such schools. For that reason he protested strongly against the clause in its present form.

Mr. SYDNEY BUXTON (Tower Hamlets, Poplar) was glad to hear the First Lord of the Treasury say that it was intended that this money, so far as it went, was to be applied to the needs of the necessitous schools.

The FIRST LORD of the TREASURY: I have said so in every speech I have made.

Mr. BUXTON said it was because the Opposition were anxious that that should be the principle of the Bill, that they desired the adoption of this Amendment, so that the exact purpose of the Bill might be clearly defined. It ought to be stated at the very commencement of the Bill that the money which was to be given was to go to the necessitous Voluntary Schools, and the amount to be so given ought to be based on the existing number of necessitous schools. He, for one, thought there would be great difficulty thrown on the Department and upon these associations in arriving at the fact as to what was or was not a necessitous school. The Government themselves stated that they were able to discover this, and that being so the basis on which this Bill ought to be placed was not that it should go forth to the public that there was to be 5s. for all the children in average attendance at the Voluntary Schools, but that the money was to be devoted simply and solely to the necessitous Voluntary Schools. Unless some such Amendment as this were accepted, and unless they took steps to discover the necessitous schools, and then gave them a grant in aid of the children in average attendance, they would have great inequalities as between school and school, and district and district.

Sir HENRY FOWLER submitted that, if the word "necessitous" did not precede the words "Voluntary Schools," there would be no limit to the aid intended to be given. The First Lord of the Treasury, in moving the Second Reading of the Bill, explained that it was not meant that 5s. per head should be given to every child, but the 5s. was mentioned to ascertain the gross total to be divided according to certain rules. On that side of the House they objected to the mode of distribution. They did not believe it would secure what the clause intended—that necessitous schools should be helped and non-necessitous should not. They desired that the object of Parliament in voting the money should be clearly stated—that it was to aid necessitous Voluntary Schools only. The Government had said all along that their only object was to help the necessitous schools and not wealthy schools. If they were sincere they would accept this Amendment, which sought to secure the real intent of the Bill by limiting the aid grant to schools that really needed assistance.

The FIRST LORD of the TREASURY said there was no difference between the right hon. Gentleman and the Government as to the schools to which the money should go. The difference was as to drafting. The Government thought the amount of money to be given should first be determined, and that the machinery for distribution should be dealt with subsequently.

MR. ELLIS GRIFFITH (Anglesey) insisted that the grant should be restricted to "necessitous Voluntary Schools," and that this should be made clear. Voluntary Schools generally were only regarded as a basis of calculation as to how much the aid grant would come to in the aggregate. The insertion of the word "necessitous" before "Voluntary Schools" would make the meaning of the Bill more clear to the country.

MR. J. H. YOXALL (Nottingham, W.) also agreed that the grant should be clearly restricted to necessitous schools, otherwise the Education Department would have pressure brought upon it by the supporters of schools that were not necessitous that these schools should participate in the grant. He did not support the insertion of the word "necessitous" to restrict the gross amount of the grant. Really necessitous schools should have more than 5s. per child. He would prefer that the 5s. which wealthy schools might claim should go to necessitous schools, so that these might have 10s. per child and the wealthy schools nothing. If the word "necessitous" did not precede "Voluntary Schools," there would be no guarantee that the schools which most needed aid would receive it.

MR. SAMUEL EVANS (Glamorgan, Mid.) supported the Amendment, saying that if the object of the Bill was to assist necessitous Voluntary Schools the words referred to, as they stood, misstated that object. If the object of the Bill was to help necessitous schools only, why should the Government object to that being made clear? The object of the Bill of last year was "to assist public elementary schools requiring special aid." If the Government would not agree to the words of the Amendment, perhaps they would agree to the insertion of similar words to these. If not, those words were used as a blind, and they were so misleading as to be dishonest and almost fraudulent. The Government had £610,000 which they wished to give to the Voluntary Schools. Why did they not state their purpose plainly? What was the reason of their including in their calculations the number of scholars in schools that were not necessitous? The fact was, that the Government were afraid to tell the country frankly that they were giving, not 5s. per child, but, in many cases 10s., and even 15s.

MR. G. C. T. BARTLEY (Islington, N.) thought that the insertion of the word "necessitous" would frustrate the object of the Bill, for there were many schools which were not absolutely necessitous, but nearly so, and to which the grant ought to be given, in order that they might be made more efficient. The Amendment would exclude such schools from the benefit of the grant.

SIR FRANK LOCKWOOD (York) said that the observations of the hon. Member for Islington had thrown a flood of light upon the intentions of the supporters of the Bill. The hon. Member said frankly, "Do not put in the word 'necessitous,' because, if you do, it will be acted upon, and necessitous schools only will receive this relief," which, however, was the thing which the Government said that they wished.

MR. BARTLEY: I said nothing of the kind.

SIR FRANK LOCKWOOD: I understood the hon. Member to plead on behalf of schools that were not necessitous.

MR. BARTLEY: I said that they wanted money in order that they might be made efficient.

SIR FRANK LOCKWOOD: Quite so. The hon. Member said, "Do not put in the word 'necessitous,' because there are many schools which are not necessitous, but nearly so." But the Leader of the House had said that the object of the Bill was to relieve schools that were necessitous, and the hon. Member had based his opposition to the Amendment upon the ground that it would prevent schools which, in fact, were not necessitous from receiving relief. The hon. Member's contribution to the Debate showed more than anything else that had been said how necessary this Amendment was.

MR. McKENNA pointed out that the third sub-section of the Clause said that associations of schools were to receive a share of the aid grants, "according to the number of scholars in the schools of the association, at the rate of 5s. per scholar." But among those schools there might be no school which was necessitous, and yet if the Amendment were rejected the Education Department would not be able to refuse the grant to the association. The Amendment was actually necessary, in order to protect the Education Department in carrying out what the Government affirmed to be the object of the Measure.

Question put, "That the word 'necessitous' be there inserted."

The Committee divided: Ayes, 104; Noes, 276.—(Division List, No. 54.)

Mr. SAMUEL EVANS moved to leave out the word "voluntary," in order to insert the words "sectarian and British." He said his object in asking the Committee to adopt this Amendment was for the sake of accurate statement. "Voluntary" was not an accurate description, one authority on that point being the right hon. Member for Bodmin, who preferred to call them "denominational" schools. He quoted from a Return of the county of Glamorgan, showing that at Aberavon the amount per head contributed was 1s. 4d. and 1s. 5½d.; in other schools the amount was 2s. 10¼d., 11d., 2s. 4d., 1s. 11¼d., and at St. David's, Cardiff, the voluntary contribution was a halfpenny per child. In another school it was 8½d., 4½d., and in the Swansea higher grade schools the voluntary contributions amounted to 2d. per head. The Government had therefore no right to call these schools "voluntary."

The FIRST LORD of the TREASURY hoped that the hon. Member would not press the Amendment, which was purely verbal. The Amendment might have been substantial if it had been moved in its original form, but as altered it was wholly indefensible. The suggested alteration in phraseology would not be an improvement upon that contained in the Bill. The meaning of the word "voluntary" was perfectly well understood, and its scope was well defined in the Bill. [*Cheers.*]

***Mr. JOSEPH A. PEASE** (Northumberland, Tyneside) asked the right hon. Gentleman to omit the word "voluntary" and insert "other than Board Schools." There was great objection to the use of the word "voluntary," owing to the very large number of schools which received no subscription whatever. As a matter of fact, there were 1,061 Voluntary Schools which had no subscriptions, 674 had less than 1s. a child, 1,095 had less than 2s. 6d. per child and more than 1s. per child, and 1,967 had between 2s. 6d. and 5s. per child. These figures indicated that 4,797 out of the 14,155 schools had less than 5s., and it was absurd to speak of these schools as Voluntary, when practically the whole cost of many of them was borne by the State.

Mr. T. LOUGH (Islington, W.) thought that the use of the word "voluntary" was a most objectionable one for the purposes of the Government. It was difficult to tell exactly what was the meaning of the word, though everyone vaguely thought that he knew what the word meant. In an Act of Parliament, however, they ought to aim at accuracy of definition. Was there any precedent in educational legislation for the use of the word "voluntary." He did not think there was, and in his judgment the Government were dragging in a new word. Why not make use of the word "denominational"? It was much better than "voluntary." He confessed that he did not altogether like the suggested word "sectarian."

Mr. ACLAND thought the word "voluntary" was not a proper definition of the class of schools, and did not agree that the objection raised to its use in the clause was a frivolous one. He quoted a statement made by the Duke of Devonshire 20 years ago, the effect of which was to show that thenceforward the word "voluntary" had no proper meaning. He would ask the right hon. Gentleman whether he had any particular objection to inserting the words "not provided by a School Board" after the word "school," instead of retaining the word "voluntary." He thought that would really meet the case.

The FIRST LORD of the TREASURY said that, out of courtesy to the right hon. Gentleman, he would say a few words. What the draughtsman of the Bill had done was to use in the Bill itself the phrase which was most familiar and most easily understood by all who had to deal with these matters. ["Hear, hear!"] He had in the definition clause given a perfectly clear and precise definition of what that phrase meant. A more usual or more convenient course he could hardly imagine, and the whole purpose of the definition clause would be destroyed if they were to take out of that clause a long periphrasis, and shovel it bodily into the Bill. It was far more convenient to leave the Bill as it was; it would read far more smoothly, and there could be no possible doubt as to what the Bill meant.

Mr. REES DAVIES (Pembrokeshire) said he strongly objected to the term "voluntary." They did not think that the term was correct as applied to these schools. He was at a loss to understand why the Government would not adopt the words "public elementary schools not provided by a School Board." He thought the attitude of the Government would not tend to accelerate progress.

Mr. ABEL THOMAS (Carmarthen, E.) said there were quite a thousand of these schools which received no voluntary subscriptions at all, but nine people out of ten believed that the word "voluntary" was intended to apply to Voluntary Schools and nothing else. He did not care whether it was denominational or sectarian, but what possible objection could there be to the words "other than Board Schools?" Unless it was with the intention of misleading people in the country, there could be no reason for retaining the word "voluntary."

Mr. ERNEST GRAY (West Ham, N.) said that if the Amendment were adopted some 252,000 children would be deprived of the benefits of these grants. There were schools still classed as Voluntary Schools which were distinctly set out in Departmental returns as British, undenominational and other schools.

Mr. SAMUEL EVANS said the Amendment suggested the words "sectarian and British."

Mr. GRAY thought the Amendment was perhaps useful as an indication of the spirit in which the Bill was being opposed. [*Cheers and cries of* "Oh!"] A very large proportion of these thousand schools which had been referred to were heavily endowed. He had one in mind—a small school of about 54 children in Wiltshire, which was endowed to the extent of 92s. odd per child. He quite agreed that such schools should be without voluntary subscriptions; yet, on the other hand, the endowment should be put against the subscription. The arguments brought forward in favour of the Amendment were of a frivolous character.

Mr. HUMPHREYS-OWEN (Montgomery) said the phrase "Voluntary Schools" was a popular one which no doubt two generations ago represented an actual fact, but that was the case no longer. These schools were in no true sense of the word "voluntary." A great number of them only existed because of the threat of a School Board. The parents would all be glad to have some control over the schools, but when it was proposed the clerical party threatened them with all sorts of pains and penalties, with 1s. in the pound rates, and so forth. To call such schools voluntary was an absurd misnomer. It was notorious that many railway companies and limited companies subscribed to so-called Voluntary Schools with the object of lessening the rates upon their shareholders, but to suggest that they were influenced in such action by any desire to assist sectarian teaching would be to impute to them the grossest malversation of their funds. He would point out, moreover, that a school which used its endowments to save the rates or the voluntary subscribers was committing a breach of trust, these endowments having been intended for the improvement of education. They were asked for the first time to give a new meaning to the word "voluntary."

Sir FRANK LOCKWOOD asked the Chairman whether the first Amendment that would be put to the Committee would be to leave out the word "voluntary."

*The CHAIRMAN of WAYS and MEANS: Yes.

Sir FRANK LOCKWOOD said in that case he should certainly vote for the Amendment, although he did not think he could adopt the words suggested by his hon. and learned Friend.

Mr. McKENNA said he was in the same position as his hon. and learned Friend. No satisfactory reason had been given why words of definition should not be here inserted, and if they were he thought it would actually save time.

Sir BENJAMIN BAKER (Portsmouth) pointed out that though the word "voluntary" was used in the House to apply to Church Schools, it was not so used outside. He thought its application to Church Schools was inaccurate.

*Mr. R. W. PERKS (Lincolnshire, Louth) thought the Government should give some explanation why they had adopted "voluntary" instead of the more accurate and legal word "denominational?"

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY: British schools are not denominational.

*MR. PERKS said that in 8,000 parishes there was no choice for parents but these denominational schools, and it was desirable that they should be designated what they were—sectarian establishments.

MR. SAMUEL EVANS said that no reason had been advanced why those schools should not be called by their proper name. The hon. Member for North West Ham, who had described the Amendment as frivolous, had not used a single argument against the word "voluntary." There was no excuse for the use of such a word in the Bill. He would suggest that instead of "voluntary" the words "elementary schools other than Board Schools" should be used; and he certainly intended to ask the sense of the Committee as to whether "voluntary" should stand part of the clause.

*MR. F. A. CHANNING (Northampton, E.) said it had been admitted by several speakers on the Government side of the House during the previous Debates that the word "voluntary" was not suitable as a description of the schools to which the Bill applied. He thought the words "public elementary schools," which he had placed on the Paper in the next Amendment, if coupled with "other than schools provided by School Boards," would be a more accurate designation of the schools.

MR. GODDARD said that an examination of the income of those so-called Voluntary Schools would show how misleading the word "voluntary" was in such a connection. The total rate of income per scholar in the Church of England schools was £1 18s. 10¾d.; but the only part of that sum derived from voluntary subscriptions was 6s. 9¾d. How could such schools be called Voluntary Schools? Again, in the case of the Wesleyan schools, the total rate of income was £1 17s. 7d. per scholar, while the voluntary subscriptions were merely 3s. In the Roman Catholic schools the total rate of income was £1 16s. 10½d. per scholar, and the voluntary contributions 8s. In the British schools the total rate of income was £2 1s. per scholar, and the voluntary contributions 6s. 6d. To call these schools "voluntary" was therefore a misnomer, and yet the Government proposed to perpetuate the term in a Statute that would make the schools less and less Voluntary Schools.

*MR. CARVELL WILLIAMS (Notts, Mansfield) said he could understand why the Government were sticklers for the term "voluntary" rather than "denominational" or "sectarian." The use of one or other of the latter terms would be calling things by their right names, and that would not commend itself to the promoters of the Bill. He would suggest that the object of the supporters of the Amendment could be better accomplished by a change in the definition clause, and he had given notice of the following Amendment to that clause:—

> Clause 4, page 2, line 39, after "Board" insert "and which are maintained by voluntary subscriptions to the extent provided for by this Act."

If that principle were adopted the schools would really be Voluntary Schools, and would be properly so-called in the Bill.

Question put, "That the word 'voluntary' stand part of the Clause."

The Committee divided:—Ayes, 275; Noes, 102.—(Division List, No. 55.)

MR. ELLIS GRIFFITH proposed, after the word "schools" to insert the words "in existence at the passing of this Act." He explained that the purpose of the Amendment was to limit the operation of the Bill to such Voluntary Schools as were in existence at the time of the passing of the Act. In the case of new Voluntary Schools the 5s. grant would be an unfair premium given to them, whereas he urged that Voluntary Schools and the Board Schools ought, as far as possible, to be given equal chances. ["Hear, hear!"] Already he had heard, since the Bill was introduced, that there were districts in the country which delayed having a School Board, because otherwise they would lose the 5s. grant under the Bill. That was tantamount to putting a premium on the Voluntary Schools. He hoped the Amendment would be accepted.

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY said he could not accept the Amendment. Voluntary Schools could not be established unless the money was provided for building and maintaining them—["hear, hear"]—and even after this 5s. grant was made, those who were interested in the development of the voluntary system would find it a matter of great difficulty to keep that system in pace with the growth of the population in new districts in the country. [" Hear, hear!"] So far as equality of the two systems was concerned, the Voluntary system was at present enormously handicapped, and it would be only slightly relieved by the present Bill. In the circumstances he hoped the hon. Member would not think it necessary to press the Amendment.

Mr. ACLAND said he understood the right hon. Gentleman to say that when a new Voluntary School was set up in a district it would receive 5s. per head per child in average attendance as proposed by this clause.

The FIRST LORD of the TREASURY: The new Voluntary Schools will be just like the old ones. [*Cheers.*]

Mr. ACLAND said that the answer of the right hon. Gentleman was remarkable. If the new schools were to be like the old, it meant that when the choice lay between building a Board School or a Voluntary School, the latter would be recommended by the hope of getting the 5s. grant.

The FIRST LORD of the TREASURY: Of course it will not be in the power of those who wish to start a new Voluntary School to foresee what the Education Department will do in regard to the grant.

Mr. ACLAND pointed out that though the extra grant earned by the new Voluntary School might not be paid to that school, it would be paid to some other in the same association. Up till now, Board and Voluntary Schools had been on an equality. [*Cries of* " No! "] When there had been a desire to start a Voluntary School, the School Board of the district had always been only too willing. But if this money was to be used as a building grant— [*Cries of* " No! "] Well, since building grants had ceased a Voluntary School had always meant a school built by volunteers. Was that to be the case in the future? Why should the new schools be brought in at all?

Mr. HUMPHREYS-OWEN said that there was nothing to prevent the grant from being applied as a building grant. But it was not necessary to raise a building fund for the establishment of a Voluntary School. A school, however, might be rented. There was a case in his own constituency where a building had been employed as a school to provide accommodation in an outlying district. The building had been condemned by the Department, but it could be acquired and put in order for a small sum. The parishioners would like a School Board, but that would be extremely obnoxious to the clergyman and other Churchmen, although the parents of every single child attending the school were Nonconformists. The inequality had all along been in favour of Church schools, and this provision really put a premium on the establishment of Voluntary Schools.

Mr. J. A. PEASE pointed out that in a growing district, if this Amendment were not accepted, there would be an inducement to the ratepayers to place all new schools under Voluntary management. This would exclude popular control and discourage the parents from taking an interest in education.

Mr. REES DAVIES said that the argument generally employed by those asking for subscriptions to Voluntary Schools was, "Do something to keep them up and save us from the rates." The whole object was to avoid the School Board, and, if the Bill passed in its present form, not only would the existing Voluntary Schools receive a great stimulus, but a great incentive would be given to the establishment of other Voluntary Schools.

Mr. BUXTON urged that the Committee was entitled to some answer from the First Lord of the Treasury. Under one of these associations new schools accommodating, say, 1,000 children might be built. That would mean that the association would earn an extra grant of £250 a year. The necessitous schools were already amply provided for under the Bill. What would be done with the additional £250 a year?

The FIRST LORD of the TREASURY said that the hon. Gentleman had misunderstood his interruption. The Government had always held that the grant ought to be made variable and elastic, in proportion to the number of schools to be dealt with. It was conceivable that the number of Voluntary Schools might diminish, and that the necessities of those remaining would at the same time increase. In that case this grant would be insufficient. It was also conceivable that the number of schools would increase, and that the new schools would be so rich that the increase in the amount given by the Exchequer would be more or less wasted. But, broadly speaking, there was not a better plan for varying the lump sum to be given each year than by making it proportionate to the number of schools. [*Cheers.*] No one could foresee whether the new schools to be erected would be necessitous or not. But the fears expressed lest the ratepayers should, in order to get an additional £250 a year, build schools at a cost to themselves of £15,000 were rather idle. [*Cheers.*] Some of the new schools would, no doubt, be in rich districts, and would not want the 5s. grant. Others might be necessitous, and so be a drain on the resources of their neighbours. It was impossible to obtain perfect equality and smoothness of working; but no better or simpler plan than that in the Bill could be found. He was glad to hear from the late Vice President of the Council the admission that Voluntary Schools had been built by volunteers.

MR. A. J. MUNDELLA (Sheffield, Brightside) said that the Amendment must be considered in its effect on the future supply of school accommodation. The Opposition had never objected to aid being given to existing necessitous schools. [*Cries of* "Oh!"] In every School Board district where accommodation was lacking it had to be supplied by the School Board. His right hon. Friend might shake his head, but that had been the custom up to now. If a 5s. additional grant was to be given to all Voluntary Schools that might hereafter be called into existence it was practically a bribe—

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY: It is not necessarily to be given.

MR. MUNDELLA said that if the schools were necessitous they were to receive the 5s. per head; therefore this was a bribe to call into existence necessitous Voluntary Schools. [*Cheers.*] The argument of the clergyman would always be, "Do not take a Board School, but rent our Sunday school, for then you will get the grant of 18s. or 19s. per head, the 10s. fee grant, and, in addition, this 5s. bonus." That meant the keeping down of the quality of education. [*Cheers.*] The object of all this was to stop the growth of the Board Schools, and to prevent the extension of that education which Board Schools gave. In short, there was to be a bonus for the provision of schools that would just fulfil the demands of the Department, but nevertheless be inferior schools.

*MR. J. M. PAULTON (Durham, Bishop Auckland) said the assumption was that the Bill was to meet the necessities of the Voluntary Schools. It was obvious that the additional money for scholars in new schools would not be wanted unless necessitous Voluntary Schools would be brought into existence purposely. The assumption of the Government was, that the new Voluntary Schools would not be necessitous—[The FIRST LORD of the TREASURY: "That is not my assumption"]—and therefore the money would be paid over to give assistance which, under the Bill, was not required. More money would go into a district containing new schools, and the inducement would be great to create Voluntary Schools in order that a larger amount might go to the Association.

MR. YOXALL said there was a great number of certified efficient schools that were not recognised by the Department for grants for several reasons. The first was, that the ground was already covered by existing schools; the second was, that the school premises were unsatisfactory; and the third was, that the education was not altogether satisfactory. Under the Bill, unless this Amendment were adopted, the Department would be inundated with applications for the recognition of these schools, and he did not see very well how recognition could be refused. There would be a stoppage of the growth of satisfactory education under School Boards in favour of cheap, nasty, and marine-store education—["Oh, oh!" *and cheers*]—in schools that, up to the present, had not been recognised as fit for children to enter.

*MR. PERKS said the Bill put a premium upon the transfer of Board Schools to the National Society, or some other sectarian management. The other day the Bishop of Winchester took part in the ceremony of transferring a Board School to Anglican control, and said that was the first of a series of such transactions which would probably take place under this Bill. In Lincolnshire there were 130 or 140 villages in which there were fairly efficient schools under the control of School Boards. The schools did not, perhaps, give as good education as Board Schools in towns, but they were certainly superior to the National schools in those villages. Why should a premium be placed upon the transfer of those schools to their former conditions? They had thrown over the fetters of ecclesiastical management, and at present were efficiently conducted by farmers, shopkeepers, and labourers. Why should the Government, through the provisions of this Bill, place an inducement before the ratepayers to hand the school back to the bad management and sectarian control of the Church of England? The First Lord of the Treasury told them some minutes ago that one object of the Bill was to prevent the transfer of Voluntary Schools to School Board management. He thought the clergy would manage them better than the parents and ratepayers. [The FIRST LORD of the TREASURY: "I never said anything of the kind."] He certainly gathered from the interposition of the right hon. Gentleman that that was one of the objects of the Bill. Let him cite the case of a village he knew very well. There were 240 children in the Anglican school, the only school in the place, and, of the 240, at least 215 were the children of Nonconformists. Suppose the Methodists who were the parents of those children were to say: "We are tired of this sectarian control; we want to run our own school, and, under this Bill, we propose to do it. We got a 10s. grant a few years ago, and we are to get 5s. per head under this Bill." "No," said the right hon. Gentleman, "you are not to be certain of that 5s. It will only be given where, through the agency of these federations, we are persuaded that the schools are effectively managed." Did they think that, under the ægis of the present Education Department, the Methodists, Baptists, Congregationalists, or any body of Dissenters would be permitted to start their anti-sectarian or anti-Anglican school? ["Why not?"] And be sure of the 5s. grant? [The FIRST LORD of the TREASURY: "Hear, hear!"] Did the right hon. Gentleman say they might be sure of the 5s. grant? [The FIRST LORD of the TREASURY: "If they are necessitous."] Who was to say they were necessitous? It was because the Amendment would, to some extent, prevent invidious and illiberal treatment of Nonconformist schools that it was worthy of support.

SIR F. LOCKWOOD said he understood the right hon. Gentleman to say, in reply to the Member for Sheffield, that it did not follow that the money raised on this principle of 5s. per head per child should be given to all schools.

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY: Not necessarily to new schools.

SIR F. LOCKWOOD thought that it would necessarily be given to new schools. The money voted might not be needed for the existing schools, and then, it would be spent on scholars attending the new schools. He understood that the amount of the grant was not to be distributed with reference to schools being necessitous or non-necessitous, but only with regard to the number in the association area, and that by the erection of new schools the amount to be distributed could be indefinitely increased. He should like to hear the view of the right hon. Gentleman (Sir J. Gorst) on this point, because he had told them that the money would be paid on the basis of the number of children included in the association area; it was not to be in regard to the number of necessitous schools or non-necessitous schools in that area. They were to take the number of children with the association area and have no regard to whether they were necessitous or not. So far from this being a Bill which was intended to relieve Voluntary Schools it was a Bill intended to create Voluntary Schools. ["Hear, hear!"]

MR. SAMUEL EVANS said he desired to ask the Chairman a question on a point of order—whether it would be competent to move an Amendment providing that any portion of this money should be used for the purpose of schools which are not now in existence? Looking at the words of the Resolution and the words of the Bill now in Committee, he submitted that it was perfectly clear that both the Resolution and the Bill were intended to refer solely to existing schools. How could they "increase the efficiency" of schools if they did not exist? ["Oh, oh!"] How could they have regard to "the maintenance of schools" if they were never established? [AN HON. MEMBER: "Annually!"] He asked whether it would be in order to move such an Amendment? He submitted that the Bill was confined to existing schools.

*THE CHAIRMAN OF WAYS AND MEANS: I do not like to give an opinion on an abstract question. It is for the Committee to judge whether the Bill deals only with existing schools or with schools that may be opened in the future. That is not a question of order. ["Hear, hear!"]

MR. SAMUEL EVANS said no one dreamt when this Bill was introduced that the money was to be applied to schools that were not in existence, and he believed that Members would be perfectly astounded to hear the statements which had been made. [*Cries of* "No, no!"] Could anyone point to a single statement in the Measure which indicated in the slightest degree that the money would be used for the maintenance of schools not in existence at the present moment? He challenged the Member for West Ham, who had interrupted him, to point out a single statement in one of his speeches to this effect. They were told that the policy was to relieve 'the intolerable strain," but schools which did not exist could not suffer from "intolerable strain." The fact of the matter was, that the Government and those who supported them were absolutely insatiable. They had got their large majority—["hear, hear!"]—but that did not make what was wrong right. This policy was not before the country when they got their majority. Did anyone say that they were going to erect new schools for the Church of England out of public money? Lord Salisbury, who always spoke plainly, and he wished his example was followed in that House, said their duty was to capture Board Schools, but now they were going to destroy Board Schools. Say that a Board School existed in a village, a wealthy landowner would say, "I shall build a Voluntary School, because I know it will be paid for, and I want you to get rid of the Board School." Take the case of London, where the great majority of the children were educated in Board Schools. They made it possible to establish any number of schools, not primarily for education, but for educating children in the established Church. He wanted to ask the First Lord of the Treasury a very plain question. What was there to prevent an association saying "We are rich; we shall allocate the money for building grants?" [AN HON. MEMBER: "They can't!"] Well, they had a right to know. Supposing £2,000 was given to an association, £1,000 of that might be allocated to the building of new schools. He asked, could that be done?

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY: The grant can only be given to schools in existence at the time the grant was allocated. It cannot be given to future schools in that sense.

MR. SAMUEL EVANS asked if there was any power to prevent the £1,000 going as a building grant?

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY: Of course there is.

MR. SAMUEL EVANS accepted that entirely. Perhaps words would be introduced to make it clear.

*SIR HENRY FOWLER said he did not see the President of the Local Government Board present; for, if he was, he thought he would regret his Bill of last year was not conducted as this Bill was being conducted so far as money was concerned. Last year the grant to rates was confined to existing schools. This year the grant was not to be confined to existing schools, but new schools were to share in it. A couple of days ago the right hon. Gentleman the First Lord of the Treasury had stated that the grants to Board Schools would be made with two limitations—namely, the limit of time and the limit of money. But this Bill, in dealing with the Voluntary Schools, contained no limit of either time or money. Passing from that point, he would say that the Debate had shown the justice of the complaint that had been made as to the order in which the clauses of the Bill had been placed. They were now granting this money, and when they proposed certain limits for the division of the grant the right hon. Gentleman met every suggestion by saying that under the machinery to be set up by the Bill such and such things could not be done. But there was not a word in the Bill to show what that machinery was to be. It was quite evident that it was the intention of the Government to place the money in the hands of the diocesan associations. That meant in the case of the Church of England, the Bishops; in that of the Church of Rome, the Cardinal Archbishop; and in that of the Wesleyans, the Wesleyan Conference. He objected to any one of those individuals or bodies having the control of this public money without being subject to limitations as to the manner in which it should be applied. He complained that the Government had throughout this Debate shown a disposition—he would not say to enter into a conspiracy of silence—but to refrain from replying to the arguments that were put forward by the Opposition.

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY said that he had already spoken.

*SIR H. FOWLER said that the right hon. Gentleman was the authority upon the matter—with him it was "*sic volo sic jubeo*"; but in a matter affecting every parish and every district throughout the kingdom the House of Commons had a right to expect that it would be fairly argued on both sides. ["Hear, hear!"] If the arguments of the Opposition were wrong, by all means let them be answered, and not met by the Government saying, "We have a big majority, and we do not care a brass farthing about what you say. We shall go into the Lobby and register our mandate, and it is by the result of the divisions that we are prepared to stand or fall." That might perhaps be regarded as a wise and a strong policy, but it would recoil upon its authors and in course of time upon the House of Commons itself. He was not sure that the right hon. Gentleman himself fully realised the operation this Bill would have upon the future Voluntary Schools. Was the Bill to be turned into a scheme for extending the Voluntary Schools at the public expense and not the Board Schools?

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY said that the right hon. Gentleman opposite seemed to think that the promoters of Voluntary Schools went about the country erecting them wherever they liked. A more absurd hypothesis he had never heard put forward. Under the Bill a school not yet completed, or, if built, not actually filled with children, could not get a single shilling of the grant. Moreover, under the existing law, a Voluntary School could not be built or recognised in any district where there was not a deficiency of school accommodation. The idea that Voluntary Schools could spring up in districts where Board Schools existed was preposterous, and was founded on ignorance. The suggestion that the managers of Board Schools were going to spend a large capital sum in building in order to obtain the grant was entirely illusory.

*SIR H. FOWLER said that the new Voluntary Schools might be created by the utilisation of the existing Sunday schools, and then there need be no building grant whatever.

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY said that he could assure the right hon. Gentleman that when he saw the Government Board Schools Bill, which he hoped would be soon, he would find that the two Bills were absolutely alike, and that, as this Bill dealt with the Voluntary Schools, the other Bill would deal with the poor Board Schools.

MR. MUNDELLA: With all Board Schools?

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY said that it would deal with poor Board Schools to be called into existence in the future, as well as with Board Schools which were now in existence. ["Hear, hear!"]

MR. MCKENNA said that he considered that the Bill would offer a bribe of £25 per hundred children for the creation of Voluntary Schools as opposed to Board Schools.

*MR. J. A. PEASE said that the First Lord had not referred in his reply to the effect which would be produced in those districts where a transfer could be easily arranged from a Board School management to private management. The matter was one of great importance, and unless the Amendment were accepted, they would promote educational retrogression, for in many places in the north of England the colliery owners had handed over their schools to the School Board in order to promote the interests of education. He thought that the Bill would induce the colliery owners to allow their schools to be handed over to private management in order to obtain the larger grant.

*MR. CARVELL WILLIAMS said that this Debate had thrown a new and a strong light on the intentions of the promoters of the Bill. This Measure had been avowedly brought in for the maintenance of the Voluntary Schools, but now it had been shown to be a Bill for their extension. The new Voluntary Schools would very soon become necessitous, and would be making an appeal for their share of the grant, and so the anomalies of the system would be indefinitely extended.

*Mr. CHANNING said that this was a matter of the gravest importance to the education of the country, and ought to be discussed on its merits. [*At this point the* Vice President of the Council *rose from his seat.*] He would ask the Vice President of the Council not to leave the House. ["Hear, hear!"] It was a public scandal that when a question of the gravest importance as to the details of the administration of the Education Department was raised—a question in which the First Lord of the Treasury, as he would himself admit, was not versed —the Committee did not receive any advice or aid from the Minister for Education—[*cheers*]—especially after the grave statements made by his right hon. Friend the Member for Sheffield, whose weight and authority on questions of details of educational administration could not be questioned. His right hon. Friend was supported by his hon. Friend the Member for Nottingham, whose position in connection with the Teachers' Union also gave him great authority in the matter. It was stated that Sunday Schools and other unsuitable buildings would be placed on the grant list. These were administrative questions of first-class importance, and the Committee had the right to demand to have some light thrown upon them by the Minister for Education. The second Sub-section of the Bill said:—"The aid grant shall be distributed by the Education Department to such Voluntary Schools and in such manner and amounts as the Department think best for the purpose of helping necessitous schools and increasing their efficiency." He would ask whether those words did not give a basis and foothold to the Education Department to deal with some of the cases to which his right hon. Friend the Member for Sheffield and his hon. Friend the Member for Nottingham had referred? ["Hear, hear!"] Suppose the managers of a Voluntary School wished to add a class-room, the words of the Bill did not afford any check against such an application of the money; and moreover, according to the wording of the Bill, even the question of auditing was left permissive. The Committee ought to have some further assurance from the Minister who had to interpret the Statute for the work of his Department as to whether the words in the Bill would not permit an association to enlarge existing Voluntary Schools or create new accommodation. ["Hear, hear!"] This Amendment had brought a really vital issue before the House. It was simply a scandal that the money of the country should be voted, not for the relief of necessitous schools or for the provision of education where it was not provided now, but to enable the denominational system to be extended throughout the land. ["Hear, hear!"]

Mr. HERBERT LEWIS said that the right hon. Gentleman had stated in reply to his hon. Friend that where there was sufficient accommodation in a parish a Voluntary School would not be started. He knew that schools had been started even where there was sufficient accommodation. Such schools had been maintained privately for a year or two, and had received grants, and in those circumstances the statement of the right hon. Gentleman ought not to be accepted without qualification, and that qualification had a most important bearing on the Amendment before the Committee, because, as a matter of fact, what would follow if the Amendment was rejected? Diocesan associations all over the country would clearly have great power placed in their hands. It was possible they would not be able to give a building grant for starting a Voluntary School, but there were other ways in which they would be able to aid these schools if started afresh. ["Hear, hear!"] Unfortunately in the future these associations would have very considerable discretion with regard to the disposal of the money, and would be able to favour certain schools to the exclusion of others. It would be the policy of these associations to start new Voluntary Schools as far as the law and the Education Department would allow them to do so. ["Hear, hear!"] This was a question of considerable importance to Wales, because there the proportion of Nonconformists to the general population was very large, and if these associations were given the power to carry out the policy which this Bill evidently aimed at, it would largely increase the number of Voluntary Schools. He did not know whether the hon. Member for West Ham had anything to say on this question, but he should think it would operate very prejudicially to the teachers, and on their account as well as on the ground of the insufficiency of the instruction given in Voluntary Schools, he hoped the Amendment would be carried. ["Hear, hear!"]

Question put, "That the words 'in existence at the passing of this Act' be there inserted."

The Committee divided:—Ayes, 88; Noes, 127.—(Division List, No. 56.)

On the return of the CHAIRMAN of WAYS and MEANS, after the usual interval,

MR. ELLIS GRIFFITH moved after the word "schools," to insert the words "situate in School Board districts." He said the last Amendment he moved had reference to a time limit; the present Amendment was a space limit, confining the grant to Voluntary Schools situated in School Board areas. He supported the Amendment by two reasons. The first was that in these School Board areas there was, no doubt, some kind of competition between the Board School in receipt of rates on the one hand, and the Voluntary School which depended to some extent on subscriptions on the other. In so far as that competition told upon the education given in the Voluntary School, and in so far as it might be necessary to supplement the subscriptions which the Voluntary School got, he quite admitted there was something to be said for allowing that school something from Government grant. But where there was no competition, where the Voluntary School was in possession of the field, those were a set of circumstances which did not justify the Government in going out of its way to assist the Voluntary School. He might also add that in those cases where the Voluntary School had no competition to fear and no particular standard up to which to live, the Voluntary subscriber ought to subscribe something for being allowed to monopolise the education of the district in which he lived. The second reason for the Amendment was this. He understood the Bill was introduced to relieve a certain alleged intolerable strain which fell upon somebody or other. The somebody or other, so far as he could find out, was supposed to be the man who lived in a School Board district and paid rates to the School Board, and also paid a voluntary subscription to the Voluntary School. He proposed to limit the grant to those cases where there was this intolerable strain. That was the object of his Amendment. At the Church House Conference, which he took to be a reflection of the diocesan conscience on education, a great point was made of the fact that in the districts to which he had alluded there was this intolerable strain he had tried to define, and he, adopting this opinion, expressed on the authority of high ecclesiastical dignitaries, proposed to relieve that strain, but where there was no such strain the relief would not apply. He, therefore, hoped that the Attorney General, who, for the time was in charge of the Bill, would look with a conciliatory spirit on the Amendment.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir RICHARD WEBSTER, Isle of Wight) said with every wish to conciliate the hon. Member, it was impossible for him to accept the Amendment. In the first place, to do so would reduce the amount of the grant by one-half. Speaking roughly, he believed that half the Voluntary Schools were in School Board districts and half were in distrcts where there were no Board Schools, and that fact he hoped hon. Members would remember in reference to certain other Amendments not altogether consistent with the present one. In the first place then the Amendment would reduce the grant by one-half. Then the hon. Member had put a construction on the expression "intolerable strain" which he would not for a moment say did not apply in certain places and under certain circumstances, but it was not the ordinary meaning attached to it. The "intolerable strain" was this: that having regard to the demands to keep up educational efficiency, and having regard to the growing, he was glad to say the ever growing request for better education, it was impossible for Voluntary Schools to keep pace with the proper demands of the Education Department. That was the intolerable strain under which Voluntary Schools suffered, and, although undoubtedly it was a hardship to many ratepayers to support their own schools as well as Board Schools, that was not the "intolerable strain" understood as necessitating the grant. But he did not deny that the hon. Member was entitled to take that view. In many rural districts Voluntary Schools had maintained the whole burden of education, and maintained it notwithstanding depressed times, from the wish to have education coupled with religion, and this connection he hoped would never disappear, whatever might be the view of hon. and right hon. Gentlemen opposite. Those who wished to have education coupled with religion had made an effort to keep education going without the necessity for establishing School Boards. In such districts the strain had been severely felt, where from the very proper demands for improved buildings, better equipment of schools, and better teaching, it had been very difficult for school managers to meet requirements, having regard to the fact that there were no rates to fall back upon. He hoped the hon. Member would not think he was treating his proposal with disrespect if he said, on the ground that it would reduce the grant by one half and prevent assistance being given where it was most needed, it was impossible to accept the Amendment.

Mr. BUXTON said the Attorney General described the strain as great on Voluntary Schools, because they had to spend larger sums on education than they spent a few years ago, and that was perfectly true. But on the other hand, the hon. and learned Gentleman had forgotten that the schools had far larger resources to meet that strain than they had a few years ago. Of course, all would recognise, in fact, the Bill was founded on the recognition, that there was considerable strain, an intolerable strain the First Lord of the Treasury had called it, on managers of schools, but the Attorney General, in giving a definition of that strain, must have forgotten that during the discussions of last year's Bill the Government stated that the schools where the greatest strain was felt were those in districts where the rates were high and subscriptions were high, and in the small rural schools. The first mentioned class of schools this Amendment was designed to meet. The Bill as it stood was in no sense of the term intended to relieve the rates, so that part of the strain would remain, and as regarded high subscriptions, which were mostly high where the school rate was high, they, under the Bill, would receive less proportion of relief than they would under existing conditions. Then, as had been pointed out, in small rural schools, where relief was most needed, less in proportion would be received than in urban schools.

Sir W. HART DYKE (Kent, Dartford) said *pro rata* that was not so. The gross sum allocated might be larger in towns than in the country, but no rural schools under the Bill would be injured in the distribution of the grant as compared with a town school.

Mr. BUXTON said no doubt the right hon. Gentleman had some knowledge of the intention, no doubt he was consulted in reference to the Bill.

Sir W. HART DYKE said he was not.

Mr. BUXTON was glad to hear the right hon. Gentleman say so, as the First Lord of the Treasury distinctly said that the greater relief would go to urban schools.

Sir W. HART DYKE said the sum would be larger.

Mr. BUXTON said his point was that the real strain was in the rural districts, and there the School Boards would receive nothing and the Voluntary Schools would receive less than those schools would in urban districts. So far as the Amendment was concerned, this point was raised because it was asserted by the Conference, to which reference had been made—the Conference in which the Archbishop, the bishops, and clergy took part—and it had been asserted in all quarters that when there were School Boards the pressure was greater. Take as an illustration the position of a subscriber in London, and compare it with the position of a subscriber in a Lancashire borough, where there was no School Board, the subscriber in London would have to pay a rate of something like 11d. or 1s. in the £, and besides his average subscription would be something like 10s. per child, while his colleague in Lancashire, where there was no School Board or School Board rate, would only pay, as was the case in Preston, something like 1s. 6d. per head. So then, under the Bill, the relief given would be most unequal, and the purpose of the Amendment was to equalise matters. There was also this point to consider. One suggestion made at the Conference by the representatives of the so-called Voluntary system was that if they obtained relief from the rates they would be content that the aid grant should be equal to Board and Voluntary Schools.

SIR FRANCIS POWELL (Wigan) dissented.

MR. BUXTON said the Conference unanimously passed a Resolution that if the Voluntary system received aid from the rates for Voluntary Schools they would be quite content that some substantial part in aid should be given to Board Schools.

SIR FRANCIS POWELL said that was carried by a majority.

MR. BUXTON said at all events the majority of the representatives of the voluntary system came to that conclusion. But he did not want to put too much weight on their recommendation, the Amendment was proposed on the ground that the burden was heaviest, and in fact only intolerable in cases where the rates were high, and where, in consequence of competition, subscriptions were also high. It was not right or just that in those places in which the School Board rate had been evaded, by very often continuing schools which, in no sense of the term, could be called efficient, that in those places where the strain was slight the greatest relief should be given, and those places where the strain was heaviest should receive less in proportion.

MR. HENRY BROADHURST (Leicester) said the Attorney General had used the best argument that could be conceived in support of the Amendment, when he said that if the proposal were carried it would have the effect of reducing the proposed Treasury grant by half the sum contemplated in the Bill. That should commend itself to the First Lord of the Treasury who, in replying on the case of necessitous Board Schools said, among other things, there was a difficulty about the money, and that he could not pledge the Chancellor of the Exchequer to find the money. There were some schools, the Attorney General admitted, which were more necessitous than others. Very well; let them use the money where it was wanted, and not for the sake of the dead level of uniformity throw it about where it was not wanted. The hon. Member for Anglesey had come to the rescue of the Government, and had offered them a way out of their financial difficulties. Those who followed closely the proceedings of the Convention would remember that the arguments for increased assistance to Voluntary Schools had been based from the very commencement of this agitation upon the competition of Voluntary Schools with the Board School districts, and the intolerable strain upon the so-called Voluntary Schools caused by their competition with the Board Schools. Hon. Members on his side of the House were not unprepared to admit that Voluntary Schools were imposing upon themselves great difficulties and contending against great competition. But that was their own fault, and they could have joined the Board Schools if they had thought proper, and thus have done away with the competition of the two systems. He wished the First Lord of the Treasury had been present, because he thought the right hon. Gentleman with his philosophical knowledge and power of mind would have seen that this Amendment was really an opportunity for him to serve two purposes at one time. He did think the arguments in suport of the Amendment were quite unanswerable, and if it were not accepted it would not be because it was not founded on reason and justice, but because of the stubborn determination of the Government not to improve their own Measure when they had the opportunity of doing so with the assistance of their political opponents.

MR. MCKENNA observed that the First Lord of the Treasury in the Second Reading Debate admitted that this Bill acted unequally locally. Taking that admission, they had before them an Amendment calculated to reduce that unequal local action of which the right hon. Gentleman spoke.

THE SOLICITOR GENERAL (Sir ROBERT FINLAY, Inverness Burghs): It would increase it.

MR. MCKENNA could prove to the hon. and learned Gentleman that it would decrease it. What were the facts with regard to their educational system? Prior to 1870 there were 1,800,000 children in Voluntary Schools. That was to say, in half the school districts there were then in existence Voluntary Schools sufficient to supply school accommodation for the children; consequently all the buildings and all the grants, whether from Parliament or private sources, had been supplied prior to 1870. The result of that was that in the Voluntary School districts at the present day where there was no School Board, the Act of 1870, instead of adding a new burden had been an exoneration, for those schools had received a Parliamentary grant which they had not received before. The Act of 1870, so far as the pure Voluntary School districts were concerned, had been a Measure which had given an enormously increased Parliamentary grant to those districts, and the Act of 1876 still further increased it. They had consequently the position that in pure Voluntary School districts in which there was no School Board the effect of the Act of 1870 had been one of relief which had been increased by the Act of 1870. As a contrast to that, they found in the pure Board School districts the inhabitants had had to supply not only the maintenance of the schools, but the whole buildings and any expenditure necessary beyond the grants, so that if they gave to the pure Voluntary School districts an increased grant of 5s. per child they would be giving to those very districts which were the best off an increased grant which had been refused to the Board School districts. It was said that the increased grant was necessitated by the increased strain on the Voluntary Schools owing to the demands of the Education Department. Hitherto the strain had been met by increased voluntary subscriptions. These, since 1876, when the Parliamentary grant was last increased, had increased 1s. per child, which represented the measure of the increased demands of the Department. Unless the Amendment was accepted the Committee would give 5s. per child in respect of the increased strain of 1s. in districts where there was no School Board rate, and where since 1870 the strain had been least. He appealed to the Attorney General to accept the Amendment.

Mr. LOUGH said he represented a School Board district, and there, he admitted, the Voluntary Schools needed some assistance. [*Ministerial cries of* "Hear, hear!"] The basis of the Bill was that in School Board districts the schools had the benefit of the "bottomless purse" of the ratepayers. In districts where the bottomless purse was available the Voluntary Schools were to have 5s. per head. The Bill was a mean scramble for money, because it was said that, if the Amendment were accepted, the money Voluntary Schools would get would be cut down half. Every Amendment was rejected on the ground that it would deprive the Voluntary Schools of money. He contended that there was no foundation for the argument that if the Amendment were adopted the amount to be given under the Bill would be reduced by half. Most of the money to be given under the Bill was to be distributed in country districts where the strain from competition with Board Schools was least. Property owners in country districts saved money by keeping out Board Schools. If they had Board Schools they would have to pay ten times as much as at present.

Mr. SAMUEL EVANS did not agree with the learned Attorney General that the adoption of the Amendment would mean the cutting down of what the Voluntary Schools would receive by half. If parents in a district where competition between Board and Voluntary Schools was keen preferred sending their children to the latter while they also paid School Board rates, he admitted that it was a case of hardship. It was a hardship that they should have to maintain Voluntary Schools to which from conscientious motives they sent their children, and yet pay School Board rates. To such cases the Amendment would justly apply. But in many isolated districts in Wales Nonconformists had to send their children to denominational schools because they were the only schools available. It was said that education should mination, and those who were not adjected to its being coupled with the religion of a particular Church or denomination, and those who were not adherents of the latter having to support it.

Mr. LLOYD-GEORGE supported the Amendment, saying there were parishes in the county of Carnarvon where Church of England and Roman Catholics, besides maintaining their own schools, contributed to the maintenance of Board Schools. He was against subsidising sectarian teaching in any form, but there was a difference in a case of this kind. In another parish in the same county nine-tenths of the people were Nonconformists and there was no subscription towards the Church Schools. He contended that in the case first mentioned the Voluntary Schools were far more entitled to consideration than in parishes where the majority of the people were Nonconformists. He thought his hon. Friend had made out a case. His hon. Friend and himself were opposed to every form of sectarian endowment, but for the sake of argument they were bound to accept the principle of the Bill loyally. The House had unfortunately committed itself to the principle of giving a further endowment of 5s. per child to sectarian schools. There were two classes of schools, one which had certain merits, and the other which were practically privileged schools. In the latter case they had got their privileges, but they were not entitled to say that they must be further subsidised.

Question put, "That those words be there inserted."

The Committee divided:—Ayes, 82; Noes, 237.—(Division List, No. 57.)

*MR. PERKS proposed, after the word "schools," to insert the words "in which no charge for school fees is made." He said that the object of the Amendment was to limit the new aid grant to schools which were really free. Most of them had seen at the last General Election—at which the Government alleged they had received a mandate to introduce this Bill—placards on the walls, asking, "Who gave you free education?" They knew perfectly well that nobody had, so far, given them free education. The Tory Party no doubt by the Act of 1891 gave it to a considerable extent, but there were many elementary schools, especially in towns, where free education was not at present given, and, therefore, the Tory Party, in claiming to have established free education, claimed the credit of giving a benefit to the working classes of the country which was wholly illusory. [*Ministerial cries of* "Oh!"] The object of the Amendment was to secure in England and Wales what was universal in Scotland. In that country there was not a single child attending an elementary school that did not receive his education perfectly free. But if in some of the towns of England and Wales children claimed free education they were, first of all, subjected to a most humiliating inquiry as to the pecuniary condition of their parents; and, after having passed through that ordeal, they were told that if they wanted free education they must avail themselves of the free places that were provided in some sectarian school utterly obnoxious to their parents. In such towns as Southport and Rugby, for instance, the children of Methodists, Congregationalists, and Baptists were told that if they wanted free education they must go to the free places in Roman Catholic schools. He did not wish to say a word against those schools, but they were not schools to which Nonconformists desired to send their children, any more than Roman Catholics wished to have their children educated in Nonconformist schools; and it was a monstrous thing that children should be compelled to go into those sectarian schools, if they claimed the right, given them in an illusory way by the Act of 1891, to have free education. The Amendment, if accepted, would not make anything like a serious demand on the schools of the Church of England. The overwhelming majority of those schools were at present absolutely free. In only about 18 per cent. of them was any charge made. It was, therefore, not too much to ask that the legislation of 1891 should be carried this one step further. The total amount at present received by the Church of England Voluntary Schools for fees and books was £162,553. The probable amount they would receive under the Bill was £461,000; so that, even if they were to make all their schools free, they would have a clear gain under the Bill of £300,000. The time would come when the change would have to be made. Was it possible that in large towns they could continue to have two classes of children in the elementary Voluntary Schools—one class paying fees and the other class not paying any? ["Hear, hear!"] The two systems could not work well together, and it produced a state of things that was not fair to the artisan class. ["Hear, hear!"] He wished to refer particularly to the cases of Rugby and Southport. In Rugby there was no School Board, and the Voluntary Schools there, which were fee-paying schools, had been, to a large extent built and maintained by contributions from the North Western Railway. A working man had written to him from that place stating that a large number of parents whose children used to go free to school (the St. Matthew National School) had recently had their children sent home, and that the children had been refused admission unless school pence were paid. "After correspondence with the Education Department," continued the writer, "we were at last told that if we wanted free education we were to send our children to St. Mark's Roman Catholic School, so we thought it best to wait and see what fortune would reveal itself." This Bill certainly revealed no better fortune to that man or to men of his class. If they wanted free education for their children in Rugby they must send them to the Roman Catholic School. Was that fair or just? ["Hear, hear!"] Then as to Southport, which was supposed to be an enlightened town, though he thought some doubt must be entertained on the point—[*cries of* "Oh, oh!" *and laughter*]—he had receved a letter from Mr. Taylor, the hon. secretary of the National Education Association at Southport, and he wished to read a portion of it to the Committee. Mr. Taylor wrote:—

> "The whole of Southport belongs to two or three persons, and they have inserted clauses in the deeds, when they have leased the land for Nonconformist Sunday Schools, prohibiting the use of most of them as day schools. The Roman Catholics and the Church of England have never suffered these restrictions, so that to-day nearly all our day schools are managed by the Sacerdotalists."

[*Cries of* "Oh, oh!" *and* "Question!"]

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY rose to a point of order. Was the hon. Member in order in introducing the question of sacerdotalism on this Amendment? [*Cheers.*]

*THE CHAIRMAN OF WAYS AND MEANS: I think the hon. Member is pursuing the matter at an unnecessary length. I am sure he might state his case more concisely. ["Hear, hear!"]

*MR. PERKS said the writer of the letter now came to the point. [*Laughter.*] Mr. Taylor added:—

> "About 900 children recently applied for free places in these schools, and Sir George W. Kekewich told me recently that if any wealthy Catholic would provide sufficient free places to meet these demands, the law would require him to recognise these Catholic schools as suitable for all denominations. A Methodist preacher here actually has been compelled to send his child to a Catholic school. When the Education Department received applications for the 900 free places, the Southport School attendance officers went round to verify them, and ordered all parents to apply to the clerical school managers. About 200 did so, and they were asked impertinent questions as to their income and their ability to pay school fees, and after submitting to these humiliations free places were provided. But this deterred the other 700 applicants, and they refused to wait upon the clergy, so they have not got free places, and never will, for they refuse to go and ask as a favour what the law declares is a right. You will readily see that free education for those 700 children is now practically impossible. They will not comply with Sir John Gorst's interpretation of the law, and the local school managers will only deal with those parents who submit to make special application to them."

["Hear, hear!"] He thought he had shown that no great sacrifice would be required on the part of the Church of England to offer free education in every school under their control. One of the objections taken to this course was that parents wished to pay some fees, that they would rather pay fees than not. ["Hear, hear!" *and laughter.*] He attached little importance to that objection, but he believed the parents could contribute and would contribute in the form of subscriptions if they were not called upon to pay fees. ["Hear, hear!"] And the great advantage of this would be that the parents, as subscribers, could have some share in the management of the schools. ["Hear, hear!"] The object of the Amendment was to make real what was at present illusory, and to afford children, under the protection of the clause, free education from one end of the kingdom to the other. He hoped, therefore, the Government would regard the Amendment with favourable consideration. ["Hear, hear!"]

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY said the hon. Member could hardly have anticipated that the Government would favourably receive the Amendment he had placed on the Paper. He would first remind the hon. Gentleman that it was hardly germane to the purpose of the Bill to make it a lever, or an instrument of torture, as it were, to compel managers of schools to do that which, under the existing law, they were not obliged to do with regard to charging fees. ["Hear, hear!"] In the second place, he would remind the hon. Member that it was undoubtedly the fact—and experience had proved it, not only in England, but in Scotland also—that there were parents who preferred to send their children to a fee-paying school rather than to a non-fee-paying school, and it would be acting very arbitrarily to make that impossible of attainment. ["Hear, hear!"] The effect of the Amendment would be to reduce the total amount given to Voluntary Schools. It might or might not be right to introduce provisions making free education universal and compulsory; but, if that were to be done—and he thought it ought not to be done—the place to do it was not where it would have the effect of arbitrarily limiting the total amount of relief for necessitous Voluntary Schools. Was the hon. Member really serious in representing the charging of fees as a discredit to the managers who did it? The whole of the hon. Member's speech was framed on the hypothesis that the managers who charged fees committed something like a crime against education. The hon. Member himself belonged to a great religious communion—the Wesleyans—in whose schools fees were almost universally charged. [*Cheers.*] The result of the Amendment would be to exclude from any benefit of the grant the majority of the schools of the communion to which the hon. Member belonged. [*Cheers.*] That was not a reason why the hon. Member should not press the Amendment; indeed, it showed that he was extremely disinterested. [*Opposition cheers.*] But it also showed, as the hon. Member would admit, that those who were most zealous for education, and most anxious for the benefit of the children and of the parents, thought it not inconsistent with those principles to charge fees. [*Cheers.*]

MR. ACLAND said that his hon. Friend had a perfectly reasonable desire—namely, that the Free Education Act should be made more of a reality. When Parliament was asked to vote more money to any class of schools it was only right to consider whether free education was really as fully available as it ought to be.

*THE CHAIRMAN OF WAYS AND MEANS: Order, order! The right hon. Gentleman cannot go into the question of whether free education is in full force or not. The only purpose I had in admitting this Amendment was that I thought the hon. Member wished to limit the grant.

MR. ACLAND submitted that he was only following the hon. Member for Louth.

*THE CHAIRMAN OF WAYS AND MEANS: I listened to the hon. Member to gather his reasons for introducing the subject of free education. [*Laughter.*] Having heard them, I am clearly of opinion that it cannot be further gone into.

MR. ACLAND said that the question was whether the grant ought to be allowed to schools in which free education was not given. The free places available in schools were not nearly as numerous as was supposed, and there was no doubt that many fee-paying scholars were such not by their choice. The present head of the Education Department could testify—if he would testify to anything—that this was so. His experience told him that there was reasonable foundation for making this grant dependent on the number of non-fee-paying scholars.

MR. BUXTON pointed out that the Amendment, by excluding from the grant all schools where fees were received, would lay down a definition of what Parliament considered to be a necessitous school. The Amendment would not really be a lever for abolishing fees. This was the first opportunity the Government had had of showing what they really meant by necessitous schools.

MR. GRAY said the hon. Gentleman had altogether overlooked the fact that the clause under discussion fixed the aggregate amount to be paid to Voluntary Schools, and that if the Amendment were adopted the effect would be that the sum which might be distributed amongst necessitous schools would be reduced. ["Hear, hear!"]

Mr. BUXTON said they did not in any sense by this Amendment propose to limit the amount.

Mr. GRAY held very strongly that this was an attempt to diminish the amount that should be rendered available for the necessitous Voluntary Schools, and that it would have, as the hon. Gentleman himself had shown, no influence whatever on the schools which were now charging fees. He was convinced that in many districts the parents desired a continuance of the fee system. The Education Department had power to not only sanction a continuance of fees, but to actually sanction an increase of fees for the benefit of a particular district, and many of those schools, necessitous as they were in spite of the fees, gave a higher education, employed a better class of teachers, and—

***The CHAIRMAN of WAYS and MEANS** said the hon. Gentleman was in order in dealing with the question of the limitation of the amount, but not in going into the general question of free education.

Mr. GRAY said he might, perhaps, be allowed to add that if the proposed treatment were meted out to Voluntary Schools it ought also to be meted out to Board Schools. ["Hear, hear!"]

Mr. CHANNING thought the Amendment had hardly met with the full consideration it deserved. Take the case of Lancashire. Under the Bill about £115,000 would go to Lancashire, yet what were the facts concerning that county? In the case of Church of England schools in the principal towns the average amount of school fees, including the charges for books, was 4s. 2¾d., in certain towns the amounts were 6s. 1d., 5s. 1d., 6s. 6d., 6s. 5d., 6s. 7d., and so on. At the same time the Lancashire Voluntary Schools received a very small subscription. What the Amendment really proposed was that there should be an honest attempt on the part of the managers of Voluntary Schools to meet the grant given by the State to enable them to carry on their schools, by some reasonable sacrifice of their own.

Sir JOHN BRUNNER (Cheshire, Northwich) regretted that, owing to the Chairman's ruling, the Opposition were unable to enforce their argument by pointing out that the operation of the present law was forcing Protestant children into Roman Catholic schools. If they could not enforce this argument here they should elsewhere. It was a very common argument on the other side that they ought to have freedom of choice in order that children might be brought up in the religion to which they and their parents were attached. He approved of this Amendment in the main because, if adopted, it would be a declaration that the relief should go rather to those who could least afford to pay the money, than to those who could best afford. They proposed by the Bill to give relief to the subscribers and not relief to the poor.

Mr. CHARLES SEELY (Lincoln) appealed to the hon. Member who moved this Amendment to withdraw it. He expressed his sympathy with the object aimed at.

Mr. LLOYD-GEORGE said the hon. Member had, on a previous occasion, expressed his sympathy, but voted in the other Lobby. He hoped he was not going to repeat that to-night. The Bill was not so badly draughted as the hon. Member for West Ham seemed to suppose. They were told that there would be absolutely no inducement if they passed this Amendment—that they would not punish the rich schools, they would punish the poor schools, but there was a very substantial and practical inducement. What would happen? Suppose a school, where a fee of 2d. or 3d. was charged, the association would bring pressure on the manager to reduce the amount of the fees and make it a free school altogether. If they took the schools of Liverpool, why should 5s. be paid if—

*MR. SYDNEY GEDGE (Walsall) rose to a point of order. He said the subject was the total amount to be paid to Voluntary Schools generally, but the hon. Member was speaking about its distribution to particular schools.

THE CHAIRMAN OF WAYS AND MEANS said, as he understood the Amendment, it raised a very simple and small question, and he had endeavoured to keep the discussion to it.

MR. LLOYD-GEORGE said what he was pointing out was that the schools which charged expensive fees would get less than 5s. per child, and no doubt the Member for Walsall, who would be an influential member of the Diocesan Association, would point out that they were losing £200 or £300 a year because the school managers charged 6d. or 9d. in fees. He had no doubt that the eloquence of the hon. Member would have its effect on his clerical friends, who would stop the fees and thus add £200 or £300 to the Diocesan Association. [MR. GEDGE dissented.] He regretted the interposition of the hon. Member for Walsall as it rather tended to prolong his remarks. In one school that he knew of in Liverpool there were 793 children, and he found that the fees paid by children amounted to 25s. per head per annum. That was a school in one of what were called the respectable districts of Liverpool, in which it was expected that the respectable children were not to mix up with the poorer children. If this money was intended to be granted for the maintenance of necessitous schools, why was it to be applied in order to keep up class distinction. The fact was, that the argument of the right hon. Gentleman the First Lord of the Treasury was strongly in favour of the Amendment. He might refer to another Liverpool school, in which the fees paid amounted to 37s. per head per annum of the children. The fact was, that these schools which were for the benefit of the middle classes, were not elementary schools at all; they were really secondary education schools, and they ought to have the benefit of a grant that was intended for necessitous elementary schools only. If schools intended for a select class only were to participate in the grant, the money would be applied, not for the relief of necessitous schools, but for the relief of the subscribers to the better class schools. ["Hear, hear!"]

MR. SAMUEL EVANS said that in view of the ruling of the Chairman, he would like to put a question to the right hon. Gentleman the Vice President of the Council for Education, as to whether the members of free schools and of the scholars belonging to the Voluntary School class were increasing or diminishing. He directed the right hon. Gentleman's attention to certain statements which were set forth in page 44 of the introduction to the Report of the Committee of Council for Education. Those figures showed that there was not a very strong desire on the part of the parents that their children should attend Voluntary Schools. He should like to ask the right hon. Gentleman by how much the grant would be limited if this Amendment were carried. How was it that according to the last Return the total number of children attending fee schools was 4,340,000, as against 4,519,000 attending the free schools. He could assure the right hon. Gentleman that if he had been able to get at the bottom of the question he was now putting to him for himself, he should have done so, but he had not the time to get up the subject that the right hon. Gentleman had. He hoped that he had put the question as clearly as he could. Then with regard to the Amendment. [*Ironical cheers and laughter.*] He hoped that he was making himself understood. It might be that if the Amendment were carried the grant might be distributed among a smaller number of schools. He submitted that the Committee were not necessarily bound by the words of the Amendment as it stood, and the £620,000 might still be allotted in respect of scholars, the division taking place amongst a smaller number of schools. If that were so, he would have much more pleasure in supporting the clause, because everything that tended to uniformity in Elementary Educational matters was a good thing and anything which operated indirectly on the managers of Voluntary Schools to compel them to put in force the Free Education Act of 1891 would have his cordial approval. He hoped the right hon. Gentleman would give the Committee an explanation of the extraordinary figures to which he had referred, and so enable the Committee to say what was the limitation that would take place if the Amendment were adopted. ["Hear, hear!"]

THE VICE PRESIDENT OF THE COUNCIL (Sir J. GORST, Cambridge University), who was received with ironical Opposition cheers, said that one figure quoted by the hon. and learned Member referred to average attendance, and the other to the number of free scholars upon the books. The number of free scholars on the books was, of course greater than the average attendance. [*Laughter.*]

MR. H. J. WILSON (York, W.R., Holmfirth) thought the Committee were entitled to an exposition of the views of the Government on the question before the Committee. He remembered in the year 1891 being in Dorsetshire when a bye-election was going on, and the following lines were placarded about the constituency:—

"Remember, remember the month of November,
  There have been no school fees to pay.
Good Mr. Goschen has brought in his Motion—"

[*Cries of* "Question."]

*THE CHAIRMAN OF WAYS AND MEANS: The hon. Member is not saying anything relevant to the Question. [*Ministerial cheers.*]

MR. H. J. WILSON said he wanted to know whether the Government were frankly in favour of the free school system or not.

Mr. Samuel Evans.

*THE CHAIRMAN OF WAYS AND MEANS: I have ruled two or three times that that subject cannot be entertained.

MR. LOUGH said he thought the Vice President might have given a little more satisfactory reply to the very reasonable question put by his hon. and learned Friend. The First Lord of the Treasury said he objected to the Amendment because it would reduce the amount the Voluntary Schools would get. The Opposition wanted to know by how much, that was to say, they wanted to know the number of free scholars in Voluntary Schools. ["Hear, hear!"] His own point was that it would be much better if less cant was talked on the other side of the House. [*Cheers and* "Question!"]

*THE CHAIRMAN OF WAYS AND MEANS: I must ask the hon. Member to address himself to the Question.

MR. LOUGH said he was doing so. The Chairman had laid down that the effect of the Amendment would be to reduce the amount given to Voluntary Schools, and it was urged on the other side that it would be a crime so to reduce the amount. That, he considered, was only cant. ["Hear, hear!"] Just as much good might be done with £500,000 properly applied, as with £620,000 given in a lavish manner. He contended that if the effect of the Amendment would be to reduce the amount, that was a reason for its acceptance. But that was not the only point. The hon. Member for West Ham said that the parents preferred to pay fees.

*THE CHAIRMAN OF WAYS AND MEANS said that he had been compelled to interrupt the hon. Member for West Ham. It was not in order for hon. Members to discuss the general question of free education.

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY rose in his place, and claimed to move, "That the Question be now put."

Question put, "That the Question be now put."

The Committee divided: Ayes, 273; Noes, 105.—(Division List, No. 58.)

Question put accordingly, "That those words be there inserted."—The Committee divided:—Ayes, 102; Noes, 276.—(Division List, No. 59.)

MR. LEWIS wished to move to leave out the words, "in the aggregate." He said he could not quite understand why the words appeared in the clause, and it appeared to him they were totally unnecessary.

MR. LLOYD-GEORGE rose to order. He did not quite understand that the Chairman had ruled out of order the proposal to omit the word "annually." He desired to omit the word, not that he objected to the annual grant, but in order that he might move a proviso to provide that payments should be made quarterly.

*THE CHAIRMAN OF WAYS AND MEANS ruled that the word "annually" must remain as applying to the Parliamentary aid grant. Such grants could not be made quarterly. There was nothing to prevent the proposal of a proviso that payments out of the grant should be made quarterly.

MR. CHANNING desired to know if the Amendment of the hon. Member for Anglesey would be in order to insert the words, "in the year ending the thirty-first day of March, one thousand eight hundred and ninety-eight."

*THE CHAIRMAN OF WAYS AND MEANS repeated what he had said at the beginning of the sitting, that any limitation of the duration of the Act must be proposed in a new clause.

VISCOUNT CRANBORNE said that before the Amendment was moved he desired to ask a Question as to the exact meaning of the words, "not exceeding in the aggregate." A great deal of misapprehension had been felt in the country owing to the use of these words, and, in order that the Government might have an opportunity of giving some explanation of their meaning, he would move their omission in order to insert the words "equal to." Some persons had fancied that a sinister purpose lay behind the words "not exceeding in the aggregate" 5s.—though he did not share that view—and that the intention of leaving the matter open, as it were, might possibly be to enable the Government or their successors to give something less than the 5s. per child. He understood that this was a mere use of a formula, but it would reassure a great number of persons interested if they could have an assurance from the Government that there was no such intention as had been suggested lying behind these innocent words. He begged to move the Amendment.

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY could assure the noble Lord that the words had been introduced in accordance with a time-honoured Parliamentary custom, by which, in all cases where annual grants were made, the phrase was used that the amount should be one "not exceeding" a specified sum. Of course, it was not meant that a less sum should be given. ["Hear, hear!"] The intention was precisely that which would be carried out by the introduction of the words the insertion of which the noble Lord had moved, and in adopting the words in the Bill the Government had been guided by Parliamentary precedents. ["Hear, hear!"]

MR. McKENNA looked upon the words, the omission of which the noble Lord had moved, as one of the possibly slightly redeeming features of the Bill. As he understood it, "not exceeding" meant that Parliament might provide in any year for a less amount, having regard to the fact that the distribution of the money was only to be to necessitous schools. If, therefore, by some public spirited persons large sums of money were granted to Voluntary Schools, whereby they could be relieved of their necessity, as he read the Bill there would be no duty upon Parliament to continue to provide this extra 5s. grant to Voluntary Schools which, under these circumstances, could no longer be considered necessitous. He should be very much obliged if the First Lord of the Treasury could assure him, in spite of his last observations, that these words, "not exceeding" did not bind Parliament in every year to provide this sum of money. In the event of the necessity not continuing, and of no such thing existing as a necessitous Voluntary School, there would be no occasion for the expenditure of money; therefore, there would be equally no necessity for Parliament to provide it.

Mr. DILLON thought there was great force in the noble Lord's point. The words in the ordinary Estimates, which he understood the First Lord of the Treasury had referred to, set forth that a sum not exceeding such an amount should be granted. But in such instances very frequently surpluses were returned to the Treasury by surrender. The point in regard to the Estimates was, that the Minister in charge of the spending department had not to exceed the sum mentioned therein; but he might, and frequently did, spend less. But this was a totally different case. The object of the present Bill was to secure for Voluntary Schools that the full sum of 5s. per head should be given apart altogether from the question of whether it was wanted or not. [*Opposition cheers.*] He was stating the case from the point of view of the Voluntary Schools. He himself considered the sum of 10s. would be wanted every year, and they wanted to make sure that this five shillings was the minimum. He believed the words to which the noble Lord had called attention would not prevent a subsequent Administration saying, "We do not want 5s., we shall give less," and surrendering the balance to the Treasury. He thought it ought to be made perfectly clear that no such thing was contemplated by the Government.

Mr. SAMUEL EVANS considered that an answer should be given to the two hon. Members who had last spoken. It was one thing to have the words in an Act of Parliament and another to have the words "not exceeding" in an Estimate. In the latter case, as the hon. Member for Mayo had pointed out, Parliament did not know how much was going to be spent, and it was stated that the sum should be one "not exceeding" such and such an amount, and if it was desired to spend more Parliament had to be asked for a Supplementary Estimate. He regarded the words as meaning in plain English the maximum sum of 5s. The words should be dealt with in just the same way as words in any other Bill. He invited the Law Officers to say whether, if the words remained, there would be any obligation on the Education Department to pay the full sum of 5s.

Mr. BARTLEY argued that the words as they stood were quite correct. The whole object of the Bill was to secure efficiency, and if in a certain school the education was not satisfactory the full grant would not be paid.

Mr. DILLON pointed out that money withdrawn from any school which did not deserve the grant would not be surrendered to the Exchequer, but would be redistributed among the associated schools.

Mr. BARTLEY said he still believed he was right. [*Laughter.*] An associated school would not get more than 5s. under any circumstances, and if a certain school was not efficient the sum withdrawn would surely not be handed over to an association to which that school did not belong.

Mr. DILLON said the hon. Member evidently had not studied the Bill, and was wrong in all his points. [*Laughter.*] He repeated that money withheld from any associated school would be redistributed.

The FIRST LORD of the TREASURY assured hon. Members that their fears were groundless.

Mr. DILLON said the country associations got less.

The FIRST LORD of the TREASURY said the hon. Member appeared to think there would be pure country associations. Any residue would go back, not to the Treasury, but to the other schools, and therefore the whole amount would be distributed. Nothing in the Bill could compel the House of Commons to vote the money, and of course he had never suggested so unconstitutional a course. But if the money was voted, the fear that it would be kept back from the schools by the Education Department was perfectly illusory.

Mr. McKENNA said the right hon. Gentleman said the money would be paid to the associations, but that was not so under the Bill. The money was to be allotted, not paid, to them. The money was to be distributed by the Education Department, but only to necessitous schools.

Mr. SAMUEL EVANS said the Solicitor General was present, and he really must press for an answer from him.

The FIRST LORD of the TREASURY: I have answered on his behalf.

Mr. SAMUEL EVANS said the right hon. Gentleman had not really answered the question. The hon. Member for Islington had said that the Education Department might keep back from any one school the proportion to which that school would be entitled if the school was not efficient. He saw nothing in the Bill which enabled any portion of the grant to be kept back in respect of any particular school because the education in that school was not efficient.

The SOLICITOR GENERAL said the words had been introduced in accordance with the usual form. The provision made for disposing of the sum showed that the intention was that the aggregate amount of the grant should be 5s. per child in all cases.

Mr. EVANS objected to the Amendment being withdrawn, as he wished to know first whether these words compelled the Education Department to give 5s. for the number of children in average attendance.

Viscount CRANBORNE said he was of course quite satisfied with the explanation the Government had given, and had only raised the question to get a public explanation. He asked leave to withdraw the Amendment.

Question, "That the words 'not exceeding' stand part of the Clause," put and agreed to.

And, it being midnight, the Chairman left the Chair to make his Report to the House.

Committee report Progress; to sit again to-morrow.

MILITARY WORKS (MONEY) BILL.

Committee deferred till to-morrow.

SUPPLY [26th FEBRUARY].

Resolutions reported.

NAVY (SUPPLEMENTARY) ESTIMATES, 1896-7.

1. "That a Supplementary sum, not exceeding £507,000 be granted to Her Majesty, to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1897, for additional Expenditure on the following Navy Services, viz:—

	£
Vote 8. Shipbuilding, Repairs, Maintenance, &c. Sec. 2 Materiel	386,900
Vote 9. Naval Armaments ...	120,000
Vote 10. Works, Buildings, and Repairs at Home and Abroad	100
Total	£507,000

2. "That a sum, not exceeding £5,775 13s., be granted to Her Majesty, to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1897, for repayment to Naval Funds of certain Excess Expenditure on Contract Vessels, under the Naval Defence Act, 1889."

CIVIL SERVICES AND REVENUE DEPARTMENTS (SUPPLEMENTARY) ESTIMATES, 1896-7.

Class I.

3. "That a Supplementary sum, not exceeding £7,000, be garnted to Her Majesty, to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1897, in respect of sundry Public Buildings in Great Britain, not provided for on other Votes."

CLASS II.

4. "That a Supplementary sum, not exceeding £1,000, be granted to Her Majesty, to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1897, for the Expenses of Telegrams of the Department of Her Majesty's Secretary of State for the Colonies."

5. "That a Supplementary sum, not exceeding £40, be granted to Her Majesty, to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1897, for the Salaries and Expenses of the Mint, including the Expenses of Coinage."

6. "That a Supplementary sum, not exceeding £25,000, be granted to Her Majesty, to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1897, for Stationery, Printing, Paper, Binding, and Printed Books, &c., for the Public Service."

7. "That a Supplementary sum, not exceeding £80, be granted to Her Majesty, to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1897, for the Expenses of the Board of Lunacy in Scotland."

CLASS III.

8. "That a Supplementary sum, not exceeding £17,500, be granted to Her Majesty, to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1897, for the Expenses of the Department of the Solicitor for the Affairs of Her Majesty's Treasury, Queen's Proctor, and Director of Public Prosecutions; the Costs of Prosecutions, and of other Legal Proceedings."

9. "That a Supplementary sum, not exceeding £2,000, be granted to Her Majesty, to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1897, for such of the Salaries and Expenses of the Supreme Court of Judicature as are not charged on the Consolidated Fund."

10. "That a Supplementary sum, not exceeding £10, be granted to Her Majesty, to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1897, for the Salaries and Expenses connected with the County Courts."

11. "That a Supplementary sum, not exceeding £2,030, be granted to Her Majesty, to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1897, for the Salaries and Expenses of the Offices in Her Majesty's General Register House, Edinburgh."

12. "That a Supplementary sum, not exceeding £12,938, be granted to Her Majesty, to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1897, for the Salaries and Expenses of the Office of the Irish Land Commission."

Resolutions agreed to.

CLASS IV.

13. "That a Supplementary sum, not exceeding £153,044, be granted to Her Majesty, to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1897, for Public Education in England and Wales."

MR. HUMPHREYS-OWEN said he understood that it had been stated that under this Vote there would be no remedy by which the arrears which had been referred to, and which so many necessitous Board Schools were anxious to get, could be obtained, although it had been shown that, under a Circular issued by the Department, several years' arrears had been paid. He wished to ask the Solicitor General whether, that being so, it might not be possible so to manage that further arrears should be paid, whereby the poor Board Schools would be much benefited.

*MR. CHANNING said he understood the Attorney General on Friday night laid down that the Education Department did not act *ultra vires* in issuing the Circular of 1881, which was expressly meant to deal with those cases of arrears, and it had been seen that that Circular allowed to the poor Board Schools not only the grant for the current year, but also for the immediately preceding year. As he understood the law thus laid down, if the Department was acting within its powers in issuing that Circular, and granting, on their own discretion, this extra grant to the necessitous School Boards, then he submitted that his hon. Friend would be justified in pressing on the Government the duty of dealing with the equitable claims of these necessitous boards in this spirit. The Attorney General having laid it down that this action was within the power of the Department, he thought they had a right to ask the Government to take into consideration the case of School Boards in a necessitous condition, and to exercise the same powers with regard to matters of arrears which they exercised towards the schools when they issued the Circular of 1881. He should like to ask whether it was not possible for the Department to issue another Circular to meet the present difficulty?

THE SOLICITOR GENERAL said that no one could read the Section without seeing that these grants were to be claimed and made annually. It never could have been meant that they should be allowed to accumulate. The terms of the Circular of 1881 clearly excluded the accumulation of arrears.

MR. HERBERT LEWIS said that the Circular of 1881 allowed arrears for one year.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL said that what the Circular did was to fix a period within which the annual statement must be sent in. There was no allowance of arrears. It was simply reasonable requirement on the part of the Department to see what was included in the year's accounts.

MR. LEWIS said that it was obvious that the Department had the power of extending the time within which the accounts might be sent in. Why not extend the time still further? The poor School Boards had an equitable claim to these arrears.

Resolution agreed to.

14. "That a Supplementary sum, not exceeding £10,000, be granted to Her Majesty, to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1897, for the Expenses of the Department of Science and Art in respect of Schools of Science."

15. "That a Supplementary sum, not exceeding £650, be granted to Her Majesty, to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1897, for Purchases and Acquisitions of the British Museum."

16. "That a Supplementary sum, not exceeding £327, be granted to Her Majesty, to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1897, for the Salaries and Expenses of the National Portrait Gallery."

17. "That a Supplementary sum, not exceeding £20,110, be granted to Her Majesty, to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1897, for the Expenses of the Commissioners of National Education in Ireland."

CLASS V.

18. "That a Supplementary sum, not exceeding £23,670, be granted to Her Majesty, to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1897, for the expenses of Her Majesty's Embassies and Missions abroad, and of the Consular Establishments abroad, and other expenditure chargeable on the Consular Vote."

19. "That a Supplementary sum, not exceeding £36,700, be granted to Her Majesty to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1897, for sundry Colonial Services, including certain Grants in Aid."

20. "That a Supplementary sum, not exceeding £14,980, be granted to Her Majesty, to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1897, for sundry Colonial Services, including certain Grants in Aid."

21. "That a Supplementary sum, not exceeding £1,200, be granted to Her Majesty, to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1897, for the Expenses in connection with the Suppression of the Slave Trade."

22. "That a Supplementary sum, not exceeding £16,304, be granted to Her Majesty, to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1897, to make good the net loss on transactions connected with the raising of money for the various Treasury Chests Abroad in the year 1895-6."

CLASS VI.

23. "That a Supplementary sum, not exceeding £30,151, be granted to Her Majesty, to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1897, to make good the sum by which the Interest accrued in the year ended 20th November 1896, from Securities held by the National Debt Commissioners, on account of 'The Fund for the Banks of Savings' and 'The Fund for Friendly Societies' is insufficient to meet the Interest which the said Commissioners are obliged by Statute to Pay and Credit during such latter mentioned year to Trustees of Savings Banks and to Friendly Societies; and also the sum by which the Interest accrued in the year ended 31st December 1896, from Securities held by the National Debt Commissioners on account of 'The Post Office Savings Bank Fund,' is insufficient to meet the Interest which the said Commissioners are obliged by Statute to Pay and Credit during such latter mentioned year to Depositors and the Expenses incurred during that year in the execution of the Acts relating thereto."

24. "That a sum, not exceeding £95,434, be granted to Her Majesty, to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1897, for a Grant in Aid of the Capital of the Pension Fund created under the provisions of the National School Teachers' (Ireland) Act 1879."

CLASS VII.

25. "That a Supplementary sum, not exceeding £4,500, be granted to Her Majesty, to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1897, for the Salaries and other Expenses (including certain Grants in Aid) of Temporary Commissions and Committees, including Special Inquiries."

26. "That a sum, not exceeding £16,617, be granted to Her Majesty, to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1897, to make good certain sums written off from the Assets of the Local Loans Fund."

27. "That a sum, not exceeding £20,500, be granted to Her Majesty, to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1897, for Grants in Aid of the Expenses of the British Commissions for the International Exhibitions at Brussels, 1897, and Paris, 1900."

REVENUE DEPARTMENTS.

28. "That a Supplementary sum, not exceeding £6,800, be granted to Her Majesty, to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1897, for the Salaries and Expenses of the Inland Revenue Department."

29. "That a Supplementary sum, not exceeding £10, be granted to Her Majesty, to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1897, for the Salaries and Expenses of the Post Office Services."

Resolutions agreed to.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ALDERSHOT AND FARNBOROUGH) BILL.

Second Reading deferred till To-morrow.

BERRIEW SCHOOL BILL.

Second Reading deferred till To-morrow.

MILITARY LANDS ACT (1892) AMENDMENT BILL.

Committee deferred till To-morrow.

SUPPLY.

Committee deferred till Wednesday.

WAYS AND MEANS.

Committee deferred till Wednesday.

STEAM ENGINES AND BOILERS (PERSONS IN CHARGE) BILL.

Adjourned Debate on Motion for Committal to Standing Committee on Trade, etc. [17th February] further adjourned till To-morrow.

ESTATES TAIL BILL.

Second Reading deferred till Wednesday.

LICENSING EXEMPTION (HOUSES OF PARLIAMENT) BILL.

Second Reading deferred till To-morrow.

MOTION.

VERMINOUS PERSONS.

Bill to permit Local Authorities to provide cleansing and disinfection for persons infested with Vermin, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Hazell, Lord Balcarres, Sir Albert Rollit, Mr. Burt, and Mr. Field; presented, and Read the First time; to be Read a Second time upon Friday, 2nd April, and to be printed.—[Bill 147.]

PUBLIC ACCOUNTS.

Ordered, That the Committee do consist of Fifteen Members.

The Committee was accordingly nominated of:—Mr. Gibson Bowles, Mr. Buchanan, Mr. Victor Cavendish, Mr. Cameron Corbett, Mr. Gilliat, Mr. Hanbury, Mr. Brodie Hoare, Mr. Grant Lawson, Mr. Herbert Lewis, Mr. Luttrell, Sir Stafford Northcote, Mr. Arthur O'Connor, Dr. Tanner, Mr. Thornton, and Mr. Woodall.

Ordered, That the Committee have power to send for persons, papers, and records.—[*Sir William Walrond.*]

House adjourned at Twenty minutes after Twelve o'clock.

HOUSE OF LORDS.

Tuesday, 2nd March 1897.

THOMPSON'S DIVORCE BILL [H.L.].

Order of the Day for the Second Reading read; Counsel called in; Witnesses examined. Moved, That the Bill be now read 2ª; the same was agreed to. Bill read 2ª accordingly, and committed to a Committee of the whole House on Thursday next.

STANDING COMMITTEE.

Report from the Committee of Chairmen of the Standing Committee, That they have appointed the Lord Herschell Chairman of the Standing Committee; read, and ordered to lie on the Table.

CRETE.

THE EARL OF KIMBERLEY, on rising to call attention to the statement made (25th February) by the noble Marquess the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs of the policy intended to be pursued with respect to Crete, was received with Opposition cheers. He said: My Lords, I am so deeply sensible of the exceeding gravity of the crisis in the affairs connected with Crete at this moment that even if I were disposed to make, which I am not, any attack on the Government, I certainly should refrain from it. I need hardly assure the noble Marquess that I have not the smallest desire in any way to embarrass the Government in the conduct of the most difficult affairs in which they are engaged—[*cheers*]—but I think it is fitting that, upon the statement made by the noble Marquess the other night, some observations—prudent observations I trust—should be made. Before, however, I proceed, I have a word to say arising out of the Blue-book which has been presented to Parliament upon Cretan affairs. I have not had the advantage of studying that Blue-book, as a copy of it has not yet reached me, but through the extracts published in the public Press I have been able to read some of the important documents contained in it. There is only one to which I desire to advert, and that is the answer given by the noble Marquess to the communication of July 27, last year, from the Austro-Hungarian Government, and I think I shall have general concurrence when I say I believe that answer will have been universally read with the greatest satisfaction. [*Cheers.*] I think I shall be correct in assuming that the noble Marquess, however strong may be his desire—his natural and just desire—to act in harmony with the other Powers of Europe, will not allow himself to be forced into any Measures which may be repugnant to the feeling which prevails generally throughout this country. As to the statement itself I, of course, am not aware—the noble Marquess will probably tell us—whether what may be termed, I suppose, the proposals of Her Majesty's Government were entirely accepted by the other Powers; but I may assume that, to a very large extent at all events, they represent an agreement which has now been arrived at. At any rate, the statement contains the policy which Her Majesty's Government desired to pursue. One thing, happily, appears to be irrevocably decided by the Powers—namely, that in no circumstances shall Crete return under the direct domination of the Sultan of Turkey. [*Cheers.*] That I apprehend is the solid basis which has been laid for whatever settlement may ultimately be arrived at; but, speaking for myself only—though I believe that there are not a few who agree with me—putting aside all feeling of sympathy with the Greeks, concerning which I shall say something presently, as a mere cold question of policy, it would have been wiser and safer to have joined Crete to the kingdom of Greece. ["Hear, hear!"] My Lords, perhaps no more unfortunate event occurred some 60 years ago, or rather more, than the refusal of the Powers to unite Crete to the then newly-formed independent kingdom of Greece, and anyone who will refer to the remarkable correspondence which passed between Prince Leopold, the Earl of Aberdeen, and the Duke of Wellington at that time, will see that Prince Leopold in point of fact prophesied all the evils which have arisen by leaving Crete under the domination of the Porte, and not adding it to

Greece. His words might be adopted by anyone at the present time. I believe it would have been a wiser course; but however, the Powers have determined upon what is termed "autonomy." Now autonomy is a very blessed word; something like the well-known blessed word "Mesopotamia;" but everything depends upon what autonomy means. Now, in the first place, I suppose we all agree that that autonomy which is to be, as I understand, under the sovereignty of the Sultan should be complete and clearly defined. There is an example, which has been often quoted, of the autonomy of Samos, but I desire to point out that the circumstances of the island of Samos differ largely and essentially from the conditions of the island of Crete, because in Samos there are scarcely any Mussulmans amongst the population. I have been told there are some twenty; but, no matter what the number may be, the population is almost entirely Christian. On the other hand, in Crete there is a considerable body—I forget the exact proportion—of Mussulmans, and it is obvious that, whilst in Samos it is easy, no doubt, to govern a population which is homogeneous, or nearly entirely Christian, in Crete, unless there be a strong controlling power, it would be exceedingly difficult to govern such a population as there exists; and that is one of the reasons why I, personally, think it would have been well to have placed Crete under Greece. What I dread is this, that the Powers may have decided upon autonomy in principle, but have formed no scheme as to the manner in which that autonomy is to be carried into effect, or as to the precise nature of the autonomy which is to be established. If that be so, and if they are about to proceed to summon the Greeks to retire, or have proceeded, perhaps, already at this moment to summon the Greeks to retire from Crete, it seems to me that there may ensue great confusion, great further disturbance and difficulties, the end of which it is hard to foresee. It is quite obvious that there must be some means of preserving order in Crete until the new Government is entirely established, and upon that I find that the noble Marquess, in the statement he made, added some observations which I must confess filled me with considerable alarm. He said:—

> "It does not follow that, certainly in the case of Turkey, all the troops can be withdrawn immediately. Mere questions of police would prevent such a result as that."

I ask myself can it be intended, after the withdrawal of the Greek troops, to use the Turkish troops for the purpose of policing the island. Surely if any such attempt be made, it will only prolong the conflict between the insurgents and the Turks, and lead to disasters as great as, if not greater than, any which have hitherto occurred. The insurgents, finding that they have no longer the assistance of the Greek troops, will probably commit some of the crimes natural in a civil war, and, alas! we know too well what has taken place in other parts of Turkey, and, to some extent, in Crete itself. We know that in such circumstances the Turkish troops are not likely to be subject to much restraint. For these reasons, it seems to me that it is almost absolutely necessary that there should be organised a means of keeping order in the island before there is a withdrawal of the troops; and, further than that, it seems to me both policy and justice require that the withdrawal of the Turkish and Greek troops should practically be simultaneous. [*Opposition cheers.*] That, I think, would have a very pacifying effect upon the insurgents, and I believe, whatever you may think—and I have my own opinion, which I will express presently, as to the proceeding of the Greek Government in sending troops into the island—it would be wiser, now that the Greek troops are there, to make use of them rather than to aggravate the state of things which exists by peremptorily withdrawing them from the island, probably by the exercise of force. A further statement made by the noble Marquess with regard to the Turkish troops was that their withdrawal "is a necessary condition of administrative autonomy." It may be proper, he said, to keep, as in the case of Samos, and now for many years in the case of Servia, some troops—some few troops, no doubt, is meant—as an indication simply of sovereignty. The Samian Constitution states positively in terms that no Turkish troops are to remain in the island; but I believe there is some guard of honour to the Governor. Whether that be so or not, I have no information which enables me precisely to say; but to me it seems that it would be far safer if no Turkish troops remained in Crete, and I cannot understand why it should be necessary as an indication of sovereignty, because no doubt there will be stipulations that some tribute be paid to the Turkish Government, and there will be other indications which will clearly show that the sovereignty of the Sultan over the island continues. However that may be—and I do not attach must importance to the point, but merely mention it because the noble Marquess referred to it—what I insist upon is this, that until the Turkish troops are withdrawn from the island, there will be no security whatever that there will be order and peace in the island, and the sooner, therefore, they can be withdrawn the better. My Lords, I have made these observations, which I have strictly confined to the statement made by the noble Marquess; but there is one further statement besides that as to autonomy which undoubtedly and necessarily is of the gravest character—namely, that as to the determination of the Powers to summon both the Turks and the Greeks to withdraw their troops from the island, and if either of them refuse, to compel them by force to do so. If we are to believe what we read in the newspapers, the summons may have been presented to Greece. If it is not presented at this moment, no doubt it will be presented very shortly. I do not, of course, know what the terms of that summons may be; but we have been told that the Russian Government laid great stress upon the summons being to retire within three days. I should be glad if the noble Marquess is in a position to give any information as to the precise nature of the summons which has been delivered to the Greek Government. The newspapers also contain a document which, according to the statement I have read, has been actually presented to the Greek authorities. It is said that it was communicated to the Greek Chamber by one of the Ministers, and caused a great sensation, at which I am not surprised. It is the notification of the foreign Admirals—I quote from *The Times*—as to the measures that they will take. The words are:—

> "The admirals do not allow the Greek fleet to bombard the occupied fortresses and towns. They forbid any attack by Greek troops on the fortresses aforesaid. They do not permit the landing of guns or of ammunition. They forbid any attack on the Turkish ships on the part of the Hellenic fleet. They do not permit the troops of Colonel Vassos to advance into the interior of the island. Any attempt on the part of the Greeks to infringe these orders will be repelled by the combined fleets."

*THE PRIME MINISTER (The MARQUESS of SALISBURY): That is not correct.

THE EARL OF KIMBERLEY: I ask myself what can be the meaning of the Greeks permitting troops—

*THE PRIME MINISTER: I think I shall save the noble Earl from unnecessary argument if I say that I never heard of the document. ["Hear, hear!"]

THE EARL OF KIMBERLEY: Very likely. I am glad to hear it; but the noble Marquess will admit that it is exceedingly natural that I should make this comment upon it—namely, that, undoubtedly, it is quite within the power of the fleet to do all that; but one is a little puzzled to see how, unless forces are landed, you can prevent the Greeks from advancing into the interior of the island.

*THE PRIME MINISTER: "Hear, hear!"

THE EARL OF KIMBERLEY: If force is to be applied to compel the Greek troops to retire from the island, military forces must be employed in the island itself, and I should doubt whether the Powers contemplate that. I read that extract because I wished to get the explanation which the Prime Minister has been good enough to give us. With regard to the summons itself, I certainly sympathise strongly and deeply with the Greeks in the action they have taken. My feeling is this, that they alone have forced the Powers to act with decision in this matter, and it is due to Greece really that Crete will be emancipated from Turkish rule. Otherwise months more might have passed of massacre and turmoil, and the result might have been as distant now as it is in regard to the unfortunate Armenians, for whom, in point of fact, nothing has been done. I say, all honour to the Greeks—["hear, hear!"]—for what they have done. It is said that they have violated international law. I am not an international jurist, but I never yet heard that an act of war on the part of a regular Government was a violation of international law. No one can doubt that the invasion of Crete by Greek troops, Crete being a Turkish possession, was a distinct act of war, and one which the Turkish Government would have been entirely justified in treating as an act of war. I have heard it spoken of as a filibustering expedition; but if that be the case, there are few governments which have not been engaged in filibustering expeditions. [*Laughter.*] However that may be, the Greeks deserve warm sympathy for what they have done. But, my Lords, in circumstances so exceedingly grave and so critical, involving questions reaching so far, I certainly could not, as far as my humble voice goes, take upon myself the responsibility of offering any counsel to Greece at the present moment to take any step which might endanger her safety or prejudice her hopes for the future. [*Cheers.*] She has already done much for the freedom of her Hellenic countrymen in Crete, and I believe that it is not too sanguine to expect that, at no very distant date, although she may be again disappointed, as she was in 1829, Crete will be united with Greece under one Greek Government. [*Cheers.*]

*THE PRIME MINISTER who was received with cheers, said: I have nothing to complain of in the tone adopted by the noble Lord. He is too familiar with the difficulties with which foreign administration has to contend to have said anything to embarrass the Government in his remarks. But naturally there is much in what he has said to which I cannot consent. I will begin by saying that he is right in his conclusion that the policy which I explained by reading the telegram on Thursday night is a policy that has, on the whole, been accepted by the Powers. But I am compelled to put in a word of reservation, because I think it is right that I should say that that part of my statement which referred to the withdrawal of the Turkish troops has not been received without considerable demur on the part of many of the Powers. In fact, the one thing desired by the noble Lord is the one thing that they apprehend. I do not think that they were as unreasonable as it may have seemed at first sight, but the point which I have mostly to defend in their action, so far as it is incumbent on me to defend it, is in the decision that Crete should not form part of the Hellenic Kingdom. I do not admit that that is doing any violence to Crete. We have no grounds for thinking so. Before this crisis arose we had no evidence that there was on the part of the Cretan population, as a whole, a desire to be united to Greece. We know now that to the Mussulman part of the population it would be intensely distasteful. Whether it would be agreeable to the others at this moment it is impossible to say. I put aside the notion that you can trust the announcements of the leaders of insurrections, of politicians whose position is depending upon the success of the enterprise which they have sustained. Such evidence is of no value at all for declaring what the fixed and permanent and steady view of the population may be. I think that our experience of some 30 or 40 years ago may dispose of any inclination to apply the machinery of a *plébiscite* to ascertain a similar result. If I were to decide this question in the interests of Crete alone, without reference to any larger question or to the desire of any other Power, I should still say that it was a rash and hazardous, and, perhaps, an unjustifiable step to force Crete into a union with Greece at a moment when it is impossible that a sober and deliberate determination of the people can genuinely be ascertained. ["Hear, hear!"] The noble Lord has indulged in eulogies of Greece, and that, no doubt, is part of his case; and if I were contesting with him before a tribunal part of my case would be exactly the reverse, but in the position in which I stand I cannot develop that view. It is, however, but fair to ask whether you have a right to rush on the union of a separate island and a people like the Cretans with people on the mainland with whom they have really no community of interest and only a community, if it be such, of race, and a certain community of language. I ask whether you have a right to rush that union on without considering—without taking some precautions to ascertain—what their wishes are in that respect. If, when some years have passed, they should be of opinion that—looking at the financial position of Greece, looking upon its success in past years in maintaining public order, looking upon the character of its administration, and the salient features of its political history—an alliance with Greece, a closer union with Greece, is one that the Cretan population ought to desire, I am exceedingly sceptical that the majority of the Great Powers would offer any opposition to such a result. But I say, for the sake of the Cretans themselves, it is right that matters should be deferred until a more quiet and deliberate consideration of the question is possible, when they should really have an opportunity of giving a sincere and reflecting opinion as to the effects of the union with Greece on their future destinies. But, my Lords, I have said this assuming that I am arguing about Crete alone. Of course, everybody knows that I am not. There are other considerations of the most potent character which have weighed with the Powers in the decision to which they have come. Some of them are territorial questions which will readily occur to the mind of the noble Lord, and he will forgive me for not entering upon them. But to others I may advert, and they are most important. There is no feeling which I have found so strong among the Powers with whom I have been in communication as the belief that if this enterprise of Greece, which they stigmatise as illegal—and they use stronger language than that—is to be allowed to result in the attainment of a great territorial advantage to the Greek Government, the example will spread, the signal will be given, the fire of civil war will be lit where there is peace now. All men are familiar with the fact that, if the fire of civil war is lit on the Continent of Europe and in the Turkish Empire, it will not be civil war alone with which we shall have to deal. These are grave considerations, and we have been struck with the intensity with which they have presented themselves to the minds of the other Powers. I have also been struck with the utter neglect which they have received from public opinion here. I should say that the dominant feeling with the other Powers is this—we sympathise with the Cretans, we are earnestly desirous to serve them, to prevent and to bring to an end oppression; but if it is to be a question whether the arrangements which have gone on are to continue with only slow and general amelioration, or whether the whole of Europe is to be plunged into a cauldron of civil war, we say that the interests of vast masses of populations are superior to those of the few who appear in the forefront of the present crisis, and that it is our duty to maintain the existing state of things until we can see a safe and peaceful issue. [" Hear, hear! "] Of course, in using the phrase " the existing state of things," I refer to the integrity of the Turkish Empire, and not to the question of autonomy which we are all content to give. Therefore, my Lords, in judging of the position of the Powers that Crete is not to form part of the Hellenic Kingdom you must in the first place consider the interests of the Cretans themselves; you must ask yourselves whether you have any sufficient and adequate reasons for supposing that the Cretans themselves desire or that they would be better for it; and you must further give your sympathies to those wider views which are in favour of the preservation of the paramount blessings of European peace which have weighed heavily with all the great nations in the decision to which they have come. [" Hear, hear! "] The noble Lord pressed the question of the Turkish soldiery very strongly. The question of the Turkish soldiery is one with which I am very familiar. When I am here or with my colleagues in the other House we hear of nothing but of the necessity of turning the Turkish soldiers out of Crete, but when I am at the Foreign Office I hear of nothing but the expediency of not interfering with the Turkish soldiery unnecessarily. The belief which the Powers entertain is that the Turkish soldiery in Crete are not to be feared for the purposes of any prospective action such as the noble Lord has in his mind. By all accounts they have—I mean the regular Turkish soldiers in Crete—behaved extremely well during the present crisis, and there is really no ground to apprehend that they will disobey the orders of their officers in the future. But I may mention that I believe that a combined representation has been addressed to the Porte pointing out that the withdrawal of the Turkish soldiery must be a necessary consequence of autonomy—I am speaking from memory—and that it ought to be conducted as expeditiously as the circumstances of the situation permit, and that as soon as possible the Turkish soldiers should be gathered into those parts of the island where, being side by side with the European troops, there will be no danger of any contest or conflict between them and the islanders. I hope that the Porte will take that view—

I think that would be very desirable; but I am bound to say that the proposal to remove them immediately seems to me not practicable. There is no police. A gendarmerie was established and money for it was begun to be provided, but the enterprise of the Greek Kingdom has stopped the raising of the loan and has stopped the payment of the gendarmerie, with the result that the gendarmes, taking a very natural view of their own interest, declined to serve merely upon promises. Major Bor is there, but I am not sure that he has any gendarmes under him, and he only holds by a temporary title. He is unfortunately a British subject, and therefore some of the other Powers would rather like to see him displaced by an officer of some neutral Power. I am told that there is a very excellent Belgian officer who is willing to hold the position, but I am not sure that the arrangement has arrived at a condition of maturity. The noble Lord will therefore see that the question of an efficient gendarmerie in Crete is not sufficiently before us. I think that I heard some words dropped which sugested that the police should be maintained by the Powers.

The Earl of KIMBERLEY: I only asked how the Powers intended to maintain the police.

*The PRIME MINISTER: That is a very different matter, and it is a reasonable request. A very learned person with whom I was discussing this matter yesterday informed me that two centuries ago, when the Turks took possession of the island, they found an army of 250,000 men necessary to keep order—["hear, hear!" *and a laugh*]—and therefore I am not certain that the bluejackets detailed by different vessels would be adequate for the purpose. ["Hear, hear!" *and laughter.*]

The Earl of KIMBERLEY: I never thought that they would be.

*The PRIME MINISTER: The case is certainly one of extreme difficulty. For my part I should not be jealous—and I am speaking only for myself—if any one of the Great Powers would undertake to police Crete. But that duty has not been undertaken by them yet, and therefore we must work with such materials as we have. It appears to me, and I believe that it appears to all the Powers, that it would be a rash act to at once withdraw the Turkish troops, who are really our only safeguard against disorder, until we get something in their place. That they are ultimately to be withdrawn is undoubted, but that they shall be withdrawn at the same time as the Greek troops, whom some of the Great Powers look upon as mere invaders, is, I think, an unreasonable demand. But I hope that, if the Porte is content to leave the Turkish troops, under the supervision of European troops, to protect them from the suspicion of the noble Lord—I hope we shall be able to use them for all useful purposes without running the risk of any great dangers which he apprehends. But these are matters of detail. I cannot go more closely into detail, because I dare not answer for the consent of the Great Powers which I have not yet obtained. I can only assure the noble Lord that upon this point we are resolved—that is, on effective autonomy for Crete, and by effective autonomy I mean an effective withdrawal of Crete from the arbitrary power of the Sultan. Without saying a word which is inconsistent with international comity, I think that it can be said without rashness that the arbitrary power of the Sultan has not hitherto succeeded in securing the well-being and peace of his Christian subjects—and that is the main object we have in view. But the Powers are firmly resolved that Crete shall not for the present time form part of the Hellenic Kingdom, and if the Hellenic Kingdom chooses to take issue with the Powers upon that point it must abide the consequences. The feeling upon that point is unanimous amongst the Powers. The feeling, as the noble Lord said, is strong among some people in favour of Greece, but the feeling in other parts of Europe is strong against them as having needlessly disturbed the peace of Europe, and as having risked a general conflagration, and as having brought the sanctions and obligations of international law to a certain extent into contempt, and as having placed us in a crisis which, if she had had somewhat more self-control and somewhat more patience, we should have been able successfully and peacefully to surmount. [*Cheers.*]

House adjourned at a quarter past Five o'clock, to Thursday next, a quarter past Ten o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

Tuesday, 2nd March 1897.

GOLD AND SILVER PLATE LICENCES BILL.

Order for Second Reading To-morrow read, and discharged.

Bill withdrawn.

NOTICES OF MOTION.

EAST INDIA (OFFICERS OF GENERAL LIST).

MR. HEYWOOD JOHNSTONE (Sussex, Horsham): To call attention to the grievance of the Officers of the General List (Indian Army) in the matter of their Pensions; and to move that a Select Committee of this House be appointed to inquire into their case. [*Tuesday* 30*th March.*]

LABOUR LAW.

MR. EDMUND ROBERTSON (Dundee): To call attention to the Laws affecting Labour; and to move a Resolution. [*Tuesday* 30*th March.*]

AGRICULTURAL POPULATION.

MR. ATHERLEY-JONES (Durham, N. W.): To call attention to the condition of the agricultural population; and to move a Resolution. [*Tuesday* 30*th March.*]

FOOD SUPPLIES (UNITED KINGDOM).

MR. SETON-KARR (St. Helen's): To call attention to the wholly inadequate production of food supplies within the area of the United Kingdom in relation to its large and increasing population; and to move, That, in the opinion of this House, the dependence of the United Kingdom on foreign imports for the necessaries of life, and the consequences that would arise therefrom in the event of war, demand the serious attention of Her Majesty's Government. [*Tuesday* 30*th March.*]

QUESTIONS.

NAVAL ESTABLISHMENT (PAY).

MR. HUDSON KEARLEY (Devonport): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Admiralty what number of men are employed in the Naval Establishments who receive less than 20s. a week?

THE SECRETARY TO THE ADMIRALTY (Mr. W. E. MACARTNEY, Antrim, S.): The number of men in Naval Establishments whose pay is less than 20s. a week is 4,231.

MR. KEARLEY: Do I understand the hon. Gentleman to say that some of these men have pensions?

MR. MACARTNEY: Yes.

MR. KEARLEY: Do the Government take the pensions into consideration when fixing the pay?

Mr. MACARTNEY was understood to reply in the negative.

*SIR CHARLES DILKE (Gloucester, Forest of Dean): Could a return be given showing in what places these men are employed at the present time? Of course the hon. Gentleman will see there is a reason for establishing a distinction between certain places?

MR. MACARTNEY said he would consider the matter.

INFANTRY RECRUITS (CHEST MEASUREMENT).

MAJOR RASCH (Essex, S.E.): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for War whether the standard for infantry has been reduced to 5 ft. 3½ ins. and 32 in. chest measurement for recruits under 20 years of age; and whether this is caused by the impossibility of filling existing establishments or to raise the new battalions.

*THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR WAR (Mr. BRODRICK, Surrey, Guildford): Recruiting varies with the state of the labour market, and temporary relaxations as regards height and girth have to be made from time to time when trade is brisk. In March of last year the supply of recruits was so abundant that we were able to exact the full standard and discontinue special enlistments below it. Recruits now are scarcer, and therefore young men under twenty whom the examining

Medical Officer pronounces to be likely to develop to the full standard will, until further orders, be accepted at the figures named in the Question.

PENAL SERVITUDE.

Mr. KEARLEY: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department (1) under what circumstances, and by what Judge, a convict returned for in the last Report of the Commissioners of Prisons and the Directors of Convict Prisons (Appendix No. 3) was sentenced to 29 years' penal servitude; (2) whether there is any limit to the number of specified years for which convicts can be sentenced in cases where the maximum punishment is penal servitude for life; and (3) what sentence in years would result in an equivalent to the actual imprisonment suffered by a convict sentenced to penal servitude for life, assuming satisfactory conduct in each case?

The SECRETARY of STATE for the HOME DEPARTMENT (Sir Matthew White Ridley, Lancashire, Blackpool): The sentence is made up of four sentences imposed by Mr. Justice Stephen for various offences of blackmailing, indecent assault, and robbery with violence. The prisoner had been previously convicted of blackmailing, and the offences were of the worst kind. The answer to the second paragraph is in the negative; to the third, in the case of a male convict, a sentence of 26 years eight months. In the present case the convict is to be treated as under a life sentence.

IMPORTATION OF CATTLE (IRELAND).

Sir JOHN LENG (Dundee): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether he has been informed that extensive purchases of cattle have been made recently in Perth for breeding purposes in Ireland, and what necessity exists for demanding special licences and declarations with regard to such cattle on their importation into Ireland, seeing that Scotland is entirely free from contagious disease, and that no such licences and declarations are required on the importation of Irish cattle into Scotland, England, or Wales?

The CHIEF SECRETARY for IRELAND (Mr. Gerald Balfour, Leeds, Central): It appears that 55 cattle have recently been purchased at sales at Perth for importation into Ireland for breeding purposes; 40 of these were bought for the Congested Districts Board. For years past, in consequence of pleuro-pneumonia in Great Britain, the importation of British cattle into Ireland has been prohibited except with the special consent of the Lord Lieutenant. This consent is invariably given for the importation of cattle required for breeding purposes on satisfactory evidence that the cattle to be imported are free from disease, and that they have not been in any infected district or in contact with any diseased or suspected cattle, or otherwise exposed to infection. Pleuro-pneumonia still exists in Great Britain. More than one outbreak of the disease has occurred in England during the past year. Scotland is at present, so far as is known to the Irish Department, free from pleuro-pneumonia. There is, however, entirely free movement of cattle between England and Scotland, and the Irish Veterinary Department does not consider that the time has yet come for making any change in the existing conditions, which, as experience has shown, can, without difficulty, be complied with by persons desiring to import stock into Ireland. Cattle are not permitted to be exported from Ireland to Great Britain without having first obtained a licence declaring that the animals are free from disease, and this requirement has been in force since the passing of the Contagious Diseases (Animals) Act of 1878, when pleuro-pneumonia was prevalent in Ireland.

TOLLS (NEWPORT, CO. MAYO).

Dr. ROBERT AMBROSE (Mayo, W.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland (1) on what authority tolls are collected at Newport, County Mayo; (2) to whom do the tolls go; (3) is he aware that there is no weighing machine in the town; and (4) will he explain what right the landlord has to charge Customs for fishing boats coming up to the quay?

Mr. GERALD BALFOUR: The tolls go to Mrs. O'Donnell under the authority, it is understood, of a patent in her possession, though I am not in a position to verify this. There is no weighing machine in the village, but there are public scales. No Customs or tolls are charged for fishing boats as alleged in the last paragraph.

COPYHOLDERS (GROUND GAME).

MR. F. A. CHANNING (Northampton, E.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether his attention has been called to the position of copyholders in some cases where the right of free chase and free warren is vested in the lord of the manor, and to the fact that they have no rights under the Ground Game Act or any other Act to protect their crops from damage by ground game; and whether he will either introduce or give support to a Bill to confer upon such copyholders, under equitable conditions, similar rights to those enjoyed by tenant occupiers under the Ground Game Act?

SIR MATTHEW WHITE RIDLEY: My attention has been called to this matter, and I have been in communication in regard to it with the Board of Agriculture. I cannot undertake to introduce legislation myself, but I should be glad to give favourable consideration to any Bill dealing with the subject, as the hon. Member says, on equitable terms. The subject, however, presents several difficulties which have not been adequately dealt with in the Bills of previous years. The rights now in question, which may affect freehold as well as copyhold land, differ in material points from those affected by the Act of 1880.

MR. CHANNING: If a Bill is introduced by a private Member with proposals that meet with his approval, will the right hon. Gentleman assent to its passing, so far as he is concerned?

SIR MATTHEW WHITE RIDLEY said he should be glad to co-operate in removing the existing grievances, but so far the Bills he had seen did not deal adequately with the subject.

SLAVERY (NEW HEBRIDES).

MR. SAMUEL SMITH (Flintshire): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies whether his attention has been drawn to the fact that slavery in the New Hebrides still continues; that natives are sold to dealers like sheep at £6 to £10 on some of the trading vessels, and afterwards retailed according to the demand or the quality of the natives; and at some of the stations natives are placed in shackles because, as was alleged, they had not done sufficient work; aud what action he proposes to take in the matter?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES (Mr. J. CHAMBERLAIN, Birmingham, W): I have no information to the effect of the hon. Member's Question. If he can furnish me with any evidence of the existence of such a state of things, I will take action immediately against any British subjects concerned, but the New Hebrides are not British, I can, therefore, do no more. The right hon. Gentleman added: Since I came into the House the hon. Member has been good enough to send me an extract from a newspaper—it does not appear which——

MR. S. SMITH: *The Melbourne Argus.*

MR. J. CHAMBERLAIN: The extract is part of a letter signed "Henry Varley, San Francisco," who refers to an anonymous statement in *The Melbourne Argus* speaking of a report received from a recent visitor, also anonymous. The hon. Member will see that upon a statement of that kind—which is threefold anonymous—[*laughter*]—it is impossible for me to take any serious action. ["Hear, hear!"]

RE-ARREST OF DISCHARGED PRISONERS.

MR. SAMUEL SMITH: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will bring in a Bill to obviate the difficulties at times caused to the police and the hardships to some prisoners by re-arrests at prison gates for similar offences previously committed in a different county or jurisdiction; or, if not prepared to take this course, will he send out generally to police authorities, chairmen of quarter sessions, and judges a circular on this subject, similar to the one addressed by himself last summer to the Liverpool Watch Committee, so as to facilitate arrangements that a prisoner on trial on confessing any previous offence in addition to that for which he is accused, may be dealt with by a single sentence and punishment?

SIR MATTHEW WHITE RIDLEY: I have considered the possibility of remedying the hardship to which the hon. Member refers by means of legislation, and have consulted Her Majesty's Judges on the point; but it was found that there were great difficulties in the way. In order if possible to diminish the hardship, I caused the circular which the hon. Member mentions to be issued, not to the Liverpool Watch Committee only, but to all the police authorities in the country. I do not see that anything would be gained by issuing another circular to judges, recorders, or chairmen of quarter sessions. I am glad to say that I find the circular has been effective.

GIBRALTAR (DRAINAGE WORKS).

MR. EDMUND ROBERTSON (Dundee): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies whether he has received a protest from the Sanitary Board at Gibraltar against the mode in which the scheme of drainage works, agreed upon by the Inter-Departmental Committee, is being carried out; and, if so, whether he will lay it upon the Table?

MR. J. CHAMBERLAIN: I have received from the Governor of Gibraltar a communication addressed to him by the Sanitary Commissioners complaining of the large excess on the estimate for the execution of the drainage works. The papers will be referred to the consulting engineer, who is responsible for the estimate, and it would be unfair to that gentleman to publish the complaint before he has had an opportunity of replying to it.

VOLUNTARY SCHOOLS BILL.

MR. JAMES RANKIN (Herefordshire, Leominster): I beg to ask the Vice President of the Committee of Council on Education if in the case of a School Board District where there is no school' and the children of the district are sent to a Voluntary School outside the district, it is legal for the School Board of the district to pay the managers of the Voluntary School an agreed sum for each child so sent?

THE VICE-PRESIDENT OF THE COUNCIL (Sir JOHN GORST, Cambridge University): No, Sir; such a payment would not be legal.

QUEEN'S REIGN (COINAGE).

MR. W. F. LAWRENCE (Liverpool, Abercrombie): I beg to ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer whether it is in contemplation to issue the bronze coinage with the head of Her Majesty as it is at present on the last silver issue; and, if so, how soon; and whether, with a view to increase the historic and numismatic interest of the coinage generally, he will take the necessary steps to issue this year a complete and new series so as to specially commemorate if possible in some way on the coins themselves the sixtieth anniversary of Her Majesty's reign?

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Sir MICHAEL HICKS BEACH, Bristol, W.): The effigy of Her Majesty on the bronze coinage has been the same since 1895 as that on the silver coinage. It is not desirable to vary the design upon the coinage at short intervals of time. The present coinage is the result of the recommendation of the committee which sat in 1891, and is, I believe, generally considered satisfactory. I am afraid that the attempt of a special coinage in 1887 was by no means so successful as to encourage a fresh attempt of the same kind. The sixtieth anniversary of Her Majesty's reign will be commemorated by the issue of a medal.

RAILWAY RATES (LONDON AND TILBURY COMPANY).

MAJOR RASCH: I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade whether complaints of increased rates made by the London and Tilbury Railway (from 12 per cent. to 45 per cent.) on manures and blue lime, were deposited with the Board of Trade in pursuance of the Railway and Canal Traffic Acts 1886 and 1894, on 19th May 1896; will he explain why, although nine months have elapsed, no proposal has as yet been made by the Railway Company; and whether the Railway and Canal Traffic Act gives the Board of Trade power to prevent such delay; and, if not, whether the Department will consider the possibility of applying for the necessary powers?

THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF TRADE (Mr. C. T. RITCHIE, Croydon): The complaint referred to by the hon. and gallant Member was received by the Board of Trade about the date mentioned. After correspondence with the traders and the London Tilbury and Southend and the Great Eastern Railway Companies, a meeting of the representatives of the various parties was held at the Board of Trade in November last. At this meeting it was admitted that the increase of rates complained of was occasioned by a dispute between the Companies as to the division of the rates, and it was understood that the two Companies would consider whether they could make some arrangement by which the increase would be removed. The Board of Trade are prepared at any time to give the traders the necessary certificate to enable them to take their complaint before the Railway and Canal Commissioners, who alone have power to decide whether the increase is reasonable; but the Board still hope the Railway Companies will agree to return to the old rate. I am not prepared to apply to Parliament for any further powers.

NAVAL SHIPWRIGHTS.

CAPTAIN PIRIE (Aberdeen, N.): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Admiralty whether the allegations contained in a recent petition of the Naval shipwrights that they are compelled to perform menial tasks on board ship are correct; and, if so, whether, in view of the very responsible positions held by these men, the Lords of the Admiralty propose to take steps to prevent such employment of the time of these highly skilled artisans in the future.

MR. MACARTNEY: In common with all other ratings, except chief petty officers, shipwrights have to take part in the work necessary to keep their mess-place clean and the ship efficient. In this respect they are on the same footing as armourers, blacksmiths, skilled gunnery and torpedo ratings, whose duties are of the utmost importance as regards the fighting efficiency of the ship. It is not considered either necessary or desirable to treat the shipwrights in any exceptional manner.

MR. KEARLEY: Arising out of that answer, I should like to ask the hon. Gentleman whether it is not the fact that although special efforts were made by the Admiralty lately to fill up a hundred places, only two men responded to the appeal of the Admiralty?

*MR. SPEAKER: Order, order! That does not arise out of the question.

LAND TAX.

MR. G. H. MORRELL (Oxon, Woodstock): I beg to ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer whether he is aware that recent instructions have operated to raise the assessment of the Land Tax above the assessment for the Poor Rate on small agricultural holdings; that four-acre plots of purely agricultural land at Minster-Lovell (Oxon) are assessed at £8 12s. 6d. for Poor Rate and £13 for Land Tax, and that the small freeholder who has paid 7s. 7d. for Land Tax for 45 years is now (1897), without any alteration of his holding required to pay 10s. 10d. for Land Tax; and whether he will cause inquiry to be made with a view to correction of what appears to be a hardship to a large number of small freeholders?

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER: The increase of Land Tax on the property mentioned by the hon. Member is not due to any instruction from me or from the Inland Revenue. The assessment has been made by the Local Commissioners of Land Tax executing the duty imposed on them by the Land Tax Acts, and I have no power to interfere with them. I believe that it is probable that the plots of land in question include houses; and, if the tax on them has been raised, it must be because, in the opinion of the local Land Tax Commissioners, they have hitherto paid less than their due share of the quota of the parish, while other properties have been paying too much. The total quota of the parish cannot have been increased.

INDO-CHINA AND AUSTRALIAN MAIL CONTRACTS.

SIR JOHN LENG: I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury, as representing the Postmaster General, what number of tenders were received for the Indo-China and Australian mail contracts; whether they were all from British companies; and whether both with regard to speed and rates of subsidy, the tender of the Peninsular and Oriental

Shipping Company was in all respects the most advantageous?

THE SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY (Mr. R. W. HANBURY, Preston): Tenders for the Indo-China and Australian mail services, or for portions of them, were received from four companies. All the tenders received were from British companies. The only opportunity of obtaining a complete service to and from the whole of the British Possessions concerned was to accept offers of the Peninsular and Oriental Steam Navigation Company. When the contracts with these companies are signed they will be laid before the House for confirmation, and will be accompanied by a Treasury Minute giving full particulars of all the tenders received.

CASH BALANCES (INDIA).

MR. HERBERT ROBERTS (Denbighshire, W.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for India whether he will inform the House what is the present amount of the cash balances of the Indian Government, and in what proportions they are held in its Home Treasury in sterling and in India in rupees; if he will state how much of the balances held in India in rupees is in the Indian Government's own treasuries, and how much is out on deposit in the Presidency Banks; and whether he can give the sum now advanced on the money market from the Indian Government's Home Treasury?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR INDIA (Lord GEORGE HAMILTON, Middlesex, Ealing): On January 31 the cash balances in India amounted to Rx.11,400,000. The cash balance of the Home Treasury this morning was £2,099,462. It cannot at present be stated with accuracy how the balances in India on January 31 were divided between the Government's own treasuries and those of the Presidency banks. The Government deposits in the latter during the last week of January seem, however, to have amounted to about Rx.2,890,000, and the remainder, which would be about Rx.8,510,000, must have been distributed over Government Treasuries, which are very numerous. The amount now out at short dates on loan from the Home Treasury is £1,550,000.

NATIONAL SOCIETY FOR THE PREVENTION OF CRUELTY TO CHILDREN.

MR. E. H. PICKERSGILL (Bethnal Green, S.W.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether there are any instructions to the Metropolitan Police prescribing their relations with the National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children; how many cases were last year discovered by the Metropolitan Police and transferred by them to this Society for prosecution; and is there any other Society, and, if so, what, with which the Metropolitan Police have similar relations?

SIR MATTHEW WHITE RIDLEY: Yes, Sir, there are such instructions, and under them the Police notify to the Society particulars of all cases of cruelty to children which come to their notice. Five hundred and thirty-one such cases came to the notice of the Police during 1896, 182 of which were transferred to the Society for prosecution. There is no other society with which the police have similar relations.

UNIVERSITY COLLEGES.

SIR JOHN LENG: I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury what proportion of the increased grant of £9,500 to University Colleges in Great Britain will be allocated to Scotland; to what college or colleges; and in what sum or sums?

MR. HANBURY: The question of allocating the £25,000 included in the Civil Service Estimates for 1897-98 is still under consideration. It will probably be referred to a Committee to be appointed for the purpose.

MR. CARVELL WILLIAMS (Notts, Mansfield): Will the report of the Committee already appointed with reference to the grant be produced before the Vote is asked for?

MR. HANBURY: That is a separate question, which I cannot answer without notice.

PRIVATE LUNATIC ASYLUMS (IRELAND).

MR. W. FIELD (Dublin, St. Patrick): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether the visiting physicians of private lunatic asylums in Ireland are invariably approved of by the Recorder; and whether he will order a return of the number interned, the revenue accruing, and the cures effected during the last decade of private lunatic asylum management in Ireland?

MR. GERALD BALFOUR: The management of private lunatic asylums in Ireland is regulated by the 5th and 6th Vict., cap. 123, under which no approval of the appointment of a visiting physician is required. If the words "revenue accruing" are intended to refer to the amount received by way of fees on licences issued to private asylums there will be no objection to grant a return such as indicated, if the hon. Member will move for it in the usual way.

ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS, HEYWOOD.

MR. CARVELL WILLIAMS: I beg to ask the Vice President of the Committee of Council on Education when the Reports relative to the public elementary schools at Heywood will be laid upon the Table of the House?

SIR J. GORST: The Reports relative to the public elementary schools in Heywood have been laid upon the Table of the House to-day.

ARMENIA.

*MR. GIBSON BOWLES (Lynn Regis): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether he can confirm the statement published at page 95 of the French Yellow-book on Armenian affairs, that Her Majesty's Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs proposed on 13th August 1895 to Baron de Courcel, French Ambassador in London, to confide the surveillance by the Powers of the execution of Armenian reforms provided for by the Treaty of Berlin, to a Commission organised on the spot which might be composed of four Ottoman delegates and of one representative of each of the three Powers; what part it was proposed should be taken in such a Commission by the other Powers signatories of the Treaty of Berlin; and whether the proposal still subsists, or has now been abandoned?

*THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS (MR. G. CURZON, Lancashire, Southport): The Dispatch recording the conversation referred to will be found on page 120 of the Correspondence presented to Parliament in Turkey No. 1, 1896; and a considerable amount of correspondence with regard to it is contained in the pages which follow. The reason for which it was suggested that the three Commissioners should be nominated by Great Britain, France, and Russia was that they were the only Great Powers who possessed representatives on the spot, and that these representatives had been acting in concert since the events arising out of the Sasun massacre in 1894. The Porte strongly objected to the proposed surveillance Commission, and when a scheme of reforms which was considered to be satisfactory by the Great Powers was accepted by the Sultan the idea of the Commission was abandoned.

*MR. GIBSON BOWLES: I gather that it was proposed that no other Powers signatories to the Treaty of Berlin should take part?

*MR. CURZON: Yes. It was proposed that the Commission should be constituted, in addition to the Ottoman delegates, of representatives of those three Powers alone.

TOWN COURTS.

MR. D. MACALEESE (Monaghan, N.): I beg to ask the Attorney General for Ireland if the commissioners of a town incorporated under the Towns Improvement Act, 17 and 18 Vict., c. 103, which requires a population of 1,500 and upwards, cease to exist as commissioners when the population dwindles down to 1,100, or other number; and, does the Town Court, established to deal with offences committed within such town, continue to be a legal Court, and are its judgments legal judgments?

*THE ATTORNEY GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. J. ATKINSON, Londonderry, N.): This is a hypothetical and abstract Question, which I respectfully submit I may decline to answer.

MUZZLING DOGS.

Mr. H. C. STEPHENS (Middlesex, Hornsey): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Agriculture (1) whether he is aware that, as the muzzling orders for dogs in the counties of London, Surrey, and Hertford having been taken off, it is in contemplation to remove the muzzling order in the county of Middlesex; (2) whether it is true that fresh cases of rabies within the area of the counties mentioned have occurred quite recently; and (3) whether the Departmental Committee having reported that muzzling is not only an efficient, but the only means which is now practicable for the extermination of rabies, he will issue a muzzling order for an area and with conditions which would be likely to bring about the extermination of rabies.

*THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF AGRICULTURE (Mr. WALTER LONG, Liverpool, West Derby): The answer to the first question is in the affirmative. I regret to say the answer to the second is the same. In reply to the third, I would say that the circumstances which have recently occurred point clearly to the necessity for the issue of a muzzling order applicable to the whole of the metropolitan district, irrespective of the boundaries of particular local authorities. The form which such an order should take, is now engaging my attention, especially with regard to the description of muzzle to be used.

MR. STEPHENS asked when this order would probably be issued.

*MR. WALTER LONG: I am afraid I cannot give the exact date, but I hope to be able to make an announcement shortly.

DISCHARGE OF SEAMEN (FOREIGN PORTS).

SIR EDWARD GOURLEY (Sunderland): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade if he will be good enough to state how many seamen were paid off from British ships last year at the ports of Antwerp, Hamburg, Rotterdam, Dunkirk, and Havre, together with the amount paid in wages and the charges deducted by the Consulates; whether he is aware that in 1895, in connection with the discharge of seamen at the ports named, the charges of the Consuls amounted to the large sum of £4,600; and, whether he has yet decided to establish outdoor Board of Trade officials to assist seamen with advice at the ports of Antwerp, Hamburg, Rotterdam, and Havre, similar to the system now adopted at Dunkirk?

MR. RITCHIE: The number of seamen paid off from British ships at Antwerp in 1896 was 13,538. The amount paid in wages was £101,880, and the consular fees in respect of such discharges amounted to £1,353 16s. As regards the ports of Rotterdam, Hamburg, Dunkirk, and Havre, I have no figures for 1896, but the total number of men discharged at those ports in 1895–96 was 12,755, and the consular discharge fees amounted to £1,275. I have in these instances no authentic figures as to the wages. It has been decided to establish Board of Trade outdoor officers at Antwerp, Hamburg, and Rotterdam so as to extend the experiment introduced at Dunkirk. The officers are expected to be at their stations for duty in the course of next month.

TRANSVAAL.

SIR ELLIS ASHMEAD-BARTLETT (Sheffield, Ecclesall): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies what reply the Transvaal Government have made to the remonstrance of Her Majesty's Government regarding the recent legislation of the Volksraad which is in violation of the Convention of 1884?

MR. J. CHAMBERLAIN: I informed the hon. Member on the 21st of January that I propose to lay the papers on this subject before Parliament, but that until the time arrives for doing so I am unable to make any further statement. The correspondence is still incomplete, and cannot yet be laid.

EXPLOSION (H.M.S. "HOWE").

CAPTAIN DONELAN (Cork, E.): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Admiralty if he can state the cause of the recent explosion on board the guardship at Queenstown; and, whether the injured men are progressing favourably?

MR. MACARTNEY: No information has been received further than a telegram from the senior officer at Queenstown, to the effect that a chief stoker and a second-class stoker were seriously burnt by an explosion of coal-gas in one of the bunkers of the *Howe* last Friday afternoon, and that an inquiry had been ordered. Until this inquiry is completed, it is impossible to state the cause of the explosion.

Captain DONELAN: Can the hon. Gentleman say how the injured men are progressing?

Mr. MACARTNEY: We have no information.

POOR LAW RELIEF (IRELAND) BILL.

Mr. JAMES O'CONNOR (Wicklow, W.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland if he can say how soon he is likely to introduce the Poor Law Relief (Ireland) Bill?

Mr. GERALD BALFOUR: This Bill is nearly ready, and I hope to be able to introduce it shortly, though I am not yet able to fix the day. In view of the fact that the Bill is substantially the same as that introduced last year, I would venture to suggest that it should be allowed to be read the First time after 12 o'clock.

MAILS (SKIBBEREEN AND SCHULL).

Captain DONELAN: On behalf of the hon. Member for Cork Co., W. (Mr. James Gilhooly), I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury, as representing the Postmaster General, whether any arrangement has been made with the Schull and Skibbereen Tramway for the conveyance of the mails from Skibbereen to Schull?

Mr. HANBURY: As the hon. Member was informed only 11 days ago the question of using the Schull and Skibbereen Tramway for the conveyance of mails is under inquiry, and when the report has been received and considered the result shall be communicated to him.

SCHOOL TEACHERS (SUPERANNUATION).

Mr. VERNEY (Warwickshire, Rugby): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether it is the intention of the Government to introduce this Session a Bill dealing with the superannuation of school teachers?

The FIRST LORD of the TREASURY (Mr. A. J. Balfour, Manchester, E.): This is a matter which has been under the consideration of the Government, but we could not introduce a Bill until the educational legislation pending or promised has been brought in.

CRETE.

Mr. GIBSON BOWLES: I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether Her Majesty's Government have given attention to the statement by Consul Biliotti, in his dispatch of 22nd August, 1896, to the effect that the withdrawal of Turkish troops from the inland stations in Crete, on which the Vali had not been consulted, and which was said to have been ordered from Constantinople, would have the most disastrous consequences for the Mussulmans, from which the Christians would have to suffer in their turn later on, and that it may bring on the utter ruin of the island; whether this withdrawal was ordered from Constantinople on the advice of the European Powers: and whether any reply was made to, or any action taken by, Her Majesty's Government in consequence of Consul Biliotti's dispatch?

*Mr. CURZON: The withdrawal of the Turkish troops from the inland stations was not taken on the advice of the European Powers. It does not appear certain that it was taken by orders from Constantinople. But it was obviously a matter in which the Turkish Authorities were the best judges as to the most expedient course to pursue, and Her Majesty's Government took no measures to interfere with their discretion on the subject. Her Majesty's Government had already, in July, made representations as to the necessity of the Vali being consulted in regard to the arrangements made by the Military Commander. The Consul's dispatch was one imparting information, and did not call for a reply.

Sir EDWARD GOURLEY: I beg to ask the First Lord of the Admiralty whether his attention has been called to a telegraphic statement, dated Thursday last, from Canea, that *H.M.S. Barfleur* had only 150 tons of coal in her bunkers, whilst she burns with banked fires 15 tons a day, thus rendering her until re-coaled practically useless, and in the event of bad weather unable to steam to a place of safety; and will he state what arrangements have been made for the proper coaling of the squadrons compelled to remain in the neighbourhood of Crete and the Archipelago?

THE FIRST LORD OF THE ADMIRALTY (Mr. GOSCHEN, St. George's, Hanover-square): I have received no such information. The provision of coal is in the hands of the Commander-in-Chief of the station, and the Admiralty have no reason to suppose that he does not make all proper arrangements for the supply of the squadron in Cretan waters.

MR. BRYN ROBERTS (Carnarvonshire, Eifion): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether, in or about November 1895, or at any other time, one of the Great Powers of Europe proposed to the others that the Dardanelles should be entered by or with the sanction of the Powers, with a view of coercing Turkey or with any other view; and whether Her Majesty's Government considered any such proposal, and whether they supported or opposed it?

*MR. CURZON: I regret that I can give the hon. Member no information on the first part of the Question. No such proposal has been submitted to Her Majesty's Government.

MR. C. J. DARLING (Deptford): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (1) whether his attention has been called to a statement in *The Daily Chronicle* of this morning to the effect that the document printed in that paper on March 1, purporting to be a protest by the Greek Government against the bombardment, and addressed to the Six Powers, had been communicated to Her Majesty's Government; and (2) whether he is correctly reported as having said in this House, in reply to a Question, that he believed that this communication had not been received by Her Majesty's Government?

*MR. CURZON: Yes, Sir; my answer to both Questions is in the affirmative. What happened was as follows:—On Thursday evening the Greek Chargé d'Affaires called at the Foreign Office and read to the permanent Under Secretary of State a telegram from his Government, of which, however, he declined to leave a copy or a written *précis*, as he said he was not authorised to do so. At the same time he promised to send a *précis* of the Greek Commodore's report from Canea which formed an annex to the telegram. The *précis* duly arrived the next day. On Saturday the Chargé d'Affaires again called, and left a *précis* of another telegram from his Government. But the latter communication was not identical with the Dispatch published in *The Daily Chronicle*, which we have never received, and upon the identity of which with the telegram read out to the Under Secretary we are not in a position to pronounce.

MR. HENRY LABOUCHERE (Northampton): Would the right hon. Gentleman state whether the Foreign Office did obtain a copy, or took a copy, of what was stated by the Greek Chargé d'Affaires?

*MR. CURZON: I have already said that the Greek Chargé d'Affaires declined to leave a copy, and of course the Permanent Under Secretary did not copy it, while it was being read. [*Laughter.*]

*SIR E. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT: Can the Under Secretary state whether the report is true that Candamos is captured, and, if so, what is the fate of the Mussulman inhabitants?

*MR. CURZON: The following telegram was received this morning from Her Majesty's Consul at Canea:—

> "Governor of Candano reported that on February 26 insurgents and Greek troops with two cannons destroyed Candano blockhouse, and day following occupied commanding position; blockaded Mussulmans, having no ammunition or victuals, beg that pity should be taken on women and children. Having told them that admirals had done all they could do on their behalf, they pointed out that captain of French ship *Suchet* had rescued hundreds of Turks from far inland villages with small relief parties. I offered my services to Admiral Harris in case a last attempt should be made to save lives of Mussulmans at Candano, and consequently of such Christians as may fall victims to retaliation. Deputations of Mussulmans implored assistance of Great Powers. Greek Vice Consul having come to my office and stated that Mussulmans had applied to him to obtain liberation of besieged at Candano, two leading chiefs who were present declared that they spoke in the name of all the Mussulmans in Crete, that they had placed all their hopes in the Great Powers, and would never consent to union with Greece. Admiral informed me that Spinalonga had been revictualled, and that an Italian ship of war being at Hierapetra, that town could not be bombarded; also that four ships of war had been sent—two westward and two eastward—to visit all the creeks of the island to distribute the proclamation and to exhort the population to keep quiet."

We have also received the following telegram from the British Admiral:—

> "Mahomedans at Selino, Candano, Hierapetra are reported by Consul to be in great danger of massacre by Cretans and Greeks. Admirals are concerting to hoist flags at the places, and to inform Colonel Vassos that they are under the protection of Great Powers. From information received of Greeks reducing these Turkish blockhouses in the south by gunfire, my opinion is that Greeks have taken their field guns away from Canea and are using them elsewhere. Information as to what has happened inland very difficult to get, but many reports say that Greeks and Cretans are exterminating Mahomedans wherever they can."

*Sir E. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT: Can the right hon. Gentleman state why the force of 300 men which the three Consuls informed the Great Powers eight days ago were sufficient to save the lives of these besieged Mussulmans has not been sent and landed, and, if not, whether Her Majesty's Government will direct that a sufficient landing force shall be sent immediately?

*Mr. CURZON: We have no information that the force has not been sent; on the contrary, I have more than once stated to the House that ships have been sent, and presumably those ships have men upon them. When my hon. Friend talks about saving the lives of these unhappy beleaguered garrisons, as the telegrams I have read show, it does not appear that those lives have been sacrificed.

*Sir E. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT: Has not Candamos been captured?

*Mr. CURZON: I have read the only information which we have received.

SUPPLY (NAVY ESTIMATES).

Sir C. DILKE asked the First Lord of the Admiralty for an explanation of the non-appearance of the Navy Estimates which he had promised for that morning?

The FIRST LORD of the ADMIRALTY said he believed they would be in the Vote Office that afternoon. They would certainly be in the hands of the right hon. Gentleman in the course of the afternoon.

CRETAN QUESTION (DECLARATION OF POLICY).

MOTION FOR ADJOURNMENT.

*Sir WILLIAM HARCOURT (Monmouthshire, W.) rose in his place, and asked leave to move the Adjournment of the House for the purpose of discussing a definite matter of urgent public importance, viz, "the declaration made by Her Majesty's Government to this House on Thursday last of their policy on the Cretan question."

*Mr. SPEAKER asked if the right hon. Gentleman had the leave of the House. The pleasure of the House having been signified by general assent,

*Sir W. HARCOURT said: The House will remember that on Thursday last the right hon. Gentleman made a statement to this House of the policy of Her Majesty's Government, and he said at the time that an identical statement would be made in the other House of Parliament. Now, Sir, that did not turn out to be absolutely correct, because a statement appears to have been made in another place which was not identical, but which contained additional particulars of a very important character—["hear, hear!"]—to which I will presently refer. What we were informed was that a telegram was sent late on Wednesday night to the Five Powers in those terms:—

> "Inform Government to which you are accredited that Her Majesty's Government propose to make the following public declaration of the policy which they are prepared to pursue and which they believe to be in accordance with the views of their allies."

Now, it was admitted by the right hon. Gentleman that that was a remarkable proceeding; he said it was a departure from ordinary diplomatic tradition, and that they were making this statement of their views before receiving the full and formal assent to those views of their colleagues.

The FIRST LORD of the TREASURY: Allies.

*Sir W. HARCOURT: Of their allies. That savours of the new diplomacy. It is quite true that it was a remarkable departure from diplomatic custom. The right hon. Gentleman also mentioned, which was correct, that we did not, on this side of the House, ask for that statement. We were willing to leave it to the discretion of Her Majesty's Government to determine what was the time and what was the manner in which they would announce to this House the policy they intended to pursue. It was volunteered by the Government, I have no doubt, for very good reasons, at that time, and it was made public, as we were told, before the assent of the other Powers had been given. That is extremely important with reference to the first question which I desire to ask Her Majesty's Government. I would first remind the House what was the declaration under several heads. It was:—

> "(1) That the establishment of administrative autonomy in Crete is, in our judgment, a necessary condition to the termination of the international occupation; (2) that, subject to the above provision, Crete ought, in our judgment, to remain a portion of the Turkish Empire; (3) that Turkey and Greece ought to be informed by the Powers of the above Resolution; and (4) that if either Turkey or Greece persistently refuse, when required,"—

we were told in another place that the emphatic words were

> "when required—to withdraw their naval and military forces from the island, the Powers should impose their decision by force upon the State so refusing."

The first question I have to ask is this, Has the assent of the other Five Powers been given to those proposals of the Government in the manner and form in which they were there presented, or has any modification been made of those terms? I ask that for this reason—that immediately those terms and that programme of Her Majesty's Government were published here there was a demonstration of a character which certainly did not bear signs to very cordial assent in other quarters. I do not desire to press that matter, which it might not be desirable now to raise, but that is the reason why I think it is very important we should be told, in the first place, whether or not these categorical terms of the policy put forward by Her Majesty's Government have been accepted, and are practically now in force, in what is called the Concert of Europe. There is at least one thing in regard to this publication which I am entitled to refer to, and that is, that it was an invitation to this House, as it was to the world, to discuss the terms of this policy. ["Hear, hear!"] That may be regarded as sufficient justification of the Motion I shall make, and I am happy to say that the courteous reception which it has had from the Leader of the House implies that he does not differ from that view. It was obviously intended that the House of Commons should discuss this question when they became acquainted with the policy of Her Majesty's Government. I do not know whether it will be alleged by anybody that a discussion of the situation in which we find ourselves—a very grave situation without doubt—is premature. There is one quarter in which I am sure that such an allegation will not be made, and that is upon the Treasury Bench; nor will it be made by the able representative of the Foreign Office in this House. On Thursday night I suggested that we should take time to consider the policy so propounded and that the Debate should take place on Friday, but when the Leader of the House suggested that this was too early I acquiesced at once and waived the request for Friday. But what was my surprise—and I will add my satisfaction—when I found in the journals the next morning this announcement—

> "Mr. George N. Curzon, Under Secretary of State for Foregn Affairs, was the chief speaker at a largely-attended Smoking At Home at the United Club."

[*Laughter.*] Although I was taken by surprise, I do not complain, because it may come to this—that "Smoking At Homes" may be the only places at which we shall find ourselves able to discuss the great affairs of the Empire. [*Laughter.*] At all events, the Under Secretary had the advantage which I think Mr. Carlyle in his Life of Frederick the Great describes as "the Tabak Parlament." [*Laughter.*] In that speech the right hon. Gentleman entered at length on the whole of the Eastern Question, and especially upon the Cretan Question. I do not propose to discuss that speech here. It would not be in order, but I may refer to it. I will, however, give the House an idea of the speech from what I believe are called the head lines in the journal in which I read the speech. They are as follows:—"Three Aspects of the Cretan Question"; "Other Influences at Work"; "The Present Situation"; "The Attitude of the Powers"; "The Charges against the Government"; "The Proposed Reforms and General Reforms in Turkey." [*Laughter.*] A more comprehensive view of the subjects to be discussed at a Smoking At Home it is difficult to conceive. [*Laughter.*] Although there were in that speech some remarks not altogether favourable to the House of Commons as a place of discussion, and some severe remarks upon the Opposition, the right hon. Gentleman, as I desire to acknowledge, was extremely favourable and kind to myself—[*laughter*]—because he said I had asked the following questions:—

> "What is the international question in Crete? Why are you there? What is your object? What are you doing? Let us understand where we stand."

The right hon. Gentleman quotes these questions as having been propounded by me; and he said:—

> "I think that is a most reasonable question and a question which no member of the Government would shrink from giving a reply to; and, indeed, a reply to these questions will not merely elucidate a great deal of the position, but will, I think, give us a clue for the comprehension of the present and the future."

That is exactly the clue we want to get here, which is the proper place, in my opinion, for an exposition of this Question—[*cheers*]—so that we may have that clue to the comprehension of the present and the future. The only point to which it seems to me necessary to refer in that speech—for, no doubt, we will have the substance of it again from the right hon. Gentleman—is that the right hon. Gentleman spoke of the "solution" which had been propounded by Her Majesty's Government without any reserve as to the rest of the Powers. ["Hear, hear!"] On Thursday it was stated that the assent of the Powers had not been received; but as the Under Secretary made no reserve as to the assent of the Powers, I presume that on Friday the assent had been received. But the right hon. Gentleman made another statement. He said that this solution was due mainly to the initiative of Lord Salisbury.

*THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS (Mr. GEORGE CURZON, Lancashire, Southport): I said "due in the main."

*SIR W. HARCOURT: Yes, I said, "mainly." That is an important statement. It is one the right hon. Gentleman has made on many occasions in reference to the arrangements of last August in reference to Crete. But I am not sure that it is a very discreet or diplomatic statement, because when one party in a concert takes all the credit to himself, it is very likely that the other partners might not altogether acquiesce in that view of the situation—["hear, hear!"]—and there are circumstances which lead one to believe that that is not the view which has been taken in other quarters. ["Hear, hear!"] I would also recommend to Her Majesty's Government, if I may be permitted to do so, not to be too anxious to claim all the credit for themselves in this matter, especially in regard to the latter part of the articles which I have read to the House. [*Cheers.*] I have referred to this speech to make it perfectly clear that if the Government find themselves entitled in other places to enter into extensive discussion of the present situation, they cannot complain—and I do not believe that they do complain—of our asking for equally full explanation and discussion in the House of Commons. [*Cheers.*] Now, in order to make it clear what are the explanations we specially desire to receive from the Government, I should like to state the propositions upon which the questions which I desire to put are founded. First of all, I venture to affirm that the present situation—that is to say, the present insurrection in Crete; the intervention of Greece; the intervention of the Powers by force of arms in Crete—has been the direct result of the entire failure of the arrangements made by the Council of the Powers of last autumn. [*Cheers.*] That arrangement was founded upon the worn-out idea that you can reform Turkey, leaving Turkey to be the engine and the instrument to carry out those reforms. [*Cheers.*] That was the system upon which the reform of last August was founded, and it is because it was founded upon that false conception that it has failed. [*Cheers.*] We are still, no doubt, without official information as to what happened since that arrangement, and the causes of its failure. Consequently, we must take the best information we can get upon the subject, and I find in *The Times*, from its Vienna correspondent, on February 27, the following statement, which is ascribed to Georgi Pasha Berovitch, the Governor of Crete:—

> "Referring to the reforms which were to have been introduced into Crete, the Pasha said

that they were the best that the Christians could have expected; but as they would have done away with the supremacy of the Turks, the latter placed every obstacle in the way. The Christians were driven to despair by the delay in the execution of the reforms, and eventually hostilities broke out. From this brief account of Georgi Pasha Berovitch it is clear that the Porte took away with one hand what it had given with the other; and thus the full responsibility for the sanguinary events in Crete rests with the Sultan and the Camarilla."

[*Cheers.*] We have there the causes of the failure of the arrangements of last August. With regard to the policy set forth by Her Majesty's Government, I observe with satisfaction that the article of autonomy is placed first—["hear, hear!"—because it shows that the fundamental principle and the policy of the Government is the practical expropriation of Turkish rule from the island of Crete. ["Hear, hear!"] Everything depends, in my opinion, upon the completeness of that expropriation, and, therefore, what we have to inquire is how far and how completely does the autonomy that you propose to give to Crete get rid of Turkish rule, which has been the cause of all these evils and to reform which you entirely failed last autumn. [*Cheers.*] Of course, you may continue to speak of the integrity of the Turkish Empire, and the consolidation of the Turkish Empire. The question is whether that is a phrase or a reality. If it is only a phrase it does not so much signify; but let us examine what is the reality of this autonomy which you have put first in the statement of your policy. At all events, this, I hope, is clear and cannot be departed from—that the Government have arrived, and I hope those with whom they are acting have also arrived, at this conviction, that there is no reform possible in Crete except upon the condition of practically and substantially removing all Turkish authority and rule in that island. [*Cheers.*] If we have got so far, we have made a great advance in the solution of the Eastern Question. [*Renewed cheers.*] The Leader of the House said truly the other day that there are many forms of autonomy in the Turkish Empire. I think the more correct expression would be that there have been many experiments at autonomy in the Turkish Empire. The right hon. Gentleman referred to Servia. Servia is a very good illustration. In the original attempt to establish autonomy in Servia the Turkish troops were left in the country. That experiment entirely failed. It was not until the Turkish troops were removed from the country that anything like true autonomy was established in Servia. Then we all remember the experiment of Eastern Roumelia, which was loudly proclaimed as the great triumph of British policy in the Treaty of Berlin. Hardly was the ink dry upon the instrument by which the autonomy of Eastern Roumelia was established when that also disappeared; and the garrison which the Turks were to have held in the heights of the Balkans never appeared at all. ["Hear, hear!"] And Eastern Roumelia as a separate item also disappeared from the face of the arrangements in the Balkan Peninsula. All these figments of Turkish autonomy have disappeared wherever you have a real autonomy and true reforms. But at least let us know that the autonomy which you are going to establish in Crete is a real autonomy which will remove the power of the Turk at once and altogether from the island. [*Cheers.*] What is this autonomy to be? It is a very vague term without some definition, and we ask you to explain to us its nature. First of all, has the plan been settled? [*Cheers.*] That is a most important question. Or is it hung up to be settled in future by the Powers? That is a most material point on which we ought to have an answer. We have always assumed that the policy of Lord Salisbury was first to settle the autonomy beyond further dispute, and then to proceed to the measures which may be necessary to set it in operation in Crete. ["Hear, hear!"] But there has been propounded elsewhere a different policy, and that is why I put this question. It is that autonomy is not to be given first, but that you are first to put down the Cretans in Crete and expel the Greeks, and then discuss the autonomy afterwards. [*Cheers.*] It is impossible for two policies to be more discordant than these. Because, what may happen? You may combine to coerce first and quarrel over autonomy afterwards, so that coercion will take place and autonomy will never be realised [*Cheers.*] I want to know whether the policy of Lord Salisbury is, as I believe and hope, the policy of settling the autonomy first and not to proceed to the coercion until that settlement is arrived at. I would ask what form of autonomy is it that you are going to set up in Crete? I am afraid, from the statements that have been made, that you are going to set up a government which is one the Cretans do not desire. [*Cheers.*] They wish for union with Greece. [*Renewed cheers.*] You say that you will not permit that. I want to know why? [*Cheers.*] Can there be anything more dangerous in a situation of this kind—can there be anything less statesmanlike—when you are removing one form of government and setting up another, than to set up the new Government in a shape which is distasteful to the people who are to be governed? [*Cheers.*] And yet that I gather to be the policy which is about to be pursued. It is said that you desire to set up a Government like that in Samos. Well, Samos is a small island. I believe that there is a nominal Turkish Governor, and I am told that he has a guard of honour of some 20 soldiers. And that represents the integrity of the Turkish Empire in Samos. But there the population is homogeneous. They are almost all Christians; the number of Mussulmans is small. In Crete the conditions are totally different. You have a large predominant Christian population, but you have also a large Mussulman population also. ["Hear, hear!"] Therefore you must have some controlling power. A merely indigenous autonomy would still leave these two populations face to face uncontrolled; and so that the last state of that island will be worse than the first. ["Hear, hear!"] There will be no controlling power to obtain justice for the minority of Mussulmans against the majority of Christians, and I for one have no hesitation in saying that I desire protection for the minority of Moslem, as much as for the majority of Christians, for this is not a religious question in any sense of the word. But how in the world is an indigenous autonomy in Crete to keep the peace between these two parties? You have an example of similar conditions in Thessaly, where Greece has to deal with a Christian and a Mussulman population, and from all I have read the Greek Government have done their work well in Thessaly. [*Cheers.*] The Mahomedan population in Thessaly recognises that in the Greek Government they have a protector, and the two populations live side by side in amity and peace. There is this remarkable fact. I read the other day in the "State Papers" a document proceeding from a man who is recognised as one of the most sagacious European statesmen of this century—I mean Prince Leopold, who afterwards became King of the Belgians. He was invited to assume the throne of Greece, and he considered, with the caution and sagacity which belonged to him, what were the conditions on which alone Greece could be constituted a permanent and prosperous State. And the main thing on which Prince Leopold relied was the necessity of adding Crete to the kingdom of Greece. He argued the point in a letter to the Duke of Wellington, and for any man who wishes to understand this, which is the crux of the question, I recommend the reading of that letter of Prince Leopold's. He pointed out what would be the consequences to Greece and to Crete in the future if that union was not effected; and a more prophetic document it is impossible to conceive. You may trace in it the history of all the evils which have since occurred. It was to a very great degree, if not altogether, Prince Leopold's reason for declining the Crown of Greece; and it is because, unfortunately, the policy of the Duke of Wellington, which was very different from the policy of Mr. Canning, refused the annexation of Crete to Greece at that period, that we are confronted with the present difficulties. I have yet to understand the ground upon which the English Government are opposed to the annexation of Crete. [*Cheers.*] So much for the autonomy which you are going to establish in the future. But there is another and a very urgent question. What are you going to do now, and at once? What are you going to do in that sort of interregnum which you contemplate, and in which you are going to occupy and deal with the island before you establish the autonomy? I have heard it very absurdly stated that the Greek Government have been guilty of a breach of international law. That is an entire misuse of the term. The action of Greece is no breach of international law; it is something quite different. I have heard it compared to a raid. But a raid is the act of private individuals, not of a responsible Government. ["Hear, hear!"] That is filibustering. But when a responsible Government comes forward and takes part in the affairs of another country that is intervention, which may or may not result in war. It is a *casus belli;* but whether it result in war or not depends on the circumstances of the case. That is a perfectly accurate description of the Greek action. But what have the Powers done? They have gone to Crete; they have taken possession of the territories of the Sultan; and they have assumed to deal with them as they like and to give them to whom they like. That is an intervention at the very least. [*Laughter.*] I have seen that abroad it has been called a "deposit." It is a deposit in one sense. If you take from a man his purse full of money, and you take the money out of it and give it to someone else, and then return to the man "the integrity" of his purse—[*laughter*]—that would be the manner of dealing with the deposit, and in which it is proposed to deal with Crete. Therefore both of these operations are interventions, in the true sense of the term, and, if the Turkish Government choose to deal with them so, they are *casus belli.* Let us deal with this question on recognised grounds, and in the proper terminology. I want to know what you are now, and at once, going to do with Crete? As I understand, you are going to have an occupation, a *condominium* of the six Powers. And now comes in the statement, to which I have referred, made in another place as to how that *condominium* is in the interim to be worked. It is to be worked by Turkish police. [*Opposition ironical cheers.*] The arrangement of a disturbed country by a *condominium* of six Powers operating through Turkish police seems to be about as unsatisfactory a settlement as you could well have. [*Cheers.*] What is to happen if the six Powers are to depute the Turkish police to go into the mountains and settle the disturbances between the Mahomedan and Christian populations? I really cannot call this anything but an insane proposal. [*Cheers.*] Surely you can find some better instrument to pacify Crete than Turkish police acting under the joint direction of the six Powers. The whole difficulty arises from your determination not to have peace kept by the only people who could keep it. [*Cheers.*] I have, I hope, moderately put before the Government the points on which we require and request from them information. But I cannot sit down without asking the question which, I am sure, is in the heart of every man in whom the love of freedom breathes. I ask what, under your policy, is to be the fortune of Greece? [*Cheers.*] I say that is the first question in the mind of every Englishman today. [*Cheers.*] The deliverance of Crete from the abominable tyranny of the Turk is at last I hope proclaimed. [*Cheers.*] Whose work has that been? [*Cheers.*] I say without hesitation and without reserve that the deliverance of Crete is due to the Greek King and to the Greek people alone. [*Cheers.*] That King and that people have greatly dared, and they have greatly done. [*Cheers.*] They came to the rescue of this oppressed people who had fallen among thieves. [*Cheers.*] They came and played the part of the good Samaritan. [*Opposition cheers and Ministerial laughter.*] Yes, you may laugh, but I say they played the part of the good Samaritan while the concert of the priest and Levite passed by on the other side. [*Cheers.*] That work, worthy of their immortal race, will remain to them as an inheritance of imperishable fame when the laughter of the Gentlemen opposite has disappeared and I hope will be forgotten. [*Cheers.*] I read with anything but satisfaction the speech the other day by a Member of the Cabinet who thought it a good opportunity to jeer and sneer at the Cretans in the struggle for liberty in which they are engaged. I do not charge the Government with that spirit. I do not believe that the language of Lord Balfour of Burleigh represented the feelings of the Cabinet in this matter. But the hour of the triumph of the Greek people in the cause of others is also the crisis of their own. In the critical circumstances in which Greece is placed I feel that those to whom her fortunes are most dear ought to utter no word that should place her in danger. But this, I think, we are entitled to say, and we are bound to say—a word of solemn warning to Her Majesty's Government let them beware of the perils of the path upon which they are entering—a path in which they will not be their own masters, in which they will not be the persons to say where they shall advance or where they shall go. They may be forced by others into deeds which the conscience of the English nation will condemn. I will say no more than that we must reserve to ourselves the absolute right of judgment upon those transactions when they arise. Greece has earned for herself the right to judge of the course she shall pursue, and in the cruel position with which she is now threatened it is not for us, to whom her future is dear, to counsel her to any measures which may endanger the noble future that lies before her. She has done great things for freedom in the past, more greater than that which she has accomplished to-day, she has great things to do for freedom in the future. She has given at least autonomy to Crete, and autonomous Crete will one day—I feel assured at an early day—be joined to her Throne. [*Cheers.*] And by a far-sighted policy guiding her undaunted spirit she will live to fulfil that mission of emancipation upon which she has entered. [*Cheers.*] Her safety is the precious hope of all that are desolate and oppressed, and we may devoutly pray that she will long endure to hand on, like the torch-bearers of her classic age, the lamp of freedom which her valour has kindled, and which her wisdom may long keep alive. [*Loud cheers.*]

*MR. CURZON, who was received with Ministerial cheers, said: I hope that I may succeed in catching some echo of the note of dignity and of moderation which, with the exception of one passage, to which I shall presently call attention, has characterised the speech of the Leader of the Opposition. At the opening of his remarks the right hon. Gentleman addressed a few observations to myself. He complained that the Leader of the House not having acceded to a discussion upon this question on Friday last, I had taken his Friday and had presumed to make a speech elsewhere upon the same evening. The reason, if I remember aright, why the Leader of the House was unwilling to surrender Friday was because it would have interfered with the devotion of Friday night to the discussion of Supply. But so successful is that scheme, and so expeditious on Friday last was the House in the discharge of its business—a compliment which it is only rarely that one can offer it—[*Opposition cries of* "Oh!"]—that by nine o'clock the House had risen, and I, therefore, was at liberty to fulfil a long-standing engagement elsewhere. The right hon. Gentleman said that I gave extensive information in that speech. That certainly was not my impression nor my intention. [*Laughter.*] But the right hon. Gentleman has gone on to invite me to give a more ample clue this evening in a more proper place than I was then able to do. It is to that invitation that I will now respond, and I hope that in the course of doing so I may succeed in giving a different aspect to the new version of the old Scriptural story of the Samaritan and the Levite which we have had put before us this evening by the right hon. Gentleman. Whatever may be the merits, or whatever may have been the conduct of the Samaritan in this case, about which I shall have to say very little, I shall hope at any rate in the observations I have to make to prove that the Levite and the publican—[*loud laughter*]—I should have said the priest—have not passed by on the other side. [*Laughter and cheers.*] It is, I think, true that for the proper comprehension of the case before us some reference to past incidents is necessary. A big Blue-book was laid before the House yesterday. It may be said that that Blue-book contains nothing but past history; and that being so, no reference is needful to it, and that it throws very little light upon the present. I think that that is not the case, and that from even a casual perusal of that book three points stand prominently forth, which it is essential that the House should grasp in order to understand the present position. The first is this—that throughout the period which that Blue-book covers—namely, the whole of the earlier and middle portions of last year—the policy of the Government was consistently devoted, to use Lord Salisbury's words, to a thorough reconstruction of the Government of Crete, to a mitigation of the authority of the Sultan, and to the imposition, if necessary by forcible means, upon the Sultan of the necessary reforms. And I would remind the House that it was in the interest of Crete herself, and with the view of carrying out those objects, that the Government declined last year to take part in the blockade of the Cretan coasts which had then been suggested, and equally declined to embark upon those military and naval demonstrations which I remember were urged upon us by some ardent spirits in this House. The second point is this. The right hon. Gentleman has spoken with some contempt of that scheme of reforms. No doubt it is now superseded, and therefore forgotten, and it is easy to speak in a slighting manner of the dead. But it is only fair to remember that that scheme was received with more than contentment, with gratitude, by both sections in the island, and more especially by the Christian section; that 30 out of 40 Christian deputies signed the declaration to the foreign Consuls expressing their complete satisfaction with the scheme, which was more than they had expected or asked for, and signified their intention of conforming to and assisting in its execution. The third point, and upon this I cannot lay too much stress, is this—that by that scheme the Powers assumed the joint responsibility for the present and for the future of Crete, which they have ever since been discharging, and which is the explanation and basis of their conduct at this moment. In the last clause of the scheme hon. Members will find that the Powers declared that they would "assure themselves" of the execution of these reforms, and, as the autumn went on, they, in the first place, delegated their military Attachès to represent them upon the Gendarmerie Commission; they appointed delegates also upon the Judicial Commission sent to the island to reorganise the law Courts, and as soon as trouble commenced they sent their ships and their sailors to the places where distress and disorder occurred. Meanwhile at Constantinople they were dissuading the Turkish Government there from sending any reinforcements to the island; and finally, less than three weeks ago, they occupied the principal seaports on the coast. By these steps they showed that they were prepared continuously to discharge the obligations they had taken upon themselves last summer. That being so, and the Powers, having, so to speak, taken Crete out of the hands of the Turk, *a fortiori* they could not allow Crete to be taken by anybody else out of their hands. [*Cheers.*] That was the situation after the reforms had been enacted. I will not weary the House by asking them to accompany me through a tedious record of the incidents of last autumn and winter. The right hon. Gentleman says the reforms failed, but they failed because they were never allowed a chance of being carried into effect. ["Hear, hear!"] The gendarmerie, upon which so much rested, was, owing to inherent difficulties in the constitution of a foreign body, not embodied until the end of the year.

MR. JOHN DILLON (Mayo, E.) was understood to ask who was responsible for the creation of the gendarmerie.

*MR. CURZON: I could answer that question, but I do not think it is material. ["Hear, hear!"] The situation in the island was greatly aggravated by a lack of funds owing to the financial embarrassments in which the Government had long been involved and the difficulty of raising a loan on satisfactory terms. Meanwhile there was increasing agitation and disquiet, and, I am sorry to say, intrigue going on in the island. The old distrust between Mahommedan and Christian, which has existed in Crete now for 250 years and which is almost ineradicable from the blood of the people, revived, both parties declining, in the fear which they commonly shared, to return, the one to the villages and the other to the towns. In the meantime it is not capable of dispute that agitators continued to arrive in the island; a propaganda was conducted and the hopes of the Christians were excited by a prospect of fresh concessions. That brings us down to the end of the year. In December and January the old situation of panic, and of firing, of incendiarism and wounding, and even of massacring, had revived, and so we come to the first day of the last month. I wish to ask the attention of the House a little more closely to the incidents of this most critical month of February. On February 1 the British Consul reported that British ships were necessary for the protection of British subjects. They arrived, and I do not think any words used in this House could exaggerate the debt which is owed by both parties in that unhappy island to the exertions on the one hand of the captains and the crews of the vessels, for which my right hon. Friend the First

Lord of the Admiralty is responsible—["hear, hear!"]—and, on the other hand, to Her Majesty's Consul in the island, Sir A. Biliotti, who can scarcely have slept for many weeks past, and to Colonel Chermside, who was representing the Government on the Gendarmerie Commission, and who has been practically acting as joint Consul with Sir A. Biliotti. At this time all reports agreed that the Turkish garrisons, about whom the right hon. Gentleman had had nothing favourable to say, behaved extremely well, and were held in proper control. Then we come to the events of the first and second weeks of February and the appearance of the Greeks upon the scene. It was on February 7 that a Greek ironclad and transport first arrived, their object being to protect the Greek subjects and to save from danger the Greek women and children. [*Opposition cheers.*] Then on February 12 there arrived the flotilla of gunboats headed by a Prince of Greece. [*Opposition cheers.*] On the same day a Greek ironclad, although there had been no declaration of war, fired upon a Turkish ship that was conveying Turkish forces to the relief of one of the beleaguered garrisons.

MR. DILLON: Was that before or after the burning of Canea? [*Ministerial cries of* "Order!"]

*MR. CURZON: The date was February 12, though I do not see the relevancy of the remark. [*Cheers.*] On February 16 there arrived in the island Colonel Vassos with 1,500 men, with instructions to occupy the island in the name of the King of Greece. Upon the wisdom or the reverse of the Greek proceedings, upon the motives by which they may have been actuated, I do not desire, it is clearly not my business, to say one word, but there can, I think, be no doubt whatever, from all the information we have received, that, from the first, the arrival of these Greek ships and troops greatly aggravated the situation. ["Hear, hear!"] On the one hand it excited the Christians with new hopes—[*Opposition cheers*]—and on the other hand it infuriated the Mahommedans and reduced them to a state of sullen rancour and almost of despair. [*Opposition laughter.*] As early as February 11 the Consuls and the Admirals acting together reported to their Governments that the only chance for the peace of the island lay in the withdrawal of the Greek forces; the continued abstention of the Turks, the mixed occupation of the Powers, and, finally, in the organisation of the gendarmerie and reforms in the administration. Upon the first point, the withdrawal of the Greeks, as the House knows well, the representations that were made by the Powers were without effect. [*Opposition cheers.*] On the second point, the influence of the Powers was successfully exerted at Constantinople to prevent any reinforcements whatever being sent to the island. The four principal seaports were occupied by detachments from the allied fleets, and the gendarmerie, having been constituted, arrived in the island, and Major Bor, as temporary commander, took up his post. Meanwhile the tension had increased in the island, and it was just about this time that those unhappy massacres took place to which I have had occasion to refer to this House, and in which the Mussulmans were the sufferers. The House will easily understand how this arose. The bulk of the Mussulmans, having fled for safety into the bigger towns on the sea coast, there were scattered communities of Mussulmans left in the interior, where the majority of the population is Christian. It is these unhappy people who were beleaguered in one place and in another, and who, from time to time, as the Christians gained the upper hand, suffered, and even in some cases were practically extinguished. Thus, when the right hon. Gentleman talks this evening about the action of Greece having brought hope and peace and goodwill to the island, and when he compares it to the action of the good Samaritan in the tale—[*Opposition laughter, and an* HON. MEMBER: "A tale?"]—well in the parable—[*Opposition laughter and cheers*]—I always thought a parable was a tale in illustration—[*cheers*]—I hope he will see that, while I do not desire to dispute for one moment that such may have been the object with which those troops were landed, and with which they endeavoured to conduct themselves, such has not been the consequence in its operation upon the state of society in the island. ["Hear, hear!"] I now come to what is really in itself an important incident, but which has, I think, assumed almost undue proportions in the part it has played in public attention in this country. I allude to the bombardment. [*Some Opposition cries of* "No!"] I suppose I may allude to the bombardment? I quite understood, with the right hon. Gentleman opposite, that we are discussing wide issues—["hear, hear!"] —and I thought that, as so much has hitherto turned on the incident of the bombardment, and as it is such a material point in the consideration of the question, I might be allowed, perhaps, as we have full information, to state to the House exactly what did occur. ["Hear, hear!"] It was on February 15 that the detachments from the ships of the Powers, 450 men, were landed at Canea. An intimation was sent on that day by the Powers to the Greek Commodore and the Greek Commander on land, and to the Cretan insurgents on the heights of Akrotiri, commanding Canea, that they had taken the town under their protection. Three days later the insurgents sent an official notification, in reply, that they intended to attack the Turkish outposts on the morrow. The Admirals reported that this would be a most menacing measure for the occupying forces, and that, should the Turkish outposts be driven in, fire would then be opened upon the position of the allied forces in the town; that the Admirals were unanimous in deciding to prevent this, and that fire from the ships would be used to check such an advance of the insurgents. The Admirals reported that such a step was necessary for the safety of their men in the town. [*Cheers.*] On the next day they did more. They sent an urgent remonstrance to the Greek naval and military commanders against any attack upon Canea. The Greek Commodore replied that he was not responsible for the action of the insurgents in question. Then, on the same day, February 19, we heard that the insurgents' guns were advanced and it was reported that any further advance would have to be stopped, that the Admirals were unanimous on this point, and that the step was necessary to prevent loss of life among their own people in the temporary possession of the town, which would be most probable if the investment became closer. In consequence of these messages the Admirals were authorised to assist any attack on the town—[*cheers*]—and consequently any censure anyone may have thought fit to bring against the Admirals must be brought against those who sit upon this Bench. ["Hear, hear!"] Then came the day of the bombardment, which was on the evening of February 21, and about which we received the information that the insurgents having renewed their attack on the south-eastern side of the town, fire had been opened from the German, Russian, Austrian, and English ships; that after a few minutes the Greek flag had been hauled down and the firing had ceased. The French and Italian ships did not fire, their guns being masked by the other ships. The only other point that has since arisen is in regard to the wounded. Fearing that there might be wounded, the Commanders asked leave to send their medical officers on shore, and were declined permission by the Greek Commodore. The House will be aware that during the last ten days I have been almost daily assailed with questions as to the incidents of this bombardment. Some points may still perhaps be in doubt, and it may therefore be for the general advantage of the House if I am permitted to read the latest information which we have received. This is the account of what actually happened from the British Admiral:—

> "*Revenge* at 4,700 yards fired three shells; *Harrier* at 3,800 yards, *Dryad* at 4,000 yards, fired each about six shells."

That is 15 shells in all in place of the 40 about which we heard. [*Cheers.*]

> "Distance of buildings occupied by insurgents from Turkish outposts 1,800 yards, the latter about 1,500 yards from the suburbs of Halepa, and these are 1,200 yards from Canea. Insurgents had commenced forward movement, without provocation, for two hours before ships opened fire, and had closed 800 to 1,000 yards on Turkish outposts. Turks were and have been throughout, absolutely passive until attacked, so much so that it is presumed that they are short of ammunition. [*Laughter.*] All the necessary communications with insurgents passed through Greek Commodore a few days before. Bread and flour were allowed to be landed at Akrotiri on his application, on the condition that insurgents remained passive. Last warning was passed through Greek Commodore on the day before attack."

This is an interesting and, I think, a conclusive account. We now know that the successive allegations which have played so conspicuous a part at question-time in the House for the last 10 days are for the most part entirely erroneous. ["No, no!" *and* "Hear, hear!"] I will summarise them. There was an allegation that the proceedings began by an attack by the Turks on the insurgents, and that I have shown to be untrue. ["Hear, hear!" *and* "No, no!"] There was the allegation, a very unimportant one, that the British Admiral gave the signal, and that the British Fleet fired 40 out of 70 shots. There was the allegation that the Turks fired on the wounded, and that after the bombardment the Turks continued firing, but that the Greeks and Cretans were prevented from returning the fire for fear of a renewed bombardment. All these allegations have been exploded by the information we have received; and I should like to inform the House that so far were these statements from being true that we hear that the Turks did not reply from the arsenal at Suda, although they were repeatedly fired on from the hills, and that the British Admiral and his flag lieutenant were fired on by the insurgents while they were reopening the telegraph office outside the arsenal. Now, I do not think that anybody can contend that a "people rightly struggling to be free" are to be at liberty to fire upon a British Admiral and his flag lieutenant. [*Ironical cheers.*] There are another half-dozen reports which have done duty during the last ten days, but they also, I am afraid, must be considered to be exploded, culminating in the story of a great massacre of Mussulmans in Sitia. These reports have been industriously circulated, but they must all be relegated to the limbo of exploded fictions. ["Hear, hear!"] Now I come to the present situation in the island, and I am afraid it is very serious indeed, and the telegrams indicate that it may become more serious still. Desultory firing has been going on in the neighbourhood of the towns, the Admirals are endeavouring to prevent each side from continuing aggressive action, and we can only hope that their efforts may be attended with good results. I apologise to the House for having detained it so long with this narrative of incidents, which, however, is not immaterial for the formation of a judgment. ["Hear, hear!"] And now I turn to the larger question raised by the speech of the right hon. Gentleman; his speech was, in fact, a question as to what is the policy of Her Majesty's Government. ["Hear, hear!"] Throughout this time of trouble that policy has been based on two main principles—first, loyalty to our obligations entered into with the other Powers of Europe—["hear, hear!"]—which we have since conscientiously discharged and to which we are not going to be faithless; and, secondly, a regard for the future of the island itself. It is for these reasons that we have contended throughout that, though in the interest of order it was highly expeditious that the Greek troops should withdraw, yet it would be impossible usefully to consider proposals for enforcing that result until the Powers had made up their mind what was to become of Crete. It is to the future of Crete our eyes throughout have been turned. In the course of the discussions with our colleagues which ensued it soon transpired that on this point, as before, the Powers were in practical agreement. I do not think there has been a breach in the absolute unanimity of action at Constantinople and at Athens. The right hon. Gentleman asked whether the assent of the Powers had been given to the scheme of policy that was put forward the other day by the right hon. Gentleman sitting on my right. Well, Sir, we have every reason to believe that the Powers are in absolute agreement.

*SIR W. HARCOURT: The phrase used by the Leader of the House was that it had not received formal assent, but that the general assent of the Powers was secured. I should be glad to know if the Government have received the formal assent.

*MR. CURZON: Yes; I think that the full assent of the Powers has been received. The right hon. Gentleman has said you are proposing to offer autonomy to Crete—what is that autonomy you are going to give, and can you give us an assurance that it will be full and complete? Sir, by autonomy the Government intend that the effective authority for internal government of the Sultan shall cease to exist in Crete—["hear, hear!"—that there shall be a government in Crete, but that that government shall not be the government of the Sultan. ["Hear, hear!"] That, I think, is the answer in a sentence to the question the right hon. Gentleman has put. There is only one other point about which the right hon. Gentleman asks, and to which it is necessary I should reply, and that is in reference to the Turkish police, as he calls them, in the island.

*Sir W. HARCOURT: It is Lord Salisbury's phrase.

*Mr. CURZON: Upon that point I think the right hon. Gentleman has perhaps not given sufficient importance to the critical nature of the situation as it now stands. When we hear of Moslem garrisons beleaguered by hostile populations it is quite obvious that there must be some force in the island until a permanent gendarmerie can take its place to save those beleaguered Moslems from the fate that otherwise awaits them; and, when slurs are, perhaps not unnaturally, cast upon the Turkish soldiery, it should be remembered that the Turkish soldiers for months past in Crete have acted with exemplary obedience, and that in Armenia and elsewhere, where Turkish soldiers have taken part in lamentable excesses, they did so under the authority and instructions of their own officers. ["Hear, hear!"] There is no reason to believe that, under proper authority and in places where there may be European supervision and control, Turkish soldiers and police are not perfectly capable of efficiently discharging the temporary duties intrusted to them. This will be, I think, only a necessary and temporary measure, which, of course, will cease to apply when the gendarmerie are ready to take their place. One other observation I have to make. The right hon. Gentleman has asked a number of questions which he will excuse me for saying it is very difficult to reply to. Let me remind him that Great Britain is only one of the six consenting parties, and that each party naturally approaches the question from its own standpoint, and has its own interests to consider. The Powers are not as six men seated at one round table, a situation which we all know is not invariably fraught with harmony—[*laughter*]—but they are like parties at different tables, not all round, and some, indeed, with very sharp corners. But, so far from any undue delay in the proceedings having arisen from the common action of the Powers, I submit to the House unanimity has been arrived at and action has been carried out with very reasonable speed. The right hon. Gentleman has suggested the conclusion he would prefer—annexation to Greece. ["Hear, hear!"] It is not for me to discuss that suggestion, but one thing I think at least is obvious—that, be it wise or unwise, be it right or wrong, it is, at any rate, impossible, in face of the present attitude of the Powers of Europe; and I should have thought, looking at the facts and the condition of the island, that this was the last moment when the prospect of such a step would be likely to lead to peace between the rival factions in the island. What is the only alternative to this autonomy offered? I imagine it would be that Great Britain should recede from the Concert of the Powers, and I cannot think that in any part of the House there will be a disposition to recommend that step. ["Hear, hear!"] It would not mean, in the first place, that Crete would be annexed to Greece, because we know the attitude of the other Powers; it would be encouraging Greece to persist—a step which, I think, would be absolutely wicked unless we were prepared to assist her in so doing. It would not mean war in Crete alone; it would mean war on the northern frontier of Greece, in a region where the slightest spark would kindle a wider flame. It would mean disturbances in Thessaly, and, finally, it would be good-bye to all the reforms we still look forward to carrying out. But I imagine that the real object everybody has in view is the future peace and prosperity of the island. The first condition of that prosperity is its liberation from the rule of the Turks. [*Cheers.*] The right hon. Gentleman has said that autonomy would not be satisfactory to the people of Crete. That is not the opinion of Her Majesty's Government. Autonomy is what the people of Crete have set before themselves for a century. It was much more than they asked for or were content to receive a year ago. We believe it now meets to the full extent their wants, and I hope that in the course of this Debate, at least, nothing may be said, and I hope nothing has been said in the course of the speech I have made, and which I am grateful to the House for having listened to for so long—[*cheers*]—I hope nothing has been said which may in any degree tend to retard that result. [*Cheers.*]

Mr. T. P. O'CONNOR (Liverpool, Scotland) thought that some parts of the speech to which the House has just listened would excite a good deal of alarm. The right hon. Gentleman had made an extremely able speech, from his own point of view; but he was very sorry that the right hon. Gentleman, while making a defence of the policy of Her Majesty's Government, had found it necessary to attack the kingdom and people of Greece. In the history which the right hon. Gentleman has given of the events which had led up to the present situation, there were some very large and grave gaps, and that part of the right hon. Gentleman's speech was calculated, and he dared say, intended, to produce the impression that if it had not been for the intervention of Greece, the condition of the people of Crete would be better than it was. He held that the intervention of Greece alone had brought about the present amelioration of the condition of things in the island. ["Hear, hear!"] The right hon. Gentleman said the reforms had been adopted, and were apparently going forward very well; but the right hon. Gentleman forgot to tell the House that the acceptance of those reforms by the people of Crete was largely due to pressure from the Government of Greece. ["Hear, hear!"] Was it not a notorious fact that the reforms were interrupted by action from Constantinople? Then, the right hon. Gentleman spoke a good deal about the gendarmerie, and from what he said the House might be led to imagine that the gendarmerie had restored peace to the island. Of all the failures in connection with the history of Crete none was so famous and so grotesque as the failure of the gendarmerie. ["Hear, hear!"] What did the correspondent of the *Telegraph* say that morning?

> "The Commission for the re-organisation of the European Gendarmerie met this morning, but was unable to come to any decision, as there are no funds with which to pay the men."

That was the end of this extraordinary gendarmerie the beneficent effects of which were interrupted by the invasion from Greece. In spite of all the right hon. Gentleman had said, the invasion of the island by Greece was what had led up to the present state of things. ["Hear, hear!"] He contended that the policy of the Government with regard to a blockade of Greece was right. The only fault to be found with it was that it was not consistent. From the very first Lord Salisbury had resisted a blockade of Greece; and if he wanted to form an indictment of Lord Salisbury's present policy he could not do better than to turn to Lord Salisbury's own Dispatches on the subject. The Government had now thrown in their lot with the other Powers as to the coercion of Greece. He wondered if they had asked themselves how that coercion was to be carried out? ["Hear, hear!"] In the autumn of last year Lord Salisbury was opposed to the policy of blockading Greece. The right hon. Gentleman had indicted the policy of the Greek Government, but he would call his attention to a Dispatch of Lord Salisbury's as to the conduct of Greece last autumn, in which he said that the conduct of the Greek Government had been perfectly correct—["hear, hear!"]—and that a blockade of Greece, even by the united fleets of the Powers, would be no easy matter. He was surprised that Lord Salisbury had now entered on a policy which must result in an attempt at a blockade. ["Hear, hear!"] He would ask the Government what they really intended to do with regard to the Greek force now in Crete, and how they were going to restore order there? Everyone would read with alarm the announcement that peace was to be preserved by Turkish police. Did the right hon. Gentleman deny that the soldiers who were to be employed as police were the very men whose hands were still red with the blood of Christian Armenians?

*MR. CURZON: I believe it is untrue.

MR. T. P. O'CONNOR said the right hon. Gentleman had said it was true that the Turkish soldiers committed these atrocities, but that they only did so because they were under the authority and orders of their officers. That was the force that was to keep peace in the island between Mussulmans and Christians. Furthermore, he would ask, Who was to pay those soldiers? Every correspondent in every capital in Europe declared that the one thing the Powers were determined not to do was to spend one farthing in restoring peace in Crete. This was the joyful and tranquillising information the right hon. Gentleman had to give to the world, the people of Crete, and the Government of Greece. ["Hear, hear!"] Had the right hon. Gentleman considered the position of the Greek question? The Government of Greece was no longer able to control the passions of the people.

He warned the Government of the responsibility of carrying out a policy which might drive the King of Greece from the throne which he had occupied with so much benefit to the people. How were the Powers going to get rid of the Greeks in Crete? Were they going to fire upon them or to bombard the towns on the littoral in which they had taken refuge? If the Government of this country took any part in driving out the Greek soldiers in Crete he did not think that their tenure of power would be of greater duration than that which would be allotted to the King of Greece. There was indeed only one final solution of the question—the transfer of the government of Crete to the Government of Greece. Was it not therefore unwise on the part of the Government to delay that solution, to leave the Cretans to the tender mercies of the Turkish soldiers, who only massacred when ordered to do so by their officers and chiefs. ["Hear, hear!"]

*SIR E. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT (Sheffield, Ecclesall) said that no one would dispute the fact that the Powers had undertaken a very great responsibility with regard to the condition of Crete. The truth as to the state of affairs in the island only made it more clear how baseless and how fraudulent had been the agitation so actively propagated in this country. For the last few weeks the Mussulman inhabitants of Crete had been hunted from their homes in the interior and driven to the sea-coast towns. That had been the beginning of the trouble in Crete, and he feared that the account of their sufferings now given by the Under Secretary would prove to be understated. He believed that eventually it would be found that not a few hundreds, but thousands of Mussulmans had been massacred in the interior. He understood why it was that the Irish Members were taking part in this agitation. This Cretan movement was largely an agrarian movement inflamed by religious animosity—it was practically what would happen in Ireland if the persons whom hon. Gentlemen from Ireland represented got the upper hand. [*Laughter.*] The Mussulmans in Crete were the chief landowners, and the Cretan Christians were exterminating them in order to seize their land. In every Cretan revolt during the present century the Mussulmans had suffered more than the Christians, until the balance had been turned by the arrival of Turkish troops. What was the responsibility of the Great Powers with regard to Crete and the Mussulmans? During the last ten days 3,000 Mussulmans had been beleaguered in two places. Neither was more than 12 miles from the sea. The Admirals had close by 20 great warships, with 12,000 fighting men on board. They were told nine days ago the critical position of these Mussulmans. The Consuls of England, Italy, and Russia had then solemnly stated that a landing force of 300 men would be sufficient to rescue these Moslem sufferers. He asked the Government why that force had not been landed? If they allowed the Mussulmans to be massacred wholesale in Crete, how could the sympathisers of the Christians complain if the Mussulmans retaliated in other parts of the Empire? It was for the interest of the Christians throughout the Ottoman Empire that these beleaguered Mussulmans in Crete should be rescued. It was by no means certain that the Cretans desired union with Greece; he believed the majority of the Cretans would prefer independent autonomy under the suzerainty of the Sultan to union with Greece. The action of the Greek Government had been taken not to obtain reforms for Crete, not for Cretan autonomy, but to prevent Crete from enjoying autonomy. ["Oh, oh!"] He was not satisfied with the international law and authorities of the Leader of the Opposition, for he believed that he had higher authorities behind him than the right hon. Gentleman to support the view that the invasion of territory of a foreign State without declaration of war in time of peace was an act of piracy. The whole of the agitation in this country was fraudulent, no doubt unintentional on the part of many of its supporters, who looked upon Greece as an heroic little Power struggling to obtain liberty for an oppressed people. The real fact was the reverse of this. The Greeks had attacked the Turkish power in an island where they knew they were safe from retaliation, and in order to prevent the Cretans from obtaining the autonomy which they desired. The power of the Sultan and the strength of the Turkish forces had been previously reduced by the influence of the Great Powers. The Greek Government were not moved by the noble motives alleged; they desired to prevent Cretan autonomy, and by interfering in this unprovoked and aggravating way when the hands of the Turks were tied, they had turned a peaceful and orderly settlement into a perfect pandemonium of bloodshed and massacre. No attempt had been made by the Leader of the Opposition to prove the statement that the application of reforms had been prevented by the Turkish Government. Indeed, an official denial on the part of the Government had been given to this view by the Under Secretary of State in his speech before the United Club on Friday last. There was no foundation for the statement that the Turkish Government in this matter had behaved otherwise than in good faith. He believed that the Turkish Government were not at all averse to see autonomy established in Crete, if the rights of the Mussulman population, as well as those of the Christian, could be secured. Crete had long been a costly burden to Turkey, and but for the fact that the Sultan felt bound in honour to protect his Mussulman subjects in Crete—who would, as present events showed, be exposed to outrage and massacre if Turkish authority was withdrawn—Crete would have been abandoned long ago. He hoped that the Powers would insist on international law being respected, and would secure autonomy and good government for Crete, while on the other hand teaching Greece that piratical expeditions of this kind could not be allowed. He maintained that the Turkish soldiers were among the best disciplined forces in the world. During the Russo-Turkish war, as several hon. Gentlemen opposite knew, they behaved in a most exemplary way towards non-combatants on the other side. He questioned very much whether it could be proved that any organised body of Turkish soldiers took part in the outrages in Armenia—[*cries of* "Oh, oh!"]—and under suitable leadership they could not find a better body of troops for maintaining order and for purposes of policing than Turkish troops. Hon. Members opposite did not care how many Mussulmans were sacrificed. [*Opposition cries of* "Oh!" *and an* HON. MEMBER: "How much do you care for Christians being massacred?" [*Opposition cheers.*] He felt very deeply indeed for the events that took place in Armenia, and the only reason the hon. Gentleman made that observation was because he had declined to express sympathy for sham atrocities in Sassun which never happened. ["Oh!"] The moment he was satisfied there were terrible deeds in Armenia in the last three months of 1895, that moment he expressed his extreme horror and regret. He had done his best to secure a better state of things for the unfortunate Armenians, and that in a more practical way than the reckless vituperation of hon. Members opposite. He denied that the failure of the scheme of reforms proposed and practically carried out by the Powers was due to the Turkish Government. The failure was attributable to the fact that Greek secret societies set to work immediately, flooded the country with agitators and arms, stirred up race and religious feelings in the island, and started in the western districts savage risings by which the Mussulman inhabitants were driven to the coast. That was the cause of the turmoil and disturbance. The Austrian Government foresaw the danger, and made a most sensible proposal last September to keep arms and agitators out of Crete by means of a naval cordon. That would have averted all the present trouble. Now we should have to blockade not only Crete, but Greece as well, when it was too late. The Leader of the Opposition spoke in favour of the expropriation of Turkish authority in Crete. Did the right hon. Gentleman and his friends mean to drive the whole of the Mussulman population out of Crete, because, if the island were handed over to Greece, and Colonel Vassos was left in charge, the whole of the 70,000 Mussulman inhabitants would be exterminated? If the Cretans had a few years of autonomy it was very doubtful if they would desire union with Greece. They had proved themselves the most turbulent people in the East, and the best thing which could happen would be an autonomy for the Cretans under the sanction and control of the Great Powers, which would put an end to the condition of anarchy that had prevailed too long. During the last four months he maintained that the provocation had come from the Christian population, and that the action of Greece had caused scenes of rapine and massacre. It was only by the intervention and the enforcement of order by the Great Powers that this appalling state of anarchy and bloodshed could be brought to an end.

MR. R. B. HALDANE (Haddingtonshire) observed that the hon. Member for the Yildiz division of Constantinople—[*Opposition laughter and Ministerial cries of* "Oh!"]

*SIR E. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT: I rise to order. I must ask you, Sir, whether a personal reference of that kind is permissible?

*MR. SPEAKER: I do not think the hon. Member is exceeding the limits of Debate. [*Opposition cheers.*] I do not think the observation was in the nature of a personal insult. [*Opposition cheers and Ministerial cries of* "Withdraw!"]

MR. HALDANE rose to proceed with his speech, but was received with Ministerial cries of "Withdraw!"

*MR. SPEAKER: I have already said that I did not think the hon. Member had exceeded the limits of Debate. If I thought he had I would have called upon him to withdraw. [*Opposition cheers.*]

MR. HALDANE could assure the hon. Member he did not intend any personal reflection. He observed that this was the first occasion upon which the hon. Gentleman had received any symptom of assent from hon. Members sitting around him. His speech had been listened to in silence, not even the Member for King's Lynn being present to throw the light of his countenance upon him. [*Laughter.*] He desired to associate himself unreservedly with the sentiments which were expressed in dignified language by the Leader of the Opposition as regarded the future of the relations of Crete to Greece. They on that side of the House, at any rate, and, perhaps, many on the other, desired and hoped that the time might come when that natural union of the island, which never should have been dissevered from the mother country, should take place once more. However that might be, the natural sentiment of the people of this country, they knew that at the present time they were face to face with a situation in which their hands were not wholly free. There was impatience on that side of the House with what was called the Concert of Europe, because they thought it prevented this country from having free action. His first observation on that was that the action of the Concert of Europe had not been by any means an ineffective action in the past. It was by means of the Concert of Europe that Mr. Canning succeeded in realising the great ideas with which his name was indissolubly associated in their memory. It was the Concert of Russia, France, and England that fought the battle of Navarino, and emancipated Greece from Turkish rule. It was by the Concert of Europe that the Treaty of Berlin was passed, and the Balkan States freed from oppression, and he did not think that even now in Montenegro and Servia they would find any disposition to cavil at the work of the Berlin Treaty. ["Hear, hear!"] What would be the position of this country if we broke away from the Concert of Europe and set ourselves to work out the emancipation of Crete with such aid as we possessed standing by ourselves? Was the agreement between the Powers as to the future of Turkish rule in Crete an instrument we should be called upon to give up at the present time? The question of Crete could not be isolated from the rest of the Eastern Question. He was glad to hear of the proposed autonomy for Crete. If we and the Powers concerned were in earnest—and there was no reason to think the latter were not—the present difficulty would be solved and matters left open for the future union of Greece and Crete. The assurance as to keeping Turkish police in Crete was not wholly satisfactory. We stood at a time which was indeed critical, when a false step might cause mischief. [*Ministerial cheers.*] The insular tone of the speech of the Chancellor of the Exchequer on Egypt the other day was a tone which exposed us to the danger of other Powers seizing on the opportunity to put us in difficulty on other questions, and if we broke away form the Concert of Europe now, who knew but that we might get a Collective Note which might raise questions even more difficult than those we had to face at present. So he was glad to see Her Majesty's Ministers assuming a friendly attitude towards other Powers, and by no vote of his would he put any difficulty in their way. But our present relations to other Powers must not be the be-all and end-all at which we should aim. There was a future for Greece—the only Liberal country in that part of the world—a country with which some of the noblest sentiments were associated—and he used the word "Liberal" in relation to it in a much wider sense than it was commonly used on those benches—a country which had aspirations the most nearly akin to our own. It was hoped that Greece had still before it another great future, and that as part of that future they might see it reach a condition of honourable and effective government in the East of Europe and embrace in its territory the island of Crete, which never should have been taken from it. ["Hear, hear!"]

Mr. LEONARD COURTNEY (Cornwall, Bodmin) remarked that it had been truly said by the Leader of the Opposition that the step taken last week was a step unexampled in Parliamentary procedure in respect of diplomatic and foreign negotiations. The Foreign Minister of the Crown had communicated a scheme of action to our allies, and before obtaining their formal assent, both Houses received a message indicating what was proposed. What was the meaning of this step? It appeared to himself that Lord Salisbury took action similar to his action last year in respect to arbitration, in indicating the kind of policy he proposed, and inviting the opinion of Parliament and the country upon the policy, so that he might know with what force he could go in council with the United States on that subject, and on this occasion into council with Europe with respect to Crete. The House was therefore answering the question of the Government—whether Parliament was prepared to support them in the policy they had indicated, and to which the Government were, to a certain degree, committed. The hon. and learned Member who had just spoken had intimated that for himself he was prepared to support the policy which Lord Salisbury had indicated. He himself was strongly disposed to sympathise with Lord Salisbury in his foreign policy. In many transactions it had been a policy of which he altogether approved. [*Cheers.*] His action when the proposal came to blockade Greece and prevent the movement of men and munitions of war from Greece to Crete was altogether admirable. But the policy of Lord Salisbury in that respect was a policy to depart from the Concert of Europe. For some days Lord Salisbury and England were the subjects of unmeasured vituperation. England was held up to obloquy because Lord Salisbury refused to join in a policy which would have left the Cretans open to the action of the Turks. In looking back on the past he observed that Lord Salisbury had not always agreed with what had been the policy of the other countries of Europe in respect to these matters. What was the situation now? At the end of last year a scheme of reform was drawn up for the government of Crete. That scheme had failed. The hon. Member below him said that it failed owing to the intrigues of the Greeks, who desired it to fail, and stated that there was no evidence to the contrary. The evidence might be judged by some to be worthy of acceptance, by others of rejection; but, at all events, there was the evidence of the gentleman who was appointed by the Sultan himself to be the Governor of Crete. At all events, there was evidence of a continuous character that the scheme of reforms which was adopted by the Powers and promulgated last autumn had been thwarted and prevented in consequence of the Sultan himself using all his powers to prevent its being successfully carried on. The Powers tried their best, and they failed because there were troublesome persons in the world who insisted on spurring one onwards to do more than was perhaps consistent with prudence. Having failed, the Powers acknowledged their fault, and another policy had now been put forward, and the question was whether the present policy could obtain success. The hon. and learned Member who had just spoken had referred to the present policy, but had omitted to touch upon what was the critical question upon which he conceived the whole chance of success depended. They were going to establish, or try to establish, an administrative autonomy in Crete, and in pursuit of that design they were going to insist that the Greek and Turkish troops when required should retire. We could not always have our own way, and the real question, so far as he could see, was what was to be done supposing that the retirement was not so easily effected. [*Opposition cheers.*] They might address their moral suasion to both parties, and say that it was extremely inconvenient to precipitate a crisis which might cause a European war; they might say that their plans were such that if carried out faithfully they would give good government to Crete. But what if the Greek and Turkish troops did not retire? [*Opposition cheers.*] What was the

European Concert going to do if both refused to retire? He was inclined to think that when Lord Salisbury suggested to the European Powers the policy that these troops should retire when required—laying great stress on the words "when required"—he reserved to himself considerable discretion as to the conditions under which the order should be given requiring them to withdraw. If that could be done peacefully by moral force there was much to be said in favour of maintaining the Concert of Europe by such a process; but if it was to be done by an act of war against Greece, then, he ventured to think, the question would seriously arise whether the United Kingdom must not retire from the Concert of Europe in connection with that. [*Loud Opposition cheers.*] It was very dangerous to utter such an opinion now, he knew. [*Ministerial cheers.*] He had not spoken without much deliberation. He knew it might be said, perhaps with some truth, that the Greeks by such utterances would be encouraged to persevere and to remain. [*Ministerial cheers.*] But let them observe the alternative. Why had Lord Salisbury put this policy before them? Was it to obtain for them such a concurrence of opinion that if the occasion arose they would be bound to support the use of force against Greece and to support an act of war? If they doubted whether we should be called upon so to act, now was the moment to express that doubt. [*Opposition cheers.*] They would be open to just censure of a very severe kind if now, by their silence as much as by their words, they encouraged the other Powers to believe that this country would join in an act of war against Greece, and encouraged Lord Salisbury to think that he would be supported by unanimous public opinion in such an act of war. ["Hear, hear!"] He did not think that Lord Salisbury held that opinion himself, nor that he relied upon a unanimous public opinion, or even upon a preponderance of public opinion, in support of such a policy. He thought Lord Salisbury distrusted the future in respect of that question. Although it might seem that he left the problem still unsolved in saying that it must depend in a large measure on the conduct of other Powers, and particularly on the conduct of Greece, he still thought they would be open to the severest condemnation if they kept silence at this crisis and allowed it to be supposed for one moment that we should not hesitate, and hesitate long, before allowing Lord Salisbury to carry them in concert with the other Powers into a war against Greece—["hear, hear!"]—or if they kept silence and allowed Lord Salisbury to imagine that he would be supported by anything like the concurrence of public opinion if the action he had now initiated should lead to such a result. The hon. and learned Member who had just sat down had not considered this contingency. If they did not look this contingency in the face, that discussion was worse than useless. His right hon. Friend the Leader of the Opposition had not said much about it, but he himself had introduced it, and he hoped it might be faced, in one sense or the other, by those who followed him. [*Cheers.*]

MR. HENRY LABOUCHERE (Northampton) said the right hon. Gentleman had spoken with his usual judicial independence. It could not be said, however, that in his speech he was a very warm supporter of the policy of Lord Salisbury. He was surprised at the way in which the right hon. Gentleman had been interrupted by his own side, as though nobody sitting on that side of the House might venture to criticise the Unionist Government. Hon. Gentlemen should have taken an example from the way in which they on that side met the speech of his hon. and learned Friend the Member for Haddington. He did not think a stronger speech than that in favour of the policy of the Government could possibly be made. His hon. and learned Friend was so zealous against the present policy of the Liberal Party that he positively went out of his way to attack a speech made by his right hon. Friend the Leader of the Opposition.

MR. HALDANE said he had entirely agreed with the speech of the Leader of the Opposition as to what they would like to do, but he was in agreement with the Government, inasmuch as they were doing the only thing that could be done. [*Ministerial cheers.*]

MR. LABOUCHERE thought his hon. and learned Friend had made an attack upon the Leader of the Opposition in stronger terms, and had protested against his making reckless speeches on the ground that they ought to limit themselves to considering what it was possible to do, and that, therefore, the honest, intelligent, and able Government —[*laughter*]—ought not to be blamed. He confessed that he himself was going to find fault with his right hon. Friend the Leader of the Opposition. [*Laughter.*] He entirely agreed with the Under Secretary of State that his right hon. Friend was wrong in comparing them to the Levite and the priest, and the Greeks to the Samaritan. The priest and the Levite went on their way; they did not bombard or blockade the man who had fallen amongst thieves. [*Laughter.*] The Under Secretary for Foreign Affairs relied upon the very old history contained in the Blue-book. The right hon. Gentleman thought it better to found his defence of the Government on what the Government were inclined to do two years ago than on what they were doing at present. It was no answer to the complaint that we had bombarded the Cretans to say that we had refused to blockade Crete a year ago. The right hon. Gentleman had said that the Great Powers had taken Crete out of the hands of the Turks and therefore that no one had a right to take Crete out of their hands. But it should be rembered that Crete belonged to the Cretans. [*Cheers.*] The destinies of Crete ought to depend upon the wishes of the Cretans, and he was not surprised that they should desire to throw off the last link of Turkish rule and join with their fellow-countrymen in the kingdom of Greece. The right hon. Gentleman said that all the disturbances in Crete were owing to agitators who were sent over by Greece. Had the right hon. Gentleman any proof of that?

*Mr. GIBSON BOWLES (Lynn Regis): Any amount. [*Laughter.*]

Mr. LABOUCHERE: Can the right hon. Gentleman give us chapter and verse?

*Mr. GIBSON BOWLES: I can give the hon. Gentleman chapter and verse. [*Laughter.*]

Mr. LABOUCHERE: No, no! I will not have them from you. [*Renewed laughter.*] The Under Secretary had given another and a much better reason for the disturbances. The right hon. Gentleman explained that the international gendarmerie proposed to be established had not been established, and that consequently the Cretans were left to the tender mercies of the Turkish garrisons. He could understand that under these circumstances the Cretans, dreading further atrocities, had broken out into rebellion, and he thought they were right in doing so. [*Cheers.*] The Under Secretary then went on to talk of having exploded 12 fictions contained in questions that had been addressed to him from the Opposition side of the House. The chief question was whether 40 shells had been fired upon the Cretans, and the right hon. Gentleman assured the House that only 15 shells had been fired. It was a small matter whether 40 or 15 shells had been fired. The fact remained that shells had been fired, and it was against that that they protested. [*Cheers.*] The right hon. Gentleman had said with regard to the bombardment that the Cretans advanced after they had been told that they must not advance, and that therefore the Admirals had a perfect right to fire upon them. Then again the right hon. Gentleman says that it was an exploded fiction that the Turkish troops issued from the towns held by the International Forces and retired again to those towns after they had attacked the Greeks. But in the protest, dated Feb. 24th, sent by the Greek Government to the Powers, the following description of what had occurred was given:—

> "The Turks, under the protection of the Great Powers around Canea, have attacked the Christians encamped at Froudia, and having defeated them the Christians were about to occupy the advanced posts abandoned by the Turks; therefore the Admirals believed it to be their duty to fire upon Christians who were coming up to help against the aggressors, who were supported by two Turkish ships anchored near the fleets. Thus the Turks fired from their position on the land and the ships fired from the sea, and they had the assistance of the foreign fleets.
>
> "The following day the Turks attempted the same procedure, hoping to provoke a fresh bombardment by the fleets. It is only the calmness of the Christians which avoided a similar scene of atrocity. It was noticed that the bombardment was preceded by a visit of the Turkish military commandant of the Admiral, after which the European cannons immediately opened fire upon the Christians."

That statement, derived from the Greek Admiral on the spot, and from the Greek Consul had been supported by all the newspaper correspondents, including the correspondent of *The Times*. Therefore the Under Secretary had not exploded what he was pleased to call the fiction in regard to the bombardment. The statement that the Turkish troops emerged from the towns, attacked the Greeks or Cretans and then withdrew, was supported by a telegram from Reuter's agent at Canea that morning. The right hon. Gentleman said that the origin of all this was that the Greeks had the effontery to send ships into Cretan waters, and that one of their ships stopped a transport carrying Turkish troops to Crete.

*Mr. CURZON: It was not carrying Turkish troops to Crete, but carrying Turkish troops from one end of the island to the other.

Mr. LABOUCHERE said the right hon. Gentleman then went on to explain that there was no necessity for Greece to have done this, because, subsequently to this, the Great Powers had urged at Constantinople that no fresh troops should be sent to Crete.

*Mr. CURZON: I must have expressed myself unintelligibly. The hon. Gentleman is quite wrong. A long time before this incident in Cretan waters the Ambassadors had constantly urged at Constantinople that it would not be wise to send troops to the island—[*cheers*]—and, as a matter of fact, not a single transport was sent to the island. The transport that was stopped by the Greeks was removing Turkish troops from one end of the island to the other.

Mr. LABOUCHERE said he thought the Greeks had a perfect right to stop the transport. [*Cheers and laughter.*] His hon. Friend, the Member of Haddington, had said there was no stain upon the honour of this country from what had occurred at the bombardment. [*Ministerial cheers.*] That, no doubt, was the view of hon. Gentlemen opposite, but on the Opposition side of the House they were almost all agreed, probably with the sole exception of his hon. Friend the Member for Haddington, that there had been a stain put upon the honour of this country by the bombardment of the Cretan troops. [*Cheers.*] Some hard facts remained, and he did not think that any amount of talking on the other side of the House would get over them. The Armenians were massacred for more than a year. During all that time the Ambassadors, like a number of old women, twaddled and twaddled over a table at Constantinople—[*laughter*]—and all the while the Sultan had a free hand. The Ambassadors explained the difficulties of the situation in Armenia, but they referred to their *magnum opus* in Crete. There, at least, they said they had introduced a good sound system of reform. But had that system of reform, the *magnum opus* of the Great Powers, produced the result they anticipated in Crete? After all the agitation in this country in favour of the Christians in Turkey, after all the denunciations of the Sultan at meetings throughout the country, attended not only by the Liberals but by Conservatives, the fact remained that all we had done was that we had fired upon the Cretans, and that we intended to coerce the Greeks into leaving the island. [*Cheers.*] With regard to the future what he wanted to know was what the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Bodmin wanted to know, were we going to join the Great Powers in coercing the Greeks if they do not leave Crete, and if they refuse to submit to the will of the Great Powers? If we were not prepared to do so, we ought, at once, to tell the Great Powers. [*Cheers.*] We had no right to sign Joint Notes sent on behalf of the Great Powers to Greece, and saying that we would coerce the Greeks if they did not retire from Crete, if it was not our intention to do anything of the kind. [*Cheers.*] They were told that the Concert of Europe might break up. For his part he did not care if the Concert did break up. [*Cheers and laughter.*] In this matter of the Eastern Question we had ever been the evil genius of Europe. We had forced Europe into war in order to maintain the integrity of the Turkish Empire. What had we done in the case of Crete? In 1867, when the Cretans had vanquished the Turks and were almost independent, the Concert of Europe wanted to give autonomy to the Cretans? Who stopped it? We, and we alone, stopped it. [*Cheers.*] And then we talked about using the Concert of Europe. We stood to the Concert when it acted as we wished, and retired from it when it did not. But now we were absolutely told that we were to commit what would unquestionably be an atrocious and wicked crime. [*Cheers.*] We were to drive the Greeks out of Crete if they would not go of their own accord, in order that the Concert of Europe should not be broken down. The Government had no right to drag this country into an infamous attack on civilisation and humanity. [*Cheers and ironical cheers.*] The Under Secretary said that after the Greeks had been turned out the Cretans were for a time to be left to the tender mercies of the Turkish gendarmerie, and that the Turkish gendarmerie could be depended on because they would obey their officers. But Turkish officers and soldiers were united in attacking the Armenians, and they would also unite in attacking the Christians in Crete. He would admit that the Christians often attacked the Turks; but the Mussulmans always forced the soldiery and gendarmerie to side with them, their co-religionists; and in any disturbances between Mahomedans and Christians in Turkey the troops always ended their interference by helping to massacre the Christians. One thing must be made as clear as possible. The Government might carry out their policy by means of their majority —[*Ministerial cheers*]—but it was not the policy of the country. [*Cheers and cries of* "Oh!"] It was not the policy of the united country. It was the policy of the Unionist Party. The Opposition protested against it, and regarded it as the greatest crime we could commit to attack the Greeks in this fashion. [*Cheers.*] Liberals all over the country, with the single exception of the hon. Member for Haddington—[*laughter*]—were opposed to the Government of this country—[*ironical cheers and laughter*] —siding with the Turks against the Christians; and that the Government had certainly done. [*Cries of* "No!"] It was really a little too absurd—[*ironical cheers*]—of hon. Members opposite to say, after we had fired at the Cretans in order to protect Canea from their attack, that we had not sided with the Turks. [*Cries of* "No!"] Should we be told that we were not siding with the Turks if, as Lord Salisbury had announced, we used force to compel the Greeks to retire? [*Cheers.*] The policy of Her Majesty's Government might be in accordance with the views of hon. Members opposite and of their constituents, but it was entirely contrary to the views of hon. Members on the Opposition side of the House, and to the views of those whom they represented. [*Cheers.*]

MR. T. W. LEGH (Lancashire, Newton) said that the Debate had been opened by the Leader of the Opposition in a speech of unusual moderation, but it was marred by an unfortunate reference to the Concert of Europe. The right hon. Gentleman forgot that the Concert which he described as a concert of "Priests and Levites" was re-established by the Government of Mr. Gladstone in 1880 for the purpose of coercing the Turk. Truly, it existed now not solely for that purpose, but also for the purpose of maintaining European peace. The hon. Member for Northampton attacked the Government for taking the side of the Turks. A more unfounded accusation had never been brought against the Government. As the Blue-book showed, this was the only Power which had been consistently friendly to the Cretan cause. After an immense amount of trouble the Powers elaborated a scheme of reforms which was gladly accepted both by Mussulmans and Christians. There was the authority of the Under Secretary for the fact that from that moment the Greek revolutionary societies deliberately set to work to bring about the present condition of things. What had the Powers done? They allowed a Greek expedition under the command of a Greek Prince to land in Crete; and they allowed provisions and munitions to be landed; but, when the insurgents fired on the Marines of the Powers they naturally drew the line. The important part of the speech of the Leader of the Opposition was that in which he pronounced emphatically in favour of the annexation of Crete by Greece. He himself saw very little to admire in the action of the Greeks. Their action in forcing this crisis was unpardonable. If they had only waited a few years Crete would inevitably have fallen to them. The final break-up of the Turkish Empire might not be very long. The Turks had already lost command of the sea; and if the Cretans declared in favour of the union with Greece the Turks could not prevent it. But there were serious objections to the policy of annexation. The bloodless revolution in Eastern Roumelia in 1886 very nearly precipitated a European war. But for the promptitude of Lord Salisbury and Sir W. White it would have been difficult to prevent a general conflagration in the Balkan Peninsula. War did break out between

Servia and Bulgaria, and was only stopped by the interposition of Austria. If the Greeks were allowed to take possession of Crete merely because it was a desirable possession, their example would be followed by other countries. Servia, Bulgaria, and Montenegro would claim to take possession of territory. The Turk was not so effete that he would not fight for his European possessions, and the result would be war in the Balkan Peninsula. Sooner or later Austria would be drawn in, and then it would merely be a matter of days before Russia followed. The Leader of the Opposition did not believe in this eventuality, which, however, was not baseless in the eyes of those best acquainted with European politics, though they might not be supported by Mr. George Russell and the leaders of the Liberal Forward policy. He declined to believe that the right hon. Member for the Forest of Dean looked forward without alarm to a crisis being brought about in Constantinople. Nor was he disposed to think that Lord Rosebery would regard such an event with equanimity. Hon. Members opposite, and also the Leader of the Opposition, had cast doubt on the efficiency of the Concert of Europe. What they had to consider in the present instance was whether it was worth the risk of a European war on account of sentimental admiration for Greece. ["Hear, hear!" and *Opposition laughter.*] For his part he declared most emphatically that it was not. At the present time, despite the insinuations of hon. Gentlemen opposite, he believed the Powers were in agreement, and that not one of them approved of the action of Greece. ["Hear, hear!"] If any one of the Great Powers showed any signs of hesitation, or of retiring from the Concert, what was already a difficult situation might at once become a most dangerous one; and, in conclusion, he would venture to suggest that those who, apparently with a light heart, were going to take part in a Division that would amount to a Vote of Censure on the Government, would thereby incur a very grave responsibility. [*Cheers.*]

*MR. HERBERT GLADSTONE (Leeds, W.), who was received with cheers, said he should be glad to see perfect unity among the European Powers, if it was thought that that unity would produce good and lasting results. But they had yet to wait for that happy consummation. How could the Powers be agreed when they did not know what was going to happen, or what shape the negotiations now going on would ultimately take? The difficulty in discussing the matter on the present occasion was the lack of information. He did not blame the Government for that. But the Government told them that they were proposing to set up autonomy in Crete. How were they going to do it? He did not think the Government knew themselves. ["Hear, hear!"] They were told that the Turkish gendarmerie were to be employed in Crete. Were the gendarmerie to be police, or were they to be Turkish soldiers acting as such, and were they to be under Turkish officers, and, if so, who was to control the Turkish officers? [*Cheers.*] Suppose Crete firmly rejected the proposals of the Powers, was it proposed to coerce the Cretans as well as Greece? [*Cheers.*] If, so, how was it to be done? Was it to be done by Turkish soldiers or the gendarmerie, or by sending British soldiers? [*Cheers.*] Did the Government contemplate with equanimity the prospect of diverting the Guards from Gibraltar and sending them to Greece to force upon her an autonomy which the Cretans might not want? [*Cheers.*] He did not agree with the hon. Member for Haddington that the Concert of Europe had done as much as he claimed. The hon. Member began by carrying them back to the Treaty of Berlin and to the freedom which was given to various countries which, until then, were under the dominion of the Turk, and he exclaimed, "See what the Concert of Europe did then?" But the hon. Member was altogether in error in taking that view. It was Russian action—[*cheers*]—sole and isolated action, which brought about that happy result. [*Cheers.*] Unfortunately the action of Russia as set forth in the Treaty of San Stefano was curtailed at Berlin by the Concert of Europe. ["Hear, hear!"] The hon. Member for the Newton Division had carried the matter a step later, and in arguing in favour of the concert of Europe alluded to events of importance in 1880. The hon. Member referred, he presumed, to the final cession of Thessaly to Greece, and to the extension of Montenegrin boundaries, but was he sure that the Concert of Europe was so effective on that occasion as he seemed to think? He should have thought that happy result was due rather to the action of England. It was true that on that occasion Russia co-operated with England. But two or three of the Great Powers stood altogether aloof. ["Hear, hear!"] He would not say for a moment that the Concert of Europe was not a great instrument for effecting national purposes in European policy. If an important thing was to be done in Europe it followed that the more Powers that could unite to compel that it should be done the better. ["Hear, hear!"] That was obvious; but if now one among the six Great Powers of Europe actuated by a selfish motive and by threatening a little opposition reduced the European Concert to impotence, then the alleged Concert of Europe might become a disgrace to Europe itself. ["Hear, hear!"] They had been told for three years past what the Concert of Europe was to do. They had waited patiently and were still waiting for some definite result, but the Concert had done nothing up to the present time. ["Hear, hear!"] It had yet to justify its existence. What happened last year when the proposal was made—he thought by Austria—to blockade Crete? Lord Salisbury himself—as the right hon. Member for Bodmin had pointed out—then departed from the European Concert by telling the Powers that he would be no party to such a proposal. If the Prime Minister could act apart from the Concert of Europe in one respect he could act apart from it in another. He repeated that up to the present time the Concert of Europe had effected no positive or lasting result, not even in relieving the Armenians. ["Hear, hear!"] Therefore, he and those hon. Members who agreed with him looked upon the Concert of the Powers with grave suspicion. He could understand the policy of the Government up to a certain point. They had committed themselves over and over again with regard to other Powers to maintain the Concert of Europe, and bound themselves hand and foot by making the integrity of the Turkish Empire one of the mainstays of their policy. ["Hear, hear!" *and Ministerial dissent.*] The maintenance of the integrity was mentioned in the Queen's Speech, and it was impossible for right hon. Gentlemen opposite to deny that it was one of the mainstays of their policy. He was much pleased, however, that evening, when he heard the right hon. Gentleman the Under Secretary for Foreign Affairs say that the first condition of the good government of Crete was the liberation of the island from the rule of the Turk. ["Hear, hear!"] With that sentiment he heartily agreed, but he confessed that he utterly failed to perceive how it could be associated or reconciled with the object of preserving the territorial integrity of the Turkish Empire. ["Hear, hear!"] Years ago the Tory policy was the preservation of the territorial and political integrity of the Turkish Empire, but if that policy as exemplified in the Treaty of Berlin was to recur he did not mind whether the Tory Government went in for Turkish integrity or not. But as far as the policy of the Government in Crete was concerned, the best that could happen would be that the history of Wallachia and Moldavia should be repeated. The Powers in that case were agreed. In 1857 they set up two Assemblies, one in Wallachia and another in Moldavia. The two Assemblies met and resolved to unite and set up an independent Roumania. The Powers assembled in Paris, and to save their dignity decided that they must adhere to their action and again set up the two Assemblies. Then Wallachia and Moldavia decided to elect Prince Alexander, and so they were united through their head. Subsequently they again decided to have one Assembly. They proclaimed their unity, and Europe, completely baffled, acquiesced. [*Opposition cheers.*] Did Europe get much satisfaction out of that? If some such result happened in the case of Greece we should welcome it, but it would reflect no credit on this country. ["Hear, hear!"] It was premature to express a final judgment upon the matters before them—[*Ministerial cheers*]—and he had not done so. In the first place they did not know what action Greece was going to take, and that was a most important factor in the matter. They did not know, and he did not believe the Government knew, what were the real views of the Cretans themselves; and, further, they did not know what exact shape the proposals for autonomy were going to take. Personally, he would not be a party to that policy, indicated to a certain extent by the action of the warships off Canea; he would not be a party to the coercion of Greece. [*Opposition cheers.*] He agreed with the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Bodmin that all these years the Powers had done nothing. Greece had acted with promptitude, with decision, and with success, and by her action she had forced the hand of Europe, and Europe was labouring heavily in the rear. Because Greece had done what Europe ought to have done—[*Opposition cheers*]—he would have no part whatever in coercing her. She had done great service to the cause of liberty in Europe, and deserved the gratitude of every Britisher. [*Opposition cheers.*]

*MR. VICARY GIBBS (Hertfordshire, St. Albans) said the hon. Member for Leeds asked whether if the Cretans declined to accept autonomy, we should attempt to coerce them. If they objected to any such control by the Powers as would prevent their fighting with one another, assassinating one another, and causing a danger to the peace of Europe, he sincerely hoped the Great Powers of Europe would coerce her. Then the hon. Member for the Scotland Division of Liverpool said the Under Secretary had made an attack upon the kingdom of Greece. He did not think the speech of the right hon. Gentleman justified such a charge. It was only fair they should assume that the Government had not only better means of judging who was to blame than any private Member could possibly have, and that they were more likely to approach the matter from an impartial standpoint. The hon. and learned Member for Haddington said he longed to see the day when Crete would be reunited to the kingdom of Greece. When in the world's history had there been a kingdom of Greece to which Crete belonged? Never. Who were the gentlemen who were rousing the sentimental enthusiasm of hon. Gentlemen opposite? Who were these Levantines who called themselves Greeks? ["Oh!"] They were a mixture of Albanians, Franks, Slavs, and everybody except Greeks. There were no men of Greek blood on the mainland, whatever there might be in Crete. They were gone over and over again. What was there in the history of these people to arouse enthusiasm? Did hon. Gentlemen like fraudulent bankruptcy? ["Oh, oh!"] Oh, let them have the truth! He would suggest some test-books. Let them read "The War of Greek Independence," by a respectable Scotchman, Mr. Finlay. The Greeks, carrying out their national aspiration for the acquisition of other people's property without paying for it, stole some of Mr. Finlay's property in Athens. [*Laughter.*] If hon. Gentlemen did not like a Scotchman's view of the Greeks, let them take that of an able Frenchman in *Le Roi des Montagnes*, an amusing satire, which gave a very fair picture of the modern Greek character. Or let them turn from the romantic to the more prosaic Stock Exchange Year Book. [*Laughter.*] Greece had done nothing either in the recent or long past to show that there was any advantage whatever to be gained by increasing the territory which was placed under its Government. There were many people on the Continent as warm friends of liberty as any hon. Gentleman who sat on the opposite benches, but they did not desire to place the Cretans under Greek rule, and there was not a jot or tittle of evidence that the Cretans desired to be put under Greek rule. What he desired to see was that the Government, when they had to choose between bad Government in Turkey and thoroughly dishonest Government in Greece, should have consideration neither for one nor the other. He believed an administrative autonomy under strong control from the Powers, which would prevent religious fights breaking out which had disgraced Crete in the past, would be, on the whole, the best arrangement that could be made. The Leader of the Opposition said that a mere indigenous autonomy would not do, because of the strong religious differences. Those were curious words for an advocate of Home Rule to utter, for he must know that precisely the same conditions which now existed in Crete had existed on various occasions in Ireland. [*Cries of* "Oh!"] Ireland had been disgraced by most violent quarrels and shedding of blood between men of different religions, but he must not now enter upon a discussion of the Irish Question. How long was it since hon. Members considered that religious opinion should afford a basis for different treatment by law? They held up their hands in horror at the murder and bombardment of Christians. But they were not murdered because they were Christians, but because they were insurgents, and were endangering the peace of Europe. He dared say the last man hung for murder was a Christian; but that did not prove that the courts of justice had set themselves against Christianity. Nor had the Powers, because they stopped aggressive fighting on the part of Christians, while they did not attack Turks, who were conducting themselves in a way deserving of the approval of Europe. He had made those remarks, because it would really do some of them good if they cleared their minds of cant in this matter. It was believed to be a popular thing, he knew, to butter up the Greeks and represent them as the finest fellows in the world. It was supposed that that sort of thing would go down in the country; and the Government were asked what they were going to do if the Greeks did not clear out of Crete. He hoped the Government would coerce them. They would commit a gross dereliction of duty if they did not compel this mischievous set of men to clear out of an island in which they had not the faintest business; or ran the risk of plunging Europe into war, by not loyally and fairly supporting their allies in the removal both of the Greeks and the Turks—the Greeks first, because they had no business there; and the Turks because, although the island belonged to them just as much as any part of our Empire belonged to us, they had shown themselves impotent to govern it.

MR. F. S. STEVENSON (Suffolk, Eye) remarked that, although it might be strictly correct to say that at no time was Crete connected with the kingdom of Greece, yet undoubtedly at the close of the great war of independence Crete was as free as Greece was, and had it not been for the action of the Powers of Europe at that time, Crete would have been connected with Greece in point of law as well as in point of fact, and the insurrection which had since taken place would by that means have been avoided. They desired further information on two points—as to the character of the proposed autonomy, and the nature of the proposed coercion. With regard to the proposed autonomy, it was undoubtedly the fact that, subject to the suzerainty of the Sultan, various forms of autonomy had, in times past, been tried in the Turkish Empire. The case of Samos could not be stated as on all fours with Crete, because Samos was a very small island, and the racial and religious differences did not exist there in the acute form in which they existed in Crete. Reference had also been made to the period during which Servia had a sort of autonomy under the suzerainty of the Sultan. Well, one of the events that occurred in 1862 was the bombardment of the town of Belgrade by the Turkish garrison which had been left in the citadel for the purpose of maintaining the nominal suzerainty of the Sultan in Servia; and if they left these Turkish soldiers as policemen in Crete they would have incidents of the same kind occurring again and again. They all, he hoped, had a desire to maintain the peace of Europe. But were the Government going the right way to maintain it by this arrangement, which could not possibly afford a permanent solution of the Cretan question, but, instead of removing difficulties, would create them. They did not recognise the existing facts. The Greek troops were in the island, and the great desire of the Cretans was to be connected with the kingdom of Greece. How did the Government intend to face these facts? Was it the intention of the Powers to send a force into the interior of Crete? To blockade the Piræus would be like locking the stable door after the steed had escaped; and would only stir up such a stormy feeling in Greece that it would have to find a safety valve in Southern Macedonia, and all the fleets in the world could not prevent that from taking place. With regard to the religious question in Crete, the animosity of the Mussulman minority against the majority had been fomented by the Turks. The Greeks had had experience in dealing with Mussulman minorities in Thessaly and in Epirus, and they were very well contented under Greek rule. If that was so, they were more likely, on racial grounds, to be content with Greek rule in Crete. If the Powers would act upon the suggestion to employ Colonel Vassos and his men as the police of the Powers instead of the Turkish soldiers they would approach much nearer to a settlement of the question. He had listened with amazement to the speech of the hon. and learned Member for Haddington, who referred to the Concert of Europe existing at the time of the battle of Navarino. But that was not a Concert in the present sense of the term, but a Concert of three Powers—England, France, and Russia—most keenly interested in the matter, who were not held back by anyone whose interest was not as great as the others. Then the hon. and learned Member referred to the Treaty of Berlin, as if that had been a liberating instrument. As a matter of fact, the Treaty of Berlin, in some important particulars, put the clock back. For instance, with regard to Asia Minor, there was a considerable tract of country in Armenia in which there would have been a material guarantee in the presence of Russian troops for the execution of reforms but for the Treaty of Berlin. The Treaty of Berlin put the clock back by establishing Eastern Roumelia, into which Turkey had still liberty to send her troops. When they looked back, he thought they would find that the European Concert on the whole, with one or two rare exceptions, had not been a liberating influence. Of course, they all admitted that if certain particular Powers had been brought to act together they might have been able to effect great and beneficial things, but he was afraid that if they looked back at the history of the last two years they could not see the prospect of any improvement in the future. He thought the time had arrived when this country should ask itself whether it was in every respect to go on acting in concert with Powers which had on many points made different aims from our own, and which exercised a retarding and a non-progressive influence. It did not follow that if they left the Concert of Europe with regard to Crete they left them on other questions. The history of Crete had been very peculiar. It had a history different from other portions of the Turkish Empire. They were now face to face with difficulties not to be found in other districts of the Turkish Empire. What was the nature of this autonomy? Was it to be complete autonomy? Was it to be a *plébiscite ?* Were the people of Crete to be allowed to say whether they wished to be placed under the Greeks or not? Were they prepared to have as Governor a member of the Greek Royal Family? Were they prepared to have Greek troops and not Turkish troops? It was said that a Note had been presented, and if that were so they would be face to face with the situation in an acute form. He thought that this country would on no condition approve of the forces of the country being used for the purpose of repressing the Cretan rising or against their gallant liberators when the Powers had failed.

On the return of Mr. SPEAKER, after the usual interval,

*MR. F. A. CHANNING (Northampton, E.) said the Debate had developed two remarkable points. There was the astounding version of the recent history of these events laid before the House by the right hon. Gentleman opposite, and there was the singular paucity of light thrown by the right hon. Gentleman on the ultimate issues of the policy Her Majesty's Government proposed to carry out. He wished to draw attention to an extraordinary omission in the history of these events as placed before the House by the right hon. Gentleman. They had all considered the Blue-books and the record of these events given in the Press, and they were perfectly well aware that the Sultan had adopted in the case of Crete with reference to the reforms alleged to have been agreed upon between himself and the Powers last August, which gave a momentary satisfaction to the unfortunate Cretans—the same policy which he had adopted in the case of reforms for Armenia. The same policy was clearly in the mind of the man whom the forms of the House did not permit an hon. Member to characterise as he would wish, and who had reduced the forms of civilised government to a mockery and banished even a semblance of humanity from the Eastern world. That policy had forced on the Cretans and on a people who were always in sympathy with their fellow-countrymen the absolute necessity of prompt and vigorous action in order to effect a change in the condition of Crete. The Cretans and the Greeks saw that the Powers were not taking action in order to make this new constitution a reality; in fact, they saw that the new constitution was dead before it was born, and, like all other constitutions offered to other parts of the Turkish Empire, a complete fraud and imposture. It seemed to him that their position imposed an imperative duty on the Greek people to act as they had acted. The other day he was talking to one of the few Englishmen who were really familiar with the island, and, speaking of the period following the desolating war of insurrection in 1867, which required 70,000 Turkish troops to crush it out and bring about what he supposed some of the supporters of the Government below the Gangway—he would not insult the Government by suggesting that they would say such a thing—might describe as the establishment of law and order in Crete, he said, after going through every part of the island, that he saw not a single house with a roof upon it, that whole villages were destroyed, and that hardly a family existed which had not had many of its members killed in that ruthless war. That was a state of things which the Greeks remembered more clearly and with more passionate feeling and resentment than we could feel here. They were near to the minds and hearts of the Greek people; they knew what the course of the Powers had been and how they had wholly failed to check the atrocities carried out by the Turks, to the direct order of the Sultan, in Armenia. [Mr. GIBSON BOWLES: "No, no!"] That was proved by the Dispatches of Her Majesty's Minister and Consuls.

*MR. GIBSON BOWLES: Could the hon. Member give chapter and verse for his assertion?

*MR. SPEAKER: Armenia is not relevant to this Debate.

*MR. CHANNING said he was endeavouring to show that the Cretans and the Greeks might dread the intervention of the Turks, owing to the inactivity of the Powers in preventing the horrors in Armenia. In connection with the bombardment at Canea, the Under Secretary and other Members said that the Turks absolutely did nothing; but the hon. Member for Northampton had referred to the protest addressed by the Greek Government to this country. Those who had read the report of the Greek Commodore were aware that the statements of the English and allied Admirals were contradicted by the statement made to his own Government by the Greek Commodore. This statement was as much entitled to credence as the statements which had been given to the House by the right hon. Gentleman. Then there were the accounts of the correspondents of *The Times* and other eye-witnesses, describing the operations of the Turks against the Christians, the firing of the Turks and the Turkish ships on the Christians, and the attacks made upon them while engaged in carrying away their wounded. When he heard the astounding version of these events given by the right hon. Gentleman he was reminded of the well-known saying of Lord Beaconsfield, when he described the Bulgarian atrocities, though clearly established, as mere "coffee-house babble." What was the present situation in Crete? In Canea a force of 400 or 500 men had been landed; and that was the only force on shore capable of supporting the views of the allied Powers, and of maintaining law and order. The number of armed Mussulmans in Canea was many times as large, and this country, in conjunction with the Powers, was doing nothing to protect law and order, and to give security to life and property in Crete. The force was wholly inadequate to do this; and yet England was pledged to the Powers, if they insisted upon it, to destroy the only force now in Crete which could maintain law and order—the Greek troops, under Colonel Vassos, and the fleet, under Prince George—if the Greeks attempted to resist this new edict to leave Crete. In this matter he thought that the English people would support the views of Mr. Gladstone in condemning the policy of trusting to the Powers. They could take but one view of the Concert of the Powers—namely, that it had been to prevent good from beginning to end—that they had acted not only to paralyse the efforts of the people to effect their liberty, but had withdrawn all the checks on the worst excesses of what was evil. The Government were surely ashamed of the abominable event which took place on Sunday week? [Mr. CURZON: "Not a bit of it."] Then, he thought that the right hon. Gentleman would learn from the people whether they were ashamed of these deeds, and whether they resented a policy which was disgraceful to the arms of England, and which cast dishonour on the policy of the Government. He protested against any Concert of Europe in which England was dragged at the chariot wheels of a Tsar or an Emperor, and in which it took no part to see that life was made worth living for these poor people. He must say it was a significant contrast to note that when in South Africa it was a question of British supremacy, which found its outcome largely in the development of commercial undertakings and the amassing of large fortunes, which the German Emperor for a moment threatened, the soul of England, the England of the classes, the England of hon. Members opposite—[*laughter*]—was up in arms and ready to go to war with Germany. But when Germany adopted the policy, which she was apparently attempting to do now, of asking them to join in coercing one of the noblest efforts of a nation like the Greeks to free their compatriots, then, of course, they were at once to yield to the dictates of Germany and to become the willing instruments in a policy that was as cruel as it was infamous. The Greek organisation and forces in the island of Crete, placed directly in the hands of the Powers the very instrument which they could, and ought to use in order to produce peace and development of settled order there. In addition, it had the great advantage of being a force which could be controlled by the Powers. There would be no difficulty if they treated Greece as the mandatory of Europe in using this Greek force under strict European control. This seemed to be the natural and rational solution, and he did not see why England should not be strong enough to demand such a solution from the other Powers. If that solution were unavailable why should not they at least insist that Crete should be occupied by a European force and that the Turks should be absolutely removed from the island? That seemed to him the simplest and most natural course if England was not strong enough to carry out the policy which he had ventured to suggest. There was no part of the Blue-book which reflected so great honour on Lord Salisbury as the Dispatch in which he referred to his refusal to join in the blockade of Crete. ["Hear, hear!"] That was a brave and a wise act. Lord Salisbury referred in that Dispatch to the extreme danger of intrusting the people to Turkish rule in any form whatever. But suppose there was to be this autonomy which was foreshadowed by the Prime Minister, they had no guarantee whatever that the Powers would be able to control the Turks if they were left in the island, or that they would not have another hell upon earth in a few weeks which would defy the European Powers to deal with except at the risk of a general European war. England, in making her mighty Fleet the instrument of the will of the European Concert, was assuming a terrible and dangerous responsibility—a responsibility which he thought the people of this country would repudiate with indignation and resentment.

*Mr. GIBSON BOWLES said that the speech of the hon. Member who had just spoken, in spite of the calm assumption with which he professed to speak for the people of England, and in spite of the portentous scheme of foreign policy he had laid down, would not assist either the House or the Government in coming to a decision on this matter. One point he must deal with. The hon. Gentleman, in spite of the fact that the Under Secretary of State had, on the authority of the British Admiral on the spot, contradicted the rumours which had been circulated by newspaper correspondents with regard to the action of the Fleet, and the cause of that action and the antecedent circumstances, had thought fit, in the absence of his right hon. Friend—

*Mr. CHANNING: It was not my fault that the right hon. Gentleman was not present.

*Mr. GIBSON BOWLES said that was so, but it was his fault that he should have repeated calumnies that had been refuted. It was not creditable to the hon. Member to question the word of a British Admiral on the spot giving his account of the proceedings. He was pleased to hear the very business-like speech of the Under Secretary. There was only one feature of the speech that did not content him; that was when he looked across the Table and, smiling at the right hon. Gentleman the Leader of the Opposition as one Roman augur might smile at another, complimented him on the dignity and moderation of his speech. He rather thought that that speech was inflammatory and mischievous, and, although the right hon. Gentleman deprecated any assertion that it was inopportune, he ventured to think, in spite of his authority, it was most inopportune. The situation in Europe was so grave and serious that he thought no light word should be said even by the humblest

Member of that House, who should always remember that he spoke to the ears of a listening Europe. The situation in Crete was not a situation that had accidentally grown up; it was a situation that had been created. For 50 years Greece had been filling the island of Crete with disorder and sending emissaries to it, not to attempt to bring that island into a peaceful and orderly condition, but to assist in the efforts which she fondly, but falsely, hoped would end in the final annexation of the island to herself. The right hon. Gentleman opposite said that the Greeks were good Samaritans; but the good Samaritan was a man who, going about his lawful business, found a victim of oppression and poured oil and wine into his wounds. But these Greeks were persons who, going about on unlawful business and finding a victim, poured, not oil and wine into his wounds, but gunpowder and vitriol. [*Laughter.*] The hon. Member for Northampton asked for chapter and verse as to the alleged unlawful expeditions and sending of arms and men to Crete, and then, having asked this, he, like jesting Pilate, who asked what was truth, went out without waiting for an answer. He would give him chapter and verse. If the hon. Gentleman would take the Turkish Blue-book, No. 7, 1896, and look at Pages 166, 170, 189, 209, 213, 237, 254, 279, 291, 295, 305, and 330—he spared him the extracts—he would see on the authority of the British Consul and of Captain Drury, of *H.M.S. Hood* that, between the 23rd of June and the 15th of August 1895, no fewer than nine Greek expeditions with arms and ammunition, filibustering expeditions, landed in Crete. Further, it would be found by adding up the numbers of men that they amounted, according to one version, to 1,000, and according to another version 1,500 men, raiders, filibusters—pirates, he might almost call them—and this was before any action was taken by the Greek Government. These were raiders who landed with arms and ammunition in Crete, and if hon. Members would refer to the pages he had mentioned, they would find indisputable evidence that while the Powers were engaged in formulating a new constitution, yet, at that very time, and because of that very fact, Greece was pouring men, arms, and ammunition into Crete to create disturbance there. He had said these men were raiders. He had heard the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Monmouth appealing to the moral law, and even to the law of nations against the wickedness of raiding in South Africa; he had heard the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Bodmin say that such was his joy when the raiders into the Transvaal were defeated by force of arms that he could have joined with President Kruger in singing a psalm of praise, and he should have thought that such a stern, unbending moralist as the right hon. Gentleman, the one "just man made perfect" in the House, would to the raiders from Greece have applied the same rule and judgment as he applied to the raiders from Mafeking; but apparently he had not sympathy against raiders unless the raids were against his fellow psalm-singers in the Transvaal. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Monmouth drew a very proper and well known distinction between private raiding by the raiders' expeditions and the public action of Greece, and claimed that the public action of Greece was what he called "intervention." That was a large word. Piracy was an act of intervention with the desire to rob or kill without lawful authority or just cause, and the action of Greece came entirely within the line and real definition of the word piracy.

*Sir W. HARCOURT said the action producing *casus belli* by a regular Government was not piracy, as everybody knew.

*Mr. GIBSON BOWLES did not think that everybody did know that. Had the right hon. Gentleman forgotten that the Algerines were guilty of piracy even though they were carrying out the orders of the Dey, their lawful Governor, and that the Powers of Europe declared the slave trade, though conducted by the orders of a regular sovereign, piracy? Had he forgotten that a statute of the House had declared the slave trade piracy, and did the right hon. Gentleman wish to be, or require him to be, wiser than a statute?

*Sir W. HARCOURT said the slave traders were individuals, and the slave trade was not carried on by a Government.

*Mr. GIBSON BOWLES said if the right hon. Gentleman had gone up some of the oil rivers from the Bight of

Benin, he would have found the trade conducted absolutely through and by the sovereign of the country, and he must know that under the Law of Nations one sovereign was as good as another sovereign. [*Laughter.*] The right hon. Gentleman claimed that the true remedy was the annexation of Crete to Greece, or, in other words, he claimed that an incendiary having set fire to the house should, for reward—or punishment—he thought it would be punishment, be allowed to annex the remainder of the property not destroyed. He did not think that was an encouraging proposition for the principles of public law and morality in Europe. This Cretan Question had not grown, it had been created, and the soil of Crete, unfortunately, was fertile for these troubles, and they needed little cultivation. Since Apostolic times the Cretans had borne an evil character which their history had justified. They were always rebels against any Government, and they would be still rebels. For 900 years they rebelled against the Romans, for 400 years they rebelled against the Venetians, and for 200 years they had rebelled against Turkey, and they would still rebel even though their sovereign were the hon. Gentleman the Member for Northampton. [*Laughter.*] He did not think that in this respect the European Concert deserved all the ill things that had been said of it during the evening. Undoubtedly there had been an honest attempt on the part of Europe to settle this difficulty. The effort was long and continued, and in August last it arrived at what was supposed to be success in the shape of a new constitution for Crete. This was arrived at by the exercise of all the wisdom of all the Powers, and it was accepted finally by the Turkish Government because it was recommended by the Powers. He did not know how you could get a new constitution for any island under better auspices. It was accepted, and it must have been to the right hon. Gentleman and the Government a startling surprise that the failure of that constitution took place before the ink was dry with which it was printed, and it might almost be said before it was printed, for its failure was announced before the Blue-book conveying the information of it was distributed in the House. Why did it fail? The right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Monmouth said, because the Turks opposd it and threw difficulties in its way. ["Hear, hear!"] Had he forgotten that the Turks had practically been turned out of the island by the European Concert? They were prevented from sending more troops to carry on their authority, and consequently were not in a position to put obstacles in the way of carrying out the constitution. It had scarcely been printed, and probably the Cretans knew as little about it as the House did to within five days ago. Undoubtedly it could not have been begun to be carried into practice, and to say that the Turks opposed it was to ignore the fact that there had practically been an evacuation of the country by Turkey, and practically a cessation of Turkish authority. Certainly, from the day the constitution was adopted. ["No, no!"] Who said "No?" Hon. and right hon. Gentlemen should read the Dispatches. In August last Consul Biliotti complained of the evacuation of the interior parts of Crete by Turkish troops, and pointed out the extreme danger of thereby causing great disasters in the island. It was not possible to say that Turkey exercised any considerable degree of authority at the time, or even before the time when the constitution was adopted. The Christians, when the constitution was brought to their knowledge, were profuse in expressions of gratitude. The Christian Deputies accepted the 14 articles in the name of the Christian population, they assured the Consul of the grateful acknowledgment of the Christian population, and expressed their anticipations of the effect of the new regulations as conducive to the peace and progress of the island in language not unlike the peroration of a Home Rule speech in the House of Commons. [*Laughter.*] There was every disposition to accept the constitution, and yet, in a few months, it was confessed and it proved to be, a most complete failure. And why did it fail? Not on account of the intervention of Turkey, not on account of any indisposition towards it on the part of the Christians, it failed entirely because, as soon as Greece saw there was a prospect of pacification of the island, as soon as she saw there was a prospect of the Cretans beginning for the first time in their history to live in peace and contentment, withdrawing from the agitation stirred up, Greece considered it was time to intervene, she threw aside the mask, gave up the flimsy pretexts of private raiding, private filibustering, assisted by Committees in the capital, and secretly fomented by persons of influence and supported by speeches in the Greek Parliament, Greece threw aside the mask and declared herself the enemy of Turkey, and without any allegation of a grievance against Turkey, or demand for redress, or declaration of war, sent forth what he still did not hesitate to call a piratical expedition under Colonel Vassos to the island of Crete. It was the Samaritan, it would be seen, that caused the trouble, as it was foreseen the Samaritan would cause trouble. It was not surprising that one Power in Europe foresaw the trouble and proposed the only practical means of preventing it, he alluded to the Austrian proposal for the blockade of Crete. It was a most practical proposal on the part of the Austrian Government, and he thought it matter for some regret that Her Majesty's Government did not feel themselves able—he was not questioning their decision—but by the light of recent events it was to be regretted that Her Majesty's Government did not accept that proposal. It would have had the advantage of preventing the trouble before it arose instead of forcing the Powers to deal with it after it had arisen, and would have spared both the Cretans and the Greeks a vast amount of trouble and of human life. A great deal of praise had been bestowed upon England for refusing that offer, and it had been suggested that England would never join in the coercion of Greece. That was an entire misapprehension of the position taken up by Lord Salisbury on the matter. In his Dispatch in reply to the Austrian proposal, on the 29th July 1896, Lord Salisbury first of all showed that the proposal to blockade as made was irregular in itself and difficult to carry out, and then he used these remarkable words:—

> "If Greece were to assume a hostile attitude to the Turkish Government, and make any aggression upon the independence or integrity of the Turkish Empire, the collective guarantee into which the Powers entered at the Treaty of Paris would become a matter of serious consideration, and if all the Powers resolved to give effect to it, I thought it quite possible that Great Britain might think that abstention would not be consistent with her engagements under that treaty."

That was exactly what had now occurred. Greece had assumed a hostile attitude to the Turkish Government, had made an aggression upon the independence or integrity of the Turkish Empire, and consequently, as Lord Salisbury pointed out, the collective guarantee of Europe had become a matter of serious consideration, the Powers had resolved to give effect to it, and Great Britain had thought that abstention would not be consistent with her engagements. The proposal of Austria to prevent the evil having been refused, the Turks having been prevented from occupying and policing the island or sending any real enforcement to Crete, and the Greeks being allowed to pour in, without restriction, arms and filibusters, of course the result was that state of anarchy and warfare which they now saw. To the 1,500 filibusters were added the 1,500 pirates under Colonel Vassos, and with these 3,000 added to the normal Cretan rebels, a large force was formed which was certain to lead to the outrage and bloodshed which followed. The latest development had been that very remarkable and, as he ventured to think, that most creditable instance of the new diplomacy which the Foreign Secretary had consciously or unconsciously borrowed from the Secretary of the State for the Colonies. One point alone he did not quite apprehend. He understood that of the four points of the Ultimatum to be addressed at once to Greece and Turkey, the third point was that Crete, although granted autonomy, should still remain under the sovereignty of Turkey.

*MR. CURZON: Suzerainty.

*MR. GIBSON BOWLES said he would not stay to inquire what exactly was the difference between sovereignty and suzerainty. The only thing he could not make consistent with that was the inspired commentary of the right hon. Gentleman himself, the scholiast of the Foreign Office, who had given them a commentary on the third point, which was that although there was to be autonomy in Crete it was not to be under the authority of the Sultan. He could not make that consistent with the third point as stated authoritatively to the House of Lords and to that House by the Leader. He had no doubt, however, that some explanation would be forthcoming in due time. He wished to insist upon one point, and it was this: that whatever arrangements they might be going to make for Crete, it was essential that that arrangement should recognise and maintain the integrity of the Turkish Empire. The Government held the even stronger view that not merely the integrity of the Turkish Empire but the *status quo* of the Turkish Empire should be maintained, because the Chancellor of the Exchequer, speaking on the 13th October last, said:—

> "The cardinal fact of the present political situation in Turkey was this, that Russia, in concert with Austria and with Germany, was determined to maintain the *status quo* of the Turkish territory. Well, that was the policy which had been the traditional policy of England, and if any single Power—if we—departed from that policy and attacked Turkish territory, as sure as he stood there we should be met by active resistance on the part, not merely of one, but of more than one European Power. We must start from the point that Turkish territory was to be maintained. If the Turkish Empire was to be maintained, reforms in the administration of the Turkish Empire were absolutely necessary. That was the view of the Government of England; that was the view of the people of England."

So that this autonomy that was to be granted to Crete must be consistent with the *status quo* of the Turkish Empire, and indeed if the Government were to adopt any other view than that they would at once not only separate themselves from, but would at once break up the Concert of Europe. He could not sympathise with the ridicule which had, he regretted to say, been poured that night upon the Concert of Europe. It was the only method by which they could act upon a question like the Cretan Question. But the Concert would be in the greatest difficulty in dealing with Crete. They had Greeks in the Island, they had insurgents and Mussulmans, and he did not quite know and could not imagine how the European Concert was going to pacify Crete unless it was prepared to take the island permanently into its own hands and be prepared not merely to have ships there, but to land armed forces in sufficient numbers. He recognised the difficulty of the situation, and would not add to it by any imprudent words. All he would say in conclusion was that this Cretan question, just as it had not arisen but had been created by Greece, so also it was not a question by itself. It was part and parcel of that great Eastern Question on the solution of which depended whether Austria, Hungary, Bavaria, Roumania, and Servia were to continue to exist; on the solution of which depended whether the Mediterranean, the Black Sea, Persia, and Asia Minor should remain in the hands of an unaggressive Power, or pass into the hands of the most ambitious and aggressive Power in Europe.

Mr. ARNOLD-FORSTER (Belfast, W.) desired to intervene in the Debate because he felt, and he believed others felt with him, that the speeches made by the hon. Member for Lynn Regis, the hon. Member for the Ecclesall Division of Sheffield, and peculiarly the speech made by the hon. Member for St. Albans, did not represent and ought not to be considered to represent the views of their Party. [*Cheers.*] He did not believe that there were 10 per cent. of the hon. Members on that side of the House who desired to associate themselves with the attacks which had been made upon the Greeks. ["Hear, hear!"] They had listened with pleasure and respect, and for his part with absolute acquiescence, to what had been said by the Under Secretary. His speech contained no censure of the Greeks, and it was the speech of a statesman. There was not one word in that speech of the tone which animated every sentence of the speeches to which he had alluded. The hon. Member for King's Lynn spoke of the Greek people as pirates, and the hon. Member for St. Albans said the Greeks stood condemned by the "Stock Exchange Year Book." That was an intolerable way of dealing with the question. He was no particular admirer of the Greeks as individuals; but he knew Greece and Turkey, and there was absolutely no comparison at all as to the conditions of the two countries, and it was their bounden duty to support the live civilisation of Greece as against the dead and effete civilisation of Turkey. It might be true that the King of Greece and perhaps the Greek community had done things which had exposed them to the censure of the Stock Exchange. If so, all he could say was that they had taken the most effectual method of cleansing themselves of the stain cast upon them. They had been told that they must find words of condemnation for what the Greeks had done. The Greeks had done precisely what every Englishman in similar circumstances would have done. They had, rightly or wrongly, gone to the rescue of the men and women who were their own kith and kin. Let them sweep aside all this travesty of argument about the analogy, or supposed analogy, between the King and Government and Parliament of Greece, and the action of a commercial company in South Africa. The Greeks entered upon their action in Crete at enormous risk. Politicians at the helm of the great nations of Europe might regard their action as incompatible either with the future of Greece or the welfare of Europe, but that was totally different from the spirit of censure which had been exhibited. The prevailing sentiment in this country did not condemn Greece—[*Opposition cheers*]—and it would endorse the policy of the Government on one condition only, that it would lead to the absolute liberation of Crete from the dominion of Turkey. The Under Secretary for Foreign Affairs had stated the policy of the Government with a lucidity and logical sequence which was beyond all praise. He had quite convinced him. He believed the maximum of good would result from the policy of the Government, but they wanted an assurance that they were pursuing it with the object he had indicated. Unionist Members could not go to their constituents and ask for their support unless they could convince them that the Government had in view the liberation of Crete from Turkey. He did not believe in the forecast of the hon. Member for the Ecclesall Division of Sheffield. The Turkish Empire could never be reconstituted or revivified. He wished to dissociate himself from the sentiments which had been expressed by a section—he believed it was only a small section—of his Party, and associate himself with the sentiments of the Under Secretary for Foreign Affairs; and, in the belief that the Government intended to bring about the emancipation of Crete from Ottoman rule, as soon as possible, he supported their policy.

Mr. JAMES BRYCE (Aberdeen, S.) regretted some of the speeches from hon. Members opposite, and he should be sorry to think they represented the general feeling of the Conservative Party. He believed that among their constituents were many who felt strong sympathy with the action of Greece, and were anxious that the conduct of the Government should be animated by sympathetic regard to the position of Greece. The Under Secretary for Foreign Affairs did not make it clear that the proposals of the Government had been accepted in their entirety by the other Powers.

The FIRST LORD of the TREASURY: They have been. He said so.

Mr. BRYCE said he was glad to hear that. Then the Under Secretary did not give a clear idea of what was meant by "administrative autonomy." Would it include the appointment of a Christian Governor, whom it would be out of the power of the Sultan to dismiss or recall; and for what period would he be appointed? Then, what provisions were to be made for the constitution of the gendarmerie. Before Greece withdrew her forces from Crete she would expect to know what was to be secured to the Christian population there. The Under Secretary eulogised the conduct of the Turkish troops in Crete, but the Blue Book stated that in July they made raids on Christian villages, set fire to houses, and cut down trees. Other depredations were also spoken of. The Consular reports showed that the Mussulman troops could not be relied on. It was stated in the Blue-book that the Turkish troops witnessed a series of cruel and unprovoked murders without trying to prevent them. After evidence like that he thought the House would feel that these Turkish troops ought not to be intrusted with the preservation of order, and that they would be useless for the purposes of police or pacification. The Under Secretary had not told them how long the Turkish troops were to be kept in Crete, and this was a serious matter. They had been told that the Turkish troops only obeyed their officers in the case of the Armenian massacres; but if they did so once they might do so again, and were they to understand that if the Turkish troops remained they were to be entirely officered by Europeans? The condition of the island was very grave; the whole of the interior was in the hands of the insurgents, and the country was of so mountainous a character that it would be a very difficult task to subdue them. Did the Government propose to let loose the Turkish troops into the interior of the island? He suggested that by far the best course, if the Powers insisted on continuing their occupation, would be to make use of the Greek troops for the preservation of order. Not a word had been said against the Greek troops; they were the troops of a civilised Power —["hear, hear!" *and laughter*]—they were on their good behaviour in this matter, and they possessed knowledge which it was impossible for any foreign gendarmerie imported from Montenegro or elsewhere to possess. If the Powers wished to restore peace it would be far better to make the Greek troops the mandatories of Europe rather than the Turkish troops. He was glad that the Under Secretary had not joined in any censure of Greece, for Greece was entitled to the great credit of having done what the Powers ought to have done long ago. It was owing to the neglect by the Powers of the provisions of the Treaty of Berlin that the condition of Macedonia was so dangerous. They were now told that Crete was to receive "administrative autonomy," but those words were not mentioned until the Greeks had entered the island. ["Hear, hear!"] He did not believe they would ever have peace in Crete until she was united with her mother-country. For the last 30 years there had hardly been a year, or even a month, in which shiploads of Cretan refugees, driven out by Turkish oppression, had not been landed on the coast of Greece. He hoped the union of Crete with Greece would not be long delayed. The Powers apparently wished to retard its accomplishment, but the best way to remove the cause of danger was to remove the cause of discontent. What had the Concert of Europe accomplished? It was the Concert of Europe that, during the last two years, had secured immunity for the Sultan of Turkey in his policy of massacre. [*Cheers.*] The Concert of Europe, as the Under Secretary had said, was composed of very different Powers with very different aims and entertaining very different views of their own interests. Some Powers had no care for Crete; some had no respect for the will of the people; some had said that their first object was to preserve the integrity of the Turkish Empire, and to preserve it apparently by maintaining still longer a rule which the Christian subjects of the Sultan had found intolerable. But we were not one of those Powers. [*Cheers.*] We were a free people. [*Cheers.*] We believed that the revolt of the Cretans and the intervention of Greece on their behalf were amply justified, and we desired the extinction, as soon as possible, over as large an area as possible, of the rule of the Turk, which had everywhere proved a desolating and blighting rule. [*Cheers.*] He joined in warning the Government that the country would expect that, in any consultation they might hold with the other Powers of Europe, their influence should be exercised in securing for all the subjects of Turkey the maximum of freedom, the release of as many Christian people as possible from the direct rule of the Sultan, and that the utmost consideration should be shown to Greece, who, in its intervention in Crete, had been animated by the best motives, with which the people of this country heartily sympathised. [*Cheers.*]

COLONEL SAUNDERSON (Armagh, N.) congratulated the House on the marked difference in tone between the speeches of hon. Members on the Opposition side in criticising the Government and their speeches on the subject on former occasions. ["Hear, hear!"] It was now felt that the position of affairs in Crete was of so grave a character that the violent language which had been used on former occasions was unsuited to the situation. But his main reason for rising was because it was assumed by hon. Gentlemen opposite that sympathy with Greece was only to be found on their side of the House. [*Opposition cries of* "No, no!"] He had heard it said by several Members, and especially by the hon. Member for Northampton. Perhaps those hon. Gentlemen got that idea from the speeches made by three or four hon. Members on the Ministerial side, who were almost alone in being unqualified admirers of the Sultan and his rule. [*Laughter.*] He was not afraid to state that he had always sympathised, and that he now entirely sympathised, with Greece. [*Cheers.*] Greece was now acting a part which Englishmen would act in similar circumstances. [*Cheers.*] If there were an island 60 miles from our coast—the same distance as Ireland—[*laughter*]—and if men of the same race and the same religion as ourselves suffered the persecutions to which the Cretans had been subjected, he ventured to say that no man calling himself an Englishman and worthy of the name would hesitate for one moment to adopt the course the Greeks had followed in regard to Crete. [*Cheers.*] But the real difficulty in the situation was the present attitude of Greece. ["Hear, hear!"] If Greece now acted in a precipitate and unreasonable manner she would destroy whatever hope there was of accomplishing the object she had in view. ["Hear, hear!"] If Greece could be got to withdraw her troops from Crete the main difficulty of the situation would disappear, and the fault he found with the scheme proposed by his right hon. Friend the Under Secretary—which, it must be remembered, was not the policy absolutely of Her Majesty's Government, but the policy of the Concert of Europe—was that it made it hard for Greece to comply. ["Hear, hear!"] It should be the duty of this country to do all that was possible with the view of making it easy for Greece to retire from Crete. ["Hear, hear!"] What was the defect in the scheme proposed which would make this important object difficult of attainment? Why, that it was proposed, or suggested, to leave the maintenance of order in the island to Turkish police. [*Opposition cheers.*] It was idle to expect that the Greeks would approve of any such arrangement. ["Hear, hear!"] If the European Powers wanted to make it easy for Greece to retire from Crete, the withdrawal of the Turkish and Greek troops should take place at the same time. [*Cheers.*] He confessed that he had no confidence whatever in Turkish police, and he believed that very few persons had confidence in them. ["Hear, hear!"] The history of the immediate past did not justify, on the part of the House of Commons, much less on the part of Greece or of the Cretan people, any feeling of confidence whatever in Turkish police or in Turkish officers. Such an arrangement would practically still give Turkey power over the island; and, in view of both the present and the future, he would not abide by it if he were a Cretan or a Greek. [*Cheers.*] Why had the Powers of Europe taken up this question? As far as he could see, they were governed by two motives—suspicion of each other and self-interest. ["Hear, hear!" *and laughter.*] If that was so, if it was for their own objects and aims that the Powers were interfering to pacify Crete, then he would say, let them pacify the island at their own expense; and he thought that that policy ought to be pursued by the Concert of Europe and the Government. Let the Concert of Europe say that it would undertake the pacification of Crete—would undertake to maintain the authority of the law and the security of life and property—and then all excuse would be taken away from Greece for refusing to withdraw her troops. If such a line as that were taken peace would probably be secured to Crete; time given to the people to organise themselves into a civilised nation, and, as the years went by, Greece, if she could only exercise patience, would see, what he believed the majority of the English people desired to see, the fruition of her hopes in the annexation ultimately of the island to the mother-country. [*Cheers.*]

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR, Manchester, E.), who was received with loud Ministerial cheers on rising, said: As this Debate has gone on for a considerably longer period than was anticipated either by the Leader of the Opposition or by myself when it began, and as there is still some business to transact before 12 o'clock, the House probably will allow me to intervene at this stage in order to answer certain questions that have been put to the Government since the able and exhaustive speech of my right hon. Friend the Under Secretary for Foreign Affairs. [*Cheers.*] Now, various Members on the other side, doubtless with different degrees of conviction, have attacked the Concert of Europe. The Concert of Europe, it is said, may be all very well as far as it goes, but what has it done either for Crete or for Greece, or for Europe as a whole, during the years it has been in existence? Sir, I take up that challenge—[*cheers*]—and I say that, whether we consider the action of the Concert of Europe in regard to the particular places situated in the Eastern part of Europe, or whether we regard it in relation to the peace of Europe as a whole, the services it has done during the last few years had been incalculable to mankind and to civilisation. [*Cheers.*] I do not, of course, deny—who can deny?—that the Concert of Europe, powerful, useful, and effective instrument though it be, is an instrument which, from the nature of its constitution, must work slowly, and, from that fact, must, under some circumstances, work imperfectly. ["Hear, hear!"] That none of us who sit on this Bench, and no impartial observer outside party politics, would be disposed for a moment to deny. But when the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Aberdeen tells us that the European Concert has not only so far been useless, but has in certain respects been absolutely noxious—when he goes the length of telling us that but for the European Concert it would have been possible for this country to exercise pressure upon the Porte in favour of the good government of the subjects of the Porte—then I must tell the right hon. Gentleman that he is mistaken. [*Cheers.*] An attempt on the part of this country during the last two or three years to exercise separate and independent pressure upon the Porte outside the Concert of Europe would not only in my judgment have broken up that Concert, but it would have been rendered absolutely ineffectual by the opposition of other Powers of Europe, who would have felt themselves naturally absolved from all loyalty to the general arrangement which by our action would have been destroyed. [*Cheers.*] So much for the objections to the Concert of Europe. Now I ask whether it be true, as has been stated over and over again in this Debate, that so far as Crete itself is concerned, the action of the Powers has been useless up to the present time, and that if now, at the eleventh hour, Europe has determined to give autonomy to Crete, that determination is the result simply of the action of the Greek power, and that if Europe had stood aside and had never intervened, Greece, having a free hand, would have brought about that desirable result, it might be months, it might be years ago. That is not the fact. [*Cheers.*] If Europe had stood on one side and had left Turkey and Greece to fight out the destinies of Crete together, is there a man in this House who doubts for one moment that Crete, instead of being as she is now, upon the very verge and edge of receiving complete autonomy under a Turkish suzerainty, would have been ground down under the heel of the Ottoman dominion, and that Greece would have been absolutely powerless—[*cheers and cries of* "No, no!"]—to obviate that disastrous result? [*Cheers.*] So much for the effects of the Concert of Europe in Asia and in Crete. What has been the result of the Concert of Europe in Europe itself? [*Cheers.*] It is an easy criticism to say that if the Concert of Europe had been more rapid in its unanimity, quicker in its action, more dexterous, more rapid in its decisions, this evil or that evil might have been avoided. I dare say it might have been. But without the Concert of Europe would Europe now be at peace? [*Cheers.*] It is impossible, of course, to give mathematical demonstrations of what would have occurred in a particular condition of affairs which condition of affairs has not actually existed; but, if mathematical demonstration is impossible, there is, I believe, not one responsible statesman in any country in Europe, whether he belongs to the Triple Alliance, or to France, or Germany, or any other of the Powers concerned, who does not recognise the critical and dangerous character of the crisis through which Europe has been passing during the last three or four years, and who does not hold it as a cardinal article of his faith that it is the Concert founded; if the Concert of Europe be alone, which has preserved Europe from the untold evils of a general war. [*Cheers.*] If these contentions of mine be well founded; if the Concert of Europe be innocent, as I believe it to be innocent, of any of the evils that have happened in the Asiatic dominions of Turkey; if its action has been in the highest degree beneficial to Crete, and, as we hope, will be in the highest degree beneficial to other populations of Turkey in the future; and if, in addition to all these benefits, it has given peace to Europe—then I have vindicated, and vindicated completely, the enormous advantage which the Concert of Europe has given to mankind, and I have laid before the House the strongest reason which exists for our doing all that we can, consistently with our other duties, to maintain that Concert unimpaired so far as we are concerned. [*Cheers.*] I pass from these general observations to the more detailed questions and criticisms which have been put to the Government by hon. and right hon. Gentlemen opposite, and here I must be permitted to say that in this Debate it is fair and right to ask us for principles; it is not fair and it is not right to ask from us detailed statements. I think the Opposition are amply justified in requiring us to lay down in clear and unmistakable language the lines of policy which we desire to adopt, but when they ask us for the detailed method by which that policy is to be carried out they must remember the general difficulties of the situation, they must remember that we are by hypothesis acting with five allies, and that some agreement as to details must be come to with them before these details are announced in this House or elsewhere. Let me illustrate that general proposition by two main questions which have been put to us by hon. Gentlemen opposite. The right hon. Member for Aberdeen was very anxious as to the nature and character of the autonomy which we desire should be given to Crete, and he asked whether there was to be a Christian Governor, whether that Governor was to be irremovable, and what his position would be. I should not say that Crete had autonomy at all unless there was a Christian Governor or, at all events, if it did not depend on the Cretans themselves whether their Governor was Christian or not. [*Cheers.*] I am not in a position to tell the House what is to be the Constitution of Crete, but I am in a position to tell the House that by autonomy, subject to the suzerainty of the Porte, we mean a form of Government familiar in the Turkish Empire, in which the Sultan and the Porte will not have the power of intervening in the local affairs of the country at all—[*cheers*]—and that broad declaration of policy will, I hope, be sufficient to satisfy both the right hon. Gentleman and other Members of the House who are naturally and justifiably anxious as to the views we take of the future government of the island. The other question which has naturally interested the House is as to the position of the Turkish forces in the island. The Turkish force as an efficient military organisation will, I presume, be in any case only a transitional factor in Cretan history. But we are asked, not what the future is to be when the Cretan constitution is in working order, but what the condition of Crete is to be during that transitional stage which must elapse before a complete constitution is granted. A lurid picture has been drawn by hon. Gentlemen opposite of what may be expected from the Turkish soldiers during that period. We have been told that in Armenia in recent times, in European Turkey in times not very far gone by, the Turkish soldiers have rendered themselves guilty of such atrocities that the notion of leaving Crete under their uncontrolled power is one which cannot for a moment be tolerated. Though I understand that, on the whole, the conduct of the Turkish troops in Crete has been exemplary during the last year, during recent events, still I perfectly understand and sympathise with the views expressed by the Cretans, whose opinions I have endeavoured shortly to describe, and I can assure hon. and right hon. Gentlemen opposite, and I can assure my hon. and gallant Friend who spoke last, that we are as alive as they are, and he is to the absolute necessity of seeing that under any circumstances the Turkish soldiers in Crete shall be under the control of the Powers whatever be the exact day or month on which or in which the last of them is required to leave the island. [*Cheers.*] That is not, I admit, a detailed statement, but it is a general statement of policy, and with a general statement of policy I trust that both sides of the House will, on the present occasion, be contented. If I may venture to add one other consideration, one not without its weight, to what I have stated on this subject, I would remind the House that at this moment the Mussulman population is in a minority—relatively speaking, an insignificant minority—and if you could suppose all the Mussulman troops were withdrawn, and no power, no gendarmerie, established in the island, undoubtedly the first result would be a great massacre of Mussulmans by Christians—a result which, I believe, would be equally abhorrent on both sides of the House. ["Hear, hear!"] However, I pass from those two broad questions as regards the future of Crete to answer a question put specifically by the right hon. Gentleman the Leader of the Opposition, and repeated by all those who have supported him. The right hon. Gentleman has said over and over again, "Autonomy for Crete is all very well, but why not hand over Crete to Greece?" I am the last person to make any attack upon any foreign nation whatever, and I may say that individually I have always felt the strongest sympathy for the welfare of the small free States in the Balkan Peninsula and in the East of Europe, and the most earnest wish that they may do all for the happiness of their population and the progress of humanity in that part of the world which their best friends expect of them; but when the Leader of the Opposition told us that all these States, by which I suppose he meant Servia, Bulgaria, and Roumania, look to Greece as their leader—

*SIR W. HARCOURT: I beg pardon. I certainly never thought it, and I do not think I ever said it.

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY: What was the phrase? He said they looked to Greece.

*SIR W. HARCOURT: Not the States that have been emancipated; the States that have not been emancipated. [AN HON. MEMBER: "What States?"] I intended, of course, populations.

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY: Of course, I accept the right hon. Gentleman's version of his own speech, but a speech in which he talked about States that do not exist seems to me a very curious speech. [*Cheers.*] I have enumerated all the States that are in existence, but, of course, I do not wish to press the right hon. Gentleman on that point, because I really only brought it forward in order to remind the right hon. Gentleman of an episode in his own political career or in the political career of a Government of which he was a distinguished member, which would explain why it is that in our judgment it would be dangerous to hand over Crete to be an integral part of the Greek Kingdom. In 1886 the right hon. Gentleman and his friends came into power; it was immediately after the State of Eastern Roumelia was joined to Bulgaria, and formed the community which is at present ruled over by the Prince of Bulgaria. The result of that junction—in my opinion a very fortunate and happy junction of populations—["hear, hear!"]—was to excite great jealousy in the Greek community, which naturally re-acted on the Greek Government. The Greek Government of the day proceeded to arm and to threaten the Turkish Empire with a view of getting out of the Turkish Empire, I suppose, some *quid pro quo* for the increase of dominion which had been given to Bulgaria. The English Government, of which the right hon. Gentleman was a member, and of which the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Aberdeen, who last spoke, was the Under Secretary for Foreign Affairs, and the Concert of Europe proceeded to inform the Greek Government that this menace of the peace of Europe would not be tolerated—[*Ministerial cheers*]—and that it was the duty of Greece forthwith to disarm. The Greek Government of that time, a Government quite as anxious for freedom as I believe the present one is, and animated by the very same motives, proved recalcitrant. The right hon. Gentleman and his colleagues, adhering to their opinion and acting with the Concert of Europe, proceeded to inform the Greek Government that under those circumstances force must be used. [*Ministerial cheers.*] And force was used, and under the auspices of the right hon. Gentleman and the Member for Aberdeen and his colleagues upon that Bench, not excluding the right hon. Member for Montrose—[*cheers*]—the whole coast of Greece from east to west was blockaded by the forces of Europe. [*Cheers.*] Europe did that for the preservation of peace and in the interests of mankind—[*cheers*]—and, Sir, what Europe did then, and what the right hon. Gentleman did then, we are justified, if occasion seems to demand it, in doing now—[*prolonged cheering*]—in order to promote and further the same great cause. It surely is no news to any Gentleman who interests himself in these matters to know that if Crete, instead of being given—as it will be given by our plan—complete freedom as a part of the general Ottoman dominions, is added to Greece, in that event Servia, Bulgaria, Roumania, Albania, and Montenegro—all these States and populations would feel that there was a disturbance of the *status quo* which required them, in as far as they are independent States, to mobilise their armies, to prepare for eventualities, and to occupy, it may be this or it may be that portion of the Turkish Empire; and, be it remembered, these are not States all arrayed in common accord against the Turkish Empire, they are rivals one with another. [*Cheers.*] And if, at a time like the present, we were to disturb the *status quo*, as the right hon. Gentleman desires us to disturb it, we should, without adding one tittle of freedom to Crete, imperil the whole peace of the East of Europe; and the peace of the East of Europe cannot be imperilled, as everyone knows, without imperilling the peace of even greater and more important portions of European civilisation. [*Cheers.*] I hope I have justified the course which the Government have pursued. [*Loud cheers.*] I can assure the House that freedom and good government have no more earnest advocates in this House or in this country than the Members of Her Majesty's Government. [*Cheers.*] We are advocates of freedom. [*Cries of* "Oh!"] In the history of the world, Sir, freedom and peace have not always proved compatible. But at the present crisis, and with regard to the affairs now under the consideration of the House, we believe, and believe most firmly, that the cause of peace is the cause of freedom—[*cheers*]—and that the cause of freedom is the cause of peace. We believe that no heavier responsibility can be taken upon himself by any man in this House than to urge the Greek Government—of whose motives I make not a word of complaint—to urge the Greek Government, now that the object of freedom in Crete has been attained, for ends which, from the nature of the case, must be selfish ends, to imperil in the future interests extending far beyond the dominions of the Greek population. The right hon. Gentleman, in his elaborate peroration this evening, brought in the parable, to which allusion has been more than once made, of the good Samaritan and the man who fell among thieves. Sir, the good Samaritan would not have been through all these 18 centuries held up as a model for admiration if, as an incidental result of his good action, he was going to add largely to his estate. [*Prolonged cheering.*] If it be true—and I doubt not that it is true—that the Greek public were animated by generous emotions, by generous sentiments, and by a generous policy in all that they have done, let them reflect that their object, as far as Crete is concerned, has now been absolutely attained—[*cheers and cries of* "No!"]—and that they lay themselves open to the suspicion by further action that they have not been animated by pure motives alone, but that there was an admixture of national ambition in the course which they have pursued. ["Hear, hear!"] I do not believe that that is the case. I believe that as soon as it is understood by the Greek public that Europe is determined to give autonomy to Crete, and that any further action on the part of the Greeks will imperil the general stability of European affairs, then they will see that duty and patriotism equally require them to withdraw from the position which hitherto, from the highest motives, they have taken up. May that be the policy which they adopt. In the meantime, the course which we have before us is a plain and simple course, and it is a course which we shall pursue for the benefit of Greece itself, for the benefit of Crete, for the benefit of East Europe, and, above all, for the benefit of the peace of Europe, which is the greatest interest of mankind. [*Loud cheers.*]

MR. JOHN MORLEY (Montrose Burghs), who was received with Opposition cheers, said: I am sure there is no dissent from the claim which the right hon. Gentleman has made for himself and his Government, that they are lovers of freedom and of peace. I cannot imagine any British Government which should be other than lovers of freedom and of peace. But we cannot forget that at this moment it is not at all impossible—some think that it is only too probable—that the effect of the policy which Her Majesty's Government are now pursuing will be to endanger peace, and that it has already done so. [*Cheers and cries of* "No!"] No one who listened to the speech of the Under Secretary and to his account of the state of Crete, and realised to himself the possiblity that Greece may refuse to evacuate the island—no such one could avoid the feeling that the cause of peace is at this moment exposed to most serious risk and danger. Everyone who listened to the speech of my right hon. Friend who moved this Motion will agree that in that speech, and in all that has been stated from this Bench, we have endeavoured to avoid giving—and I hope that I shall continue to avoid giving—a party complexion to this Debate. [*Cries of* "Oh!"] I think all of us here feel and recognise all that the right hon. Gentleman so eloquently and forcibly said as to the possible dangers that may arise from rash advice given in this House or rash action taken outside. We recognise the critical condition of these circumstances as fully as the right hon. Gentleman, and if there are aspects of the policy of the Government which we think imprudent and ill calculated to carry out the ends the Government have in view, that does not arise from party considerations but from our reading of the situation. The right hon. Gentleman secured the loud cheers of his friends behind him by a reference to the events of 1886. I am not going to dwell upon those events. [*Ironical laughter.*] I chanced to be a Member of the Cabinet whose actions the right hon. Gentleman criticised. [The FIRST LORD of the TREASURY: "Described."] Yes, but there was an innuendo. [The FIRST LORD of the TREASURY: "You are quite right."] The coercive measures taken against Greece in 1886 were taken under a totally different state of circumstances from those which now exist—[*cheers*]; but as the right hon. Gentleman made a point of the coercive action taken by us, which was very different from that to which I think Her Majesty's Government will have to resort if their views are insisted upon, I may remind him that no less a person than the Prime Minister has expressly said, in a dispatch now in the hands of hon. Gentlemen, that the circumstances in 1896 were entirely different from the circumstances under which our Government acted in 1886. ["Hear, hear!"] The Austrian Government reminded Lord Salisbury of what had taken place ten years ago, and Lord Salisbury replied: "The distinction between the two appears to me very marked;" but the right hon. Gentleman now assumes, for the sake of his argument, that the circumstances of 1886 and 1897 are identical—a statement which Lord Salisbury has in advance repudiated. [AN HON. MEMBER: "Read on."] He says: "If Greece were to make any aggression upon the independence or integrity of Turkey—" [*Ministerial cheers.*] Yes, but that has been denied by the Under Secretary; it has never been stated that Greece has been guilty of aggression. Greece has intervened just as the other Powers have intervened. [*Loud dissent.*] The more the settlement of 1886 is examined the less I think will it be found that there is any parallel with the condition of things under which Her Majesty's Government are now acting. The right hon. Gentleman began with a vindication, with which I do not quarrel greatly, of the Concert of Europe. I admit that great perils might arise from any departure from that Concert, but, when it is said that the Cretans might still be ground down by Turkish domination were it not for the Concert of Europe, it is not explained how the Ottoman Government could have got its troops into Crete. It was not denied by the right hon. Gentleman that such is the position of Crete that were the Admirals agreed Turkey could not have landed, as she did in 1862, the large number of troops which would be required to pacify the whole of the interior of the island. ["Hear, hear!"] The right hon. Gentleman implied that we had gone too far in asking for details. The right hon. Gentleman said that we had a right to demand from the Government a clear exposition of their principles and of the general line of their policy, but that to ask for details was going too far, because the Government were acting in concert with five other Powers and because the details were not yet fully settled. Yes, but the immediate point before every Member of the House and before Greece is this. The Greeks will say: "When you require us to evacuate Crete it is of no use to give us general principles or lines of policy. We cannot undertake to evacuate Crete or to retire from the enterprise we have entered upon until we know, not only the general principles and the lines of your policy, but the details," which the right hon. Gentleman rather complains of us to-night for asking Her Majesty's Government to give us. ["Hear, hear!"] This is a case in which the whole worth of the settlement to be arrived at will depend upon details. Therefore we have a full right to ask Her Majesty's Government for some further particulars, with regard to which Her Majesty's Government have not given us one glimpse, of the kind of autonomy, how far and how wide it is to be, which they propose to give to Crete. ["Hear, hear"!] The right hon. Gentleman said that there were two main questions which he felt bound to answer. One was as to the nature of the autonomy which was to be conferred upon Crete. He, however, did not give us any answer to that question except by making use of a very vague and unsatisfactory phrase. Then the second question related to autonomy. I can quite understand that the details of the scheme of autonomy are not yet settled; but I would remind the right hon. Gentleman that what we understand Her Majesty's Government to mean now is a complete reversal of the policy which was announced by Lord Salisbury. The policy which was announced by Lord Salisbury as being carried out by the Powers was one of automony preceding coercion. Lord Salisbury—it may not be his fault—appears to have been baffled in carrying that policy out, because we are now told that the Greeks are required to evacuate Crete before they are told what is to be the scheme of autonomy which is to be conferred upon Crete. ["Hear, hear!"] If the Powers had agreed upon a scheme of autonomy which the Cretans would be justified in accepting, there is no reason why the right hon. Gentleman should not have given us some information with respect to it to-night, or should not have foreshadowed what kind of autonomy it was. Another important point upon which we desire information is how order is going to be maintained in this distracted island. Upon that point the right hon. Gentleman has no information whatever to give us. Are we to suppose that Turkish troops or Turkish police, or both, are to be used for maintaining order where they have so signally failed in doing so? My right hon. Friend the Member for Aberdeen has read page after page from the Blue-book in which the action of these Turkish troops is only too plainly written. I cannot suppose that in that case the Cretans will have fair play, or that it is an argument that will induce the Greeks to evacuate the island in compliance with the determination arrived at by the Concert of Europe. I will not go back to what the Under Secretary said, that these troops were very good unless their officers ordered them to be bad; but I would remind both him and the right hon. Gentleman the First Lord of the Treasury, that they have given us no details whatever, not even any general indications, of the way in which this force is to be disciplined and maintained. ["Hear, hear!"] A more extraordinary device was never heard of. Here you have got Turkish troops ordered not to obey their own Turkish masters. They are to be under a sort of *Condominium*, as my right hon. Friend said, and we do not know who is going to pay for them. I think we might fairly have b een told at all events, that the Government have thought out fully this extraordinary device. ["Hear, hear!"] After all, in my judgment, the most important points in the Debate to which the attention of the Government should be given, are to be found in the speeches made, not on this side of the House, but on the other side, by my right hon. Friend the Member for Bodmin, the Member for North Armagh, and the Member for Belfast. It is well worth their while to take warning by those speeches. ["Oh, oh!" *and* "Hear, hear!"] My right hon Friend the Member for Bodmin, speaking, as he always does, with perfect freedom—[*Ministerial cheers*]—and imperfect responsibility, took a very definite view as to the danger that Her Majesty's Government would be running if they used the military forces of the Crown in the coercion of Greece. I think my right hon. Friend the Member for West Monmouth used language which is very proper—language that any of us should use upon this question. My right hon. Friend warned the Government that they were walking into a pass which led them they knew not where, but which might lead them to ulterior action which would undoubtedly be condemned by the bulk of the people of this island. ["Hear, hear!"] I for my part shall be very careful not to use any language about Greece beyond the language of admiration for the services she has rendered to humanity and her own race. [*Cheers.*] I agree with what was said by the Under Secretary, that anyone incurs a great responsibility in this House or this country who ventures to give advice to Greece either one way or the other. I think he would incur a very grave responsibility, and I am sure that advice, in one direction or the other, given in this House or in this country would fail with the Government of Greece, because they are face to face with a very complex and difficult and urgent set of circumstances, and those circumstances will have—must have—far more effect upon them than any words spoken by a friend in England. Therefore, we leave it where my right hon. Friend put it. We warn the Government of what was said by my right hon. Friend the Member for Bodmin, that they are apparently committing themselves to courses which may lead them into action which I am perfectly sure they will find even their own friends, their own general supporters in the country, look upon with grave doubt, and, in many cases, with profound and loud condemnation. ["Hear, hear!"] As to what may ultimately happen to Greece, it may be, as my hon. Friend the Member for Aberdeen has said, that the very first act that the first assembly chosen under your system of autonomy brings into operation will be to pronounce for annexation to the kingdom of Greece. That, in my judgment, would be a very happy consummation. [*Cheers.*] It is the natural consummation, it is the consummation which ought to have taken place but for misguided policy on the part of Great Britain in 1828 and 1830, and if that end comes it will be the end which lovers of humanity and civilisation in those distracted parts would most earnestly desire. ["Hear, hear!"] I think it will be agreed on the whole that we have avoided giving to this discussion anything like a party complexion. ["Hear, hear!"] We admit the difficulties in which the Government have been working, but we do not believe that they have taken the best way to meet and to solve those difficulties. ["Hear, hear!"] We look with the greatest doubt and dissatisfaction on the scheme which Lord Salisbury and the right hon. Gentleman have announced to-night, and to which apparently they adhere. We fear that there are grounds for apprehending that we are to-night only talking of the beginning of what may prove to be a most formidable set of transactions; and we do not think that Her Majesty's Government, so far as at present informed of their position, have taken up a position which will best enable them to grapple and deal with the new aspects which those transactions may by-and-by assume. That being our view, we have stated the opinions we hold. We have warned the Government of the dangers they are incurring, and we have listened almost with pain to one or two of the speeches from the other side. The speech of the hon. Member for St. Albans was one, I am quite sure, that no Gentleman on the Front Bench can agree with. The hon. Member said that if you want to know the Greek character and worth, the true measure of Greek aims, you must look to the "Stock Exchange Yearbook." [*Laughter.*] Language of that kind was received with loud approval by hon. Gentlemen opposite. Whatever may be the true ancient Greek character or the modern Greek character, I do not believe any one opposite will deny that, whatever may take place in future, the action of Greece, even at the eleventh hour, has in fact promoted that settlement—["No, no," *and cheers*]—and the more satisfactory the settlement is the more credit would be due to Greece. ["No," *and cheers.*] We are satisfied with the discussion that has taken place, and my right hon. friend will not divide the House. ["Oh, oh," *and Ministerial cries of* "Divide!"]

*SIR W. HARCOURT said it was not his intention, and he set out by indicating that it was not his desire, to take a Party division on the question. He asked the leave of the House to withdraw the Motion. [*Cheers and cries of* "No!"]

Motion, by leave, withdrawn.

SITTING OF THE HOUSE (ASH WEDNESDAY).

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY moved, "That this House do meet To morrow at Two of the clock."

MR. HERBERT LEWIS (Flint Boroughs) protested against what had become more and more of an anachronism. He should ask the First Lord of the Treasury to grant a return showing how many Members had taken advantage of this opportunity to attend church. (*Laughter.*)

MR. SAMUEL EVANS (Glamorgan, Mid) said that if the Government were anxious to pass their Education Bill, as they professed, they ought to be obliged to any one who protested against the loss of two valuable working hours in to-morrow's sitting. What connection there was between Ash Wednesday and Derby Day he failed to understand. They were anxious to debate the Voluntary Schools Bill. Their anxiety did not spring from the same motives as that of hon. Gentlemen opposite. They were anxious that the country should see as early as possible the monstrosity of this Bill. The Government, on the other hand, said they desired to pass it.

*MR. SPEAKER: Order, order! The hon. Member is not speaking to the Question.

MR. SAMUEL EVANS said the Government, by this Motion, were taking two very useful hours during to-morrow which they themselves had allocated towards the discussion of the Voluntary Schools Bill. If his hon. Friend divided the House, he would be very pleased to tell with him and to vote against the Motion.

The House divided:—Ayes, 246; Noes, 81.—(Division List, No. 60).

MOTION.

PRISONERS' PERSONAL CORRECTION PROHIBITION.

Bill to prohibit the Personal Correction of Prisoners, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Joseph A. Pease, Mr. Broadhurst, Mr. Burt, Mr. John Burns, Mr. Lloyd-George, Sir Thomas Carmichael, Mr. Dillon, and Mr. John Redmond; presented accordingly, and Read the First time; to be Read a Second time upon Tuesday 30th March, and to be printed.—[Bill 148.]

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

VOLUNTARY SCHOOLS BILL.

Considered in Committee.

[The CHAIRMAN of WAYS and MEANS, Mr. J. W. LOWTHER, in the Chair.]

Progress 1 March—SECOND DAY.

Clause 1,—

AID GRANT TO VOLUNTARY ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS.

(1.) For aiding Voluntary Schools there shall be annually paid out of moneys provided by Parliament an aid grant, not exceeding in the aggregate five shillings per scholar for the whole number of scholars in those schools.

(2.) The aid grant shall be distributed by the Education Department to such Voluntary Schools and in such manner and amounts, as the Department think best for the purpose of helping necessitous schools and increasing their efficiency, due regard being had to the maintenance of voluntary subscriptions.

(3.) If associations of schools are constituted in such manner in such areas and with such governing bodies representative of the managers as are approved by the Education Department, there shall be allotted to each association while so approved.

(*a*) a share of the aid grant to be computed according to the number of scholars in the schools of the association at the rate of five shillings per scholar, or, if the Department fix different rates for town and country schools respectively (which they are hereby empowered to do) then at those rates; and

(*b*) a corresponding share of any sum which may be available out of the aid grant after distribution has been made to unassociated schools.

(4.) The share so allotted to each such association shall be distributed as aforesaid by the Education Department after consulting the governing body of the association, and in accordance with any scheme prepared by that body which the Department for the time being approve.

(5.) The Education Department may exclude a school from any share of the aid grant which it might otherwise receive, if, in the opinion of the Department, it unreasonably refuses or fails to join such an association, but the refusal or failure shall not be deemed unreasonable if the majority of the schools in the association belong to a religious denomination to which the school in question does not itself belong.

(6.) The Education Department may require as a condition of a school receiving a share of the aid grant, that the accounts of the receipts and expenditure of the school shall be annually audited in accordance with the regulations of the Department.

(7.) The decision of the Education Department upon any question relating to the distribution or allotment of the aid grant, including the question whether an association is or is not in conformity with this Act, and whether a school is a town or a country school, shall be final.

MR. W. O. CLOUGH (Portsmouth) moved "That the Chairman do report Progress, and ask leave to sit again."

Question put. The Committee divided:—Ayes, 57; Noes, 189.—(Division List, No. 61.)

MR. LLOYD-GEORGE (Carnarvon Boroughs), on behalf of Mr. HERBERT LEWIS (Flint Boroughs), moved in Subsection (1) to leave out the words "in the aggregate."

MR. SAMUEL EVANS rose, but, it being Midnight, the Chairman left the Chair to make his Report to the House.

Committee report Progress; to sit again To-morrow.

SALMON FISHERIES (IRELAND) ACTS AMENDMENT BILL.

Second Reading deferred till Tuesday, 30th March.

LAND LAW (IRELAND) (No. 2) BILL.

Second Reading deferred till Tuesday, 23rd March.

JURIES DETENTION BILL.

Second Reading deferred till To-morrow.

LAW OF EVIDENCE (CRIMINAL CASES) BILL.

Second Reading deferred till Thursday.

TRUSTS (SCOTLAND) BILL.

Committee deferred till Thursday.

MILITARY WORKS (MONEY) BILL.

Committee deferred till Thursday.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ALDERSHOT AND FARNBOROUGH) BILL.

Second Reading deferred till Thursday.

BERRIEW SCHOOL BILL.

Second Reading deferred till Thursday.

MILITARY LANDS ACT (1892) AMENDMENT BILL.

Committee deferred till Thursday.

STEAM ENGINES AND BOILERS (PERSONS IN CHARGE) BILL.

Adjourned Debate on Motion for Committal to Standing Committee on Trade, etc. [17th February], further adjourned till Thursday.

LICENSING EXEMPTION (HOUSES OF PARLIAMENT) BILL.

Second Reading deferred till this day.

House adjourned at Two minutes after Twelve o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

Wednesday, 3rd March 1897.

The House met at Two of the clock.

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

VOLUNTARY SCHOOLS BILL.

Considered in Committee.

Progress 2nd March—THIRD DAY.

[The CHAIRMAN of WAYS and MEANS, Mr. J. W. LOWTHER, in the Chair.]

Clause 1,—

(1) For aiding Voluntary Schools there shall be annually paid out of moneys provided by Parliament an aid grant, not exceeding in the aggregate 5s. per scholar for the whole number of scholars in those schools.

(2) The aid grant shall be distributed by the Education Department to such Voluntary Schools and in such manner and amounts as the Department think best for the purpose of helping necessitous schools and increasing their efficiency, due regard being had to the maintenance of voluntary subscriptions.

(3) If associations of schools are constituted in such manner in such areas and with such governing bodies representative of the managers as are approved by the Education Department, there shall be allotted to each association while so approved,

(*a*) a share of the aid grant to be computed according to the number of scholars in the schools of the association at the rate of 5s. per scholar, or, if the Department fix different rates for town and country schools respectively (which they are hereby empowered to do) then at those rates; and

(*b*) a corresponding share of any sum which may be available out of the aid grant after distribution has been made to unassociated schools.

(4) The share so allotted to each such association shall be distributed as aforesaid by the Education Department after consulting the governing body of the association, and in accordance with any scheme prepared by that body which the Department for the time being approve.

(5) The Education Department may exclude a school from any share of the aid grant which it might otherwise receive, if, in the opinion of the Department it unreasonably refuses or fails to join such an association, but the refusal or failure shall not be deemed unreasonable if the majority of the schools in the association belong to a religious denomination to which the school in question does not itself belong.

(6) The Education Department may require as a condition of a school receiving a share of the aid grant, that accounts of the receipts and expenditure of the school shall be annually audited in accordance with the regulations of the Department.

(7) The decision of the Education Department upon any question relating to the distribution or allotment of the aid grant, including the question whether an association is or is not in conformity with this Act, and whether a school is a town or a country school, shall be final.

Amendment proposed [3rd March] to leave out from sub-section (1) the words "in the aggregate:"—(*Mr. Lloyd-George*).

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the clause."

MR. HERBERT LEWIS (Flint Boroughs) resumed the Debate on the Amendment. He said that in his view the words "in the aggregate" were either entirely unnecessary, and therefore mere surplusage, or that they had an effect which would not appear on the first reading of the clause. The Solicitor General had stated, in reply to the noble Lord the Member for Rochester, that the words "in the aggregate" governed the words "not exceeding," and that therefore the former words would be sufficient to prevent any diminution whatever of the grant in the course of the year. He should like to ask the Solicitor General whether the insertion of those words really had that effect, and if they had, on what ground they had that effect?

THE SOLICITOR GENERAL (Sir ROBERT FINLAY, Inverness Burghs) thought the words "in the aggregate" should certainly be retained. He did not think they were superflous in the sense that they made a little clearer what was the meaning of the section. The meaning of the section was that the amount of the grant was to be the aggregate five shillings per scholar, for the whole number of scholars in these schools, and if they left out the words the only possible effect would be to make a little less clear what the intention of the section was.

MR. SYDNEY BUXTON (Tower Hamlets, Poplar) said they understood from the Attorney General the other evening that if the words "in the aggregate" were omitted, then, in any year in which

Parliament came to the conclusion that the whole of this money would not be required in that particular year, even if they voted that amount, it would not necessarily have to be spent in that year. If the words "in the aggregate" were left in the section the Committee were given to understand by the Attorney General that every year the same sum must be granted, and every year the same amount must be expended, for the purposes of the Bill. From the point of view of the Opposition, and without for a moment saying there were not a large number of necessitous schools requiring the aid grant, he considered the effect of the words upon the basis upon which the Government founded their Bill. If the words were included would they compel the Government of the day in a future year, whether the whole of the amount were required or not for necessitous schools, to expend the whole amount? Nothing could, of course, bind the House of Commons for a future year; but would it be necessary, under this clause, that the whole sum should be spent whether it was required or not? The point he had in his mind was this. It was possible that these necessitous schools, having received large sums for years to come, though necessitous now might subsequently become self-supporting if their subscriptions did not fall off, as it was anticipated they would not; and, under such circumstances, would the whole of the money necessarily be devoted year by year to its present purpose, whether actually required or not?

The SOLICITOR GENERAL said he did not think the Attorney General had put the interpretation on the words which had been attributed to him, and he had not used words in that sense. Under the clause, of course, they could not bind Parliament in future Sessions, but it would be a most unusual thing if, this Act being passed in these terms, this grant of money were refused. If this money were voted by Parliament, amounting in the aggregate to 5s. per scholar, the Education Department would have no right to refuse to spend the money in the year; it would have to be appropriated in the manner prescribed among the associated and unassociated schools. The Clause did not depend on the words "in the aggregate," but, as conducing to clearness, the words should remain.

MR. SYDNEY GEDGE (Walsall) said he had given Notice to move the omission of the words, because they seemed to him to be ungrammatical and contradictory. "An aid grant not exceeding in the aggregate 5s. per scholar;" but 5s. was not the aggregate; 5s. was the rate per scholar, not the total. He thought the words should be struck out; but the point was not worth ten minutes' discussion.

MR. SAMUEL EVANS (Glamorgan, Mid) said he had felt a similar difficulty in construing the words. He could not see that the words made grammar or sense, and certainly he did not see, after the explanation of the Solicitor General, that the words were in any degree useful. According to that explanation the intention of the clause was that the full sum should be spent, and it would be obligatory on the Education Department to spend the full amount of £600,000 odd in the year. He was glad to have this explanation at last; he had pressed for it some weeks ago. He did not complain that the hon. and learned Gentleman did not then give an answer; no doubt he wanted to give the point further consideration. There was no doubt now that the intention of the Government and their construction of the clause was that the Education Department would have to spend this sum of £600,000 odd each year; and really this was not the maximum, but the minimum, sum that would have to be annually spent. In thinking over what might have been the intention of the draftsman in putting in the words "in the aggregate," it struck him they were put in in order to make the proposal clear that a round sum should be fixed, but should not be distributed according to the number of scholars in each school. But the point did not require a lengthy discussion, and after what the Solicitor General had said it would be well to omit the words, which had given rise to difficulty in the minds of Members on either side.

MR. R. W. PERKS (Lincolnshire, Louth) said, as the words were admitted to be surplusage, they should be struck out.

THE SOLICITOR GENERAL said he did not say they were surplusage; he said they made the meaning of the clause more clear.

MR. PERKS said the meaning was clear without the words; they had been condemned as ungrammatical, and were admitted not to be necessary. Why, then, cumber an Act with surplus words? He should have thought that probably the object of the words would be to show the intention that certain schools should not get more than a sum at the rate of 5s. per head. The Solicitor General admitted the words were useless and worthless—["No, no!"]—and were simply put in to make the meaning doubly clear, but the latter portion of the clause made the meaning perfectly clear without the words.

Question put, "That the words 'in the aggregate' stand part of the clause."

The Committee divided:—Ayes, 157; Noes, 79.—(Division List, No. 62.)

MR. SAMUEL EVANS moved, after the word "aggregate," to insert the words—

> "the sum per scholar contributed by voluntary subscriptions for each such school in each year and in any event not exceeding."

He contended that he had sound and solid ground for this Amendment, which he might be pardoned for thinking was of a most important character. The principle of the maintenance of Voluntary Schools was based at the outset upon the schools being maintained in great measure by voluntary contributions. The settlement of 1870 would never have been arrived at but for the fact that the supporters of national and sectarian schools were able to point to the large measure of support which those schools had already received, and were continuing to receive, from the voluntary contributions of the parents and of the churches to which the schools belonged. The settlement of 1870 was allowed to remain undisturbed until 1876, when for the first time it was conceded that at any rate the whole principle of equal voluntary contributions need not be maintained; and when the 17s. 6d. limit was arrived at, so far a concession was made to those who contributed to the schools by voluntary contributions. But that principle, which was introduced in 1876 was absolutely and entirely at variance with the settlement of 1870, and that was pointed out by Lord Hartington, in his speech upon an Amendment with regard to the 17s. 6d. limit, in the course of which he said:—

> "Since the Second Reading a clause has been introduced (the 17s. 6d. limit) which altogether abandons the principle hitherto adopted by Parliament, that assistance should be given to denominational schools only in proportion to the voluntary contributions."

That principle was spoken of in the present day, but the Government had turned their backs upon it. They had expressed a pious opinion on the subject which was to be found in the second sub-section, and which ran, "due regard being had to the maintenance of voluntary subscriptions." If due regard was to be had to the maintenance of voluntary subscriptions he submitted to the Committee it was necessary to look at the amount of those voluntary subscriptions in any school before they came to the conclusion that that school ought to be helped at all. They ought not to take into consideration the number of scholars in average attendance in any of those schools, which had not helped themselves by these Voluntary subscriptions. If a school existed in which there was no voluntary subscriptions at all, they had no right to take the number of scholars in that school into consideration in arriving at the aggregate amount they were to give to the schools. He admitted that the result of the acceptance of the Amendment would be in a large measure to reduce the amount which was to be applied. The way the Amendment would work would be this: If the voluntary contributions in any one school amounted to 5s. per head of the scholars in average attendance, then that school could be taken into consideration in arriving at the amount which was to be granted by the Department. If the voluntary contributions only amounted to 2s. 6d. per head for the children in average attendance, then the school ought only to be taken into consideration so far as the half-crown would go, so that that would limit the grant proposed by the Bill. The effect of such an Amendment would be that if there were schools where there was no voluntary contributions at all, those schools ought not to be taken into account in any way whatever, because they had done nothing to help themselves. The *raison d'être* of this

Bill was the intolerable strain, but there was no intolerable strain in a school where there was no strain at all. If there was no voluntary contributions there was no strain upon the voluntary contributors. The number of schools throughout England and Wales, where there were no voluntary subscriptions, was 1,061; the number in which the amount contributed was less than 1s. per child, was 674; the number where the amount was less than 2s. 6d., 1,095; and the number in which the amount was less than 5s., 1,967. The result, therefore, of the Amendment would be that there would be a limitation upon the money which was to be granted by Parliament, and to be expended by the Education Department in proportion to the number of schools where the voluntary subscriptions were under 5s. per head. So far as Wales itself was concerned, greater efforts had been made even by the National Society, for the maintenance of their own schools, than was the case in England. The figures for the Welsh counties were very interesting. The hon. Member was quoting the figures when—

*THE CHAIRMAN OF WAYS AND MEANS (Mr. J. W. LOWTHER, Cumberland, Penrith) said he did not see their relevancy. The sole point before the Committee was whether average attendance or voluntary subscriptions should be the basis of the aggregate amount of the aid grant.

MR. SAMUEL EVANS said he would not go further into the figures. His object was to show the financial result of his Amendment, and to what extent, in the part of the country he knew best, the limitation would be made in the amount of the grant. But there were a few other figures he wished to give to show the injustice done to the taxpayers if the Government took into account the scholars in average attendance. He would take five towns in Glamorganshire. In Swansea the National Schools annual voluntary subscription amounted to £33 7s. 10d., the average attendance was 2,068, and the schools would get, under the Bill, £516 10s. At Aberavon the voluntary subscription was £25 15s. 8d., the average attendance 388, and the amount to be received at 5s. per scholar was £97. At Aberdare the voluntary contribution was £89 0s. 5d. per annum, average attendance 1,226, new aid grant £306 10s. At Cardiff the Bill would be to the advantage of the Roman Catholics. To those schools there was contributed £139 7s. 5d., the average attendance was 1835, and under the Bill at 5s. a scholar those schools would be entitled to £458 15s. At Duffryn the voluntary subscriptions were £15 per annum, the average attendance 815, and under the Bill the schools there would be entitled to £203, so that in this instance they multiplied by thirteen the amount of the voluntary subscriptions.

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR, Manchester, E.) rising to order, asked whether the hon. Member's remarks were relevant? The subscriptions had nothing to do with the aid to be given to individual schools, but only with the aggregate amount of the grant.

*THE CHAIRMAN OF WAYS AND MEANS said he understood the hon. Member was using these instances as an argument to show that the total amount would be reduced.

MR. SAMUEL EVANS contended that the figures he had given showed the injustice of the proposals of the Government.

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY said it was arguable that a school ought not to receive more from the State than it derived from voluntary subscriptions; it was also arguable that the total amount to be given to Voluntary Schools should not exceed the total amount of voluntary subscriptions to those schools. It was also arguable that the State should not contribute by way of State aid grant more than the schools themselves provided by way of voluntary contributions. What, however, was not arguable was the Amendment of the hon. Gentleman, who proposed that they should limit the aid to Voluntary Schools where the voluntary subscriptions were below 5s. per scholar, and that where they exceeded that amount there should not be a *pro tanto* allowance. This he held was not arguable, and therefore he would not take up the time of the Committee by discussing it.

MR. LLOYD-GEORGE (Carnarvon Boroughs) regretted that the First Lord of the Treasury should have treated the Amendment so slightingly. He evidently did not understand the Amendment. The result of every aid grant to the Voluntary Schools would be that the voluntary subscriptions would steadily go down. The right hon. Gentleman had not answered a single argument of his hon. and learned Friend. Unless some such Amendment as this was introduced, the tendency of the Bill must necessarily be to limit the amount of the voluntary subscriptions. If the Amendment were carried, pressure would be brought to bear upon schools which did not pay voluntary contributions up to 5s. to bring their subscriptions up to that point. The result of legislation hitherto had been that subscriptions had steadily gone down. In 1870 the proportion of the subscription to the total income of the school was 49 per cent.; at the present moment it was 17 per cent. If they passed this Bill in its present form the subscriptions would become something like 12 or 15 per cent. The result of the special aid grant of 1891 was that parental subscriptions had gone down steadily. Every additional grant voted by the House of Commons to the Voluntary Schools had reduced the amount of the voluntary subscriptions. Some inducement or pressure ought to be brought to bear from outside upon the schools which did not bring up their subscriptions to the amount which would entitle them to a grant of 5s. a head. His hon. Friend had quoted four of the principal towns in Wales where the amount contributed by the Imperial Exchequer to the Diocesan Association would be very materially reduced. At the present moment the voluntary subscriptions in those towns did not amount to anything like the amount which would entitle them to the full grant of 5s. per head. The contribution of the Imperial Exchequer to the Association in that diocese would be reduced to something like one-third. Every possible inducement should be placed by Parliament in the way of raising the subscriptions, and consequently raising the efficiency of these schools. It was assumed that each one of these schools would join an association, but was that so? The Education Department could only exclude a school from any share in the aid grant upon grounds which were deemed to be sufficient. Supposing a National, Catholic, Wesleyan or British School refused to join the Association, the Department might say that there was no sufficient reason for excluding that school, and under the first sub-section of this clause the aid grant would be paid direct to that school. The Amendment, he contended, ought to be carried in the interests of the Voluntary Schools themselves, and of the necessitous schools, and, above all, in the interests of the children.

*MR. CARVELL WILLIAMS (Notts, Mansfield) said the further they travelled in the discussion on the clauses of the Bill the more discoveries they made. ["Hear, hear!"] They had supposed that the words of this clause were intended to induce the managers of the schools to maintain, if not increase, their subscriptions, but they were now told that that was not the intention, and that they had relation to the aggregate of the schools, and not to the individual schools. The result would be that the school which had had no voluntary subscriptions, or very inadequate voluntary subscriptions, would get a share of the grant to which it was not entitled.

*THE CHAIRMAN OF WAYS AND MEANS said the hon. Member was anticipating the discussion which would arise on the next sub-section.

*MR. CARVELL WILLIAMS said he would add to the reasons why this principle should be insisted upon, the sufficient reason that the amount of support which was given by the managers of these schools was a test of their sincerity and interest, and unless they submitted to that test they had no right to insist on the continued management of their schools. Public schools, supported by public money, but managed entirely by private persons, were an anachronism of which the House ought not to approve.

*MR. JOSEPH A. PEASE (Northumberland, Tyneside) did not think the Committee understood the real effect of this Amendment. Taking 175 children as the average number of children in a Voluntary School, and 4,797 as the number of the schools which at present received less than 5s. per head in average attendance, the effect of the Amendment would be to reduce the grant from £620,000 to £409,000. The poorer people of this country, particularly in the north of England, with which he was connected, were often Catholics. The Catholics in his district were not as able as other bodies to afford subscriptions to maintain their schools, and, on account of their poverty, were less able to pay even 5s. per head than other denominations. He had pledged himself to support increased aid being given by the State under suitable conditions. Though the conditions were absent in the proposals of the Government, yet he was unable to vote for a reduction of the amount, as he desired to see relief given to the poorer classes, who had made sacrifices in the interests of education.

MR. REGINALD McKENNA (Monmouth, N.) said he had still an open mind in regard to the Amendment. The Bill was for the purpose of assisting necessitous schools, and in arriving at the amount of money which Parliament was to provide for that purpose two factors were taken. The first was the grant of 5s. per head, which had no relation to the necessity of the schools, but was arrived at by the Chancellor of the Exchequer as the amount that could be voted. The second factor was not the number of scholars in necessitous schools, but the number of scholars in Voluntary Schools. If he were assured that the degree of necessity of each Voluntary School was in no way to be measured by the amount of its voluntary subscription he would be compelled to vote against the Amendment.

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY: I can give the hon. Gentleman the assurance he desires. There is no certain relation between the priority of a school and the amount of its voluntary subscriptions.

*MR. CHARLES HARRISON (Plymouth) said that if the Amendment were not adopted there would be an amount voted which would be larger and in excess of the amount which, under the Bill as now drawn, could under any circumstances be possibly applied. The "aid grant"—that was to say, in other words, "the aggregate total sum"—was to be distributed by the Bill, as now drawn, subject to conditions, one of which fundamental conditions was that a school must have some voluntary subscriptions, because unless there were some voluntary subscriptions, the condition of paying due regard to the maintenance of Voluntary Schools would be incapable of application. He construed the Bill, as now drawn, as preventing any school not having voluntary subscriptions from participating in the aid grant, and if that were so, then the aggregate total would, if the Amendment were not adopted, amount to a sum for which no purpose was assigned by the Bill, or which could be employed under the Bill.

MR. BRYNMOR JONES (Swansea Boroughs) confessed that at first he did not see the extreme importance of the Amendment, and he had approached it from somewhat the same point of view as his hon. Friend the Member for North Monmouth. But the answer given to his hon. Friend by the First Lord of the Treasury had convinced him that he ought to vote for the Amendment. The right hon. Gentleman had admitted that the amount of money to be granted to each school was solely to be decided by the number of its scholars.

MR. T. R. LEUTY (Leeds, E.) said that Parliament in its dealings with grants of public money for the assistance of the Voluntary Schools had hitherto acted on the principle that if those schools were to be protected from the undue competition of the Board Schools, and the private managers were to retain the management in their own hands, there was to be a *quid pro quo* in the form of a contribution of some of the cost of management. The Government now proposed to act on the principle of counting heads, and to discourage the giving of subscriptions to those schools. He had no admiration whatever for the relics of the system of keeping up voluntary subscriptions. It was a fine on poverty which pressed especially hard on the Catholic Schools. On conditions, he should be ready to see the system abolished altogether; but let Government either make the thing a reality or say at once that they were going to give public money regardless of subscriptions. The Government should remember that for the first time a grant was being given without its being in lieu of something else. This was an aggregate sum, which would go into the pockets of the aggregate Conservative Party.

MR. D. F. GODDARD (Ipswich) pointed out this Amendment had nothing to do with the distribution of the money, but simply affected the means of arriving at the aggregate sum to be distributed. Therefore the poor schools would not be fined any more than other schools. No doubt, however, the aggregate sum would be decreased by the Amendment. The proposal to take into account all the schools which were called Voluntary, whether they raised subscriptions or not, and to arrive in that way at the sum to be distributed, was most unreasonable.

MR. A. J. MUNDELLA (Sheffield, Brightside) said that the Amendment would not affect the distribution of the grant at all, but simply the amount to be collected for the purposes of distribution. For a year or two the great effect would undoubtedly be to reduce the total amount of the grant; but the poor schools would still get their due proportion. But what would be the ultimate effect of the Amendment? He should support the Amendment, not because he wished to reduce the grant, but to secure some correspondence between the amount of the grant given to each school and the amount of subscriptions raised by that school. In this, he was but echoing speeches which had been made over and over again on the other side of the House. The right hon. Member for Dartford had said, "We must support our Voluntary Schools more liberally than in the past." In the Lancashire towns there would be no difficulty in raising subscriptions to 5s. a head; and if the subscription were made the basis of the calculation for the grant, the effect in a year or two would be to raise the whole of the Voluntary Schools subscriptions up to the 5s. point. The schools would benefit enormously from this, and the teachers would no longer be sweated. No one who really believed in the need for Voluntary Schools should hesitate to adopt the Amendment.

MR. F. A. CHANNING (Northamptonshire, E.) said that he should support the Amendment. In most districts the subscriptions to Catholic Schools were larger than those to the Church Schools. The Amendment was a protest against the outrage to common sense implied in asking that the total number of children in the Voluntary Schools should be made the basis for calculating the total grant. Schools which had no subscriptions whatever, and which were supported entirely out of the pockets of the taxpayers, were to be included in order to increase the total sum to be given to these diocesan associations for the purpose of propagating high Anglicism. It was one of the greatest scandals of the Bill.

MR. SAMUEL EVANS said that the hon. Member for the Tyneside division misapprehended the effect of the Amendment. The schools mentioned by the hon. Member would not be excluded from any share of the grant. Their share would be proportioned to the amount of their subscriptions. The effect of the Amendment would be that those schools which had no subscriptions would have no share of the grant to be divided by the Association to which it belonged. The grant to the other schools in the Association would not thereby be diminished; but there would be a strong inducement to schools with no subscriptions to raise them. According to the amount they raised, they would share in the grant.

Mr. J. W. LOGAN (Leicester, Harborough) rose to address the Committee, when

The FIRST LORD of the TREASURY claimed to move: "That the Question be now put."

*The CHAIRMAN of WAYS and MEANS withheld his assent, because he was of opinion that the Committee was prepared shortly to come to a decision without that Motion. [*Opposition cries of* "Hear, hear!"]

Debate resumed.

Mr. LOGAN said he understood that the object of the Amendment was to induce the subscribers to Voluntary Schools to increase, or at least to continue, their subscriptions. ["Hear, hear!"] He was not in favour of Voluntary Schools at all, and therefore he could not support the Amendment. He looked forward to the time when the nation would decide that it was in its own best interests that it should provide all the money necessary for the education of the children of the country.

*The CHAIRMAN of WAYS and MEANS: The last remark of the hon. Member is totally irrelevant to the question before the Committee. [*Ministerial cries of* "Hear, hear!"]

Mr. LOGAN said he simply wished to point out that he could not support the Amendment, because one of its objects was to induce the subscribers to those schools to increase their subscriptions, and, as he had said, he looked forward to the day when the whole cost of education would be provided by the country. [*Ministerial cries of* "Order, order!"]

Mr. HERBERT ROBERTS (Denbighshire, W.) said he could not agree with the line of argument taken by the hon. Member for the Harborough Division, and heartily supported the Amendment. He did so on educational grounds, for he concurred with the opinion expressed by the hon. Member for Carnarvon that, if the Amendment were agreed to, it would act as an educational stimulus to the Voluntary Schools. [*Opposition cries of* "Hear, hear!"]

Mr. EDWARD CARSON (Dublin University): I claim to move: "That the Question be now put." [*Ministerial cheers and Opposition cries of* "No!"]

Question put, "That the Question be now put."

The Committee divided:—Ayes, 266; Noes, 109.—(Division List, No. 63.)

Question put accordingly, "That those words be there inserted."

The Committee divided:—Ayes, 96; Noes, 296.—(Division List, No. 64.)

The announcement of the numbers was received with Ministerial laughter.

Mr. JAMES LOWTHER (Kent, Thanet) asked what course he should pursue with regard to the fact that on the Division on the Closure he had voted in the wrong Lobby. [*Laughter.*]

*The CHAIRMAN of WAYS and MEANS said the right hon. Gentleman should have called attention to the matter after the Division referred to. At present there was no course open to him; but on the occasion the only thing to do under the circumstances was to take measures to avoid passing the Tellers. [*Laughter.*]

Mr. SAMUEL EVANS proposed to leave out the word "*five*," in order to insert instead thereof the word "*four*." This, he said, would reduce the allowance per scholar to the sum proposed in the

Bill of last year. The bonus to Voluntary Schools was now fixed at £620,000, so that by the addition of the shilling as compared with last year, the bonus was increased by £150,000. He moved the reduction, not because he thought that schools which were not under the control of the ratepayers were entitled to any public money, but because they had gone so far. These schools were sectarian in the past, and they were to remain sectarian. If he followed the dictates of his own judgment and conscience he would not give such schools a single penny. He submitted that no case had been made out for the increase on the Bill of last year.

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY, opposing the Amendment, said that in his judgment 5s. was not at all too much. He might go farther and say that it was too little. ["Hear, hear!"] At present the average expenditure throughout England and Wales was about £2 per head in Board Schools, and about £1 9s. in Voluntary Schools, leaving a balance of 11s. He thought that showed that the 5s. left many wants unsatisfied.

MR. A. H. DYKE ACLAND (York, W.R., Rotherham) said that he confessed, when he bore in mind the condition of things that prevailed in England and Wales with regard to the voluntary system of education, he was not much surprised at the opinion which had been expressed by the hon. Member for Mid Glamorgan. There could be no doubt that there were particular districts in Wales in which a condition of things existed that could hardly be understood in England, and which justified hon. Members from Wales in looking at this question from their own point of view, and feeling very strongly indeed upon it. In England we were not accustomed to a state of things in which nine-tenths of the population, who were Nonconformists, were compelled to send their children to schools that were under the management and control of a religious denomination with which they had no connection. As to the point whether this grant should be at the rate of 4s. or 5s. per head, he confessed that he had no desire to limit the grant to either amount. He had been satisfied last year with a 4s. grant, and he was satisfied this year with a 5s. grant. He hoped that the Government would be able to show that this 5s. grant would secure the efficiency of these necessitous Voluntary Schools. This grant would undoubtedly raise the total sum given by the State for educational purposes, and he hoped that it would not at the same time reduce the amount of the subscriptions of the Voluntary Schools. For his own part, he had never grudged State grants for Voluntary Schools, subject to reasonable conditions. He thought, however, that if 5s. were given to Voluntary Schools to be pooled for the necessitous schools, an equal sum ought to be given to Board Schools all round, which might also be pooled in the same manner, for the benefit of necessitous Board Schools. He thought that if the Government were to impose conditions in relation to this grant which might be thought reasonable by a large number of hon. Members on both sides of the House, there could be no objection to this 5s. grant. ["Hear, hear!"]

*SIR JOSEPH PEASE (Durham, Barnard Castle) said he was very much in favour of the view of the right hon. Gentleman the First Lord of the Treasury, that a 5s. grant was not too much for either Voluntary or other schools. He had had a great deal to do with Voluntary Schools during his life, and he thought that they deserved assistance. But unless they received from Her Majesty's Government some greater token than they had hitherto had, that they were prepared to meet the wishes of the Opposition, that they would attach reasonable conditions to the grant, he should feel himself bound to vote for the Amendment. As matters stood at present, he could not help regarding this 5s. grant as an additional endowment of the Church of England, Under this proposal the Church of England would receive some £400,000 per annum. [An hon. Member: "£600,000."] No; the balance would go to the other religious denominations. What proof had they that the Church of England held any adequate supervision over the religious teaching given in the Church of England Voluntary Schools? He was not prepared to endow the Church of England with an annual sum which, if capitalised, would amount to £12,000,000, and which, after all, the parents of the children and the taxpayers of the country would have to contribute unless certain conditions were laid down as to the management of the schools by those who thus contributed. He trusted that those who were interested in education would try and keep their minds as clear as possible from sectarian influences, and would keep in view the interests of education. So far from this grant of 5s. being too much, in his opinion it was too little, because the whole of our system of education was very much behindhand when compared with Switzerland or with that of Germany. Why could not the Government come forward and get rid of all the difficulties of this question by following the advice of the right hon. Gentleman, and taking a broader view of the matter? Why should not the Board Schools receive the same consideration as the Voluntary Schools?

*The CHAIRMAN of WAYS and MEANS: I am sorry to interrupt the hon. Member, but the question of the Board Schools is not before us. The question is whether the grant shall be 5s. or 4s. per head.

*Sir J. PEASE said that of course he should bow to the ruling of the right hon. Gentleman in the Chair. Unless the Government gave the Committee some satisfactory assurance as to the conditions to be attached to this grant, he should certainly vote for the Amendment, because he was unwilling to endow the Church of England unconditionally with the large sum he had referred to. ["Hear, hear!"]

Mr. COURTENAY WARNER (Stafford, Lichfield) said that he had placed upon the Paper an Amendment similar to that which had been moved by his hon. Friend the Member for Mid Glamorgan. He had no desire to injure the work of the Voluntary Schools, and his object in putting down his Amendment was to secure the distribution of this money among the really necessitous schools of that class, and to increase the amount of the grant which they would receive from 5s. to £1 per head. If the Board Schools were to have anything, a great deal more money would be required than was provided by this Bill. He did not think that the necessitous schools would suffer by this grant being reduced to 4s. per head. They had to take care that, in making this grant, they would not be conducing to the falling off in the amount of subscriptions. Four shillings would be quite enough to relieve the necessitous schools throughout the country from what was called the intolerable strain; whereas it would at the same time leave a certain amount to be found by subscriptions. It had been said that this Bill amounted to an endowment of the Church of England. He hoped it would not be a general endowment all round, but that the Government would see that their money went only in relief of necessitous schools.

*Sir JOHN BAKER (Portsmouth) said he could not support the Amendment, because he thought the question on which the difference of opinion arose was not so much the amount of the contribution as the belief that its administration would not be of such a character as would justify the grant of public money. He had always supported what was called Voluntary Schools in every possible way, and he could not therefore vote for a reduction of the grant, for if he did that he would possibly be doing something to limit the usefulness of these schools in the future, and probably hindering a grant of a larger sum from the Exchequer to other schools.

*Mr. EDWARD STRACHEY (Somerset, S.) thought the Welsh Members were justified in the Amendment, not only as Welsh Members, but as Radicals, and that English Radicals would be right in supporting them against any proposal to give more money to Voluntary Schools, unless it were accompanied by adequate popular control. [" Hear, hear ! "] In a large number of those schools there was a kind of popular control in the fact that there was a large body of subscribers; but the proposals of the Government would have the direct effect of reducing the number of subscribers, and would increase the danger of having more one man schools in the country. [" Hear, hear ! "] For these reasons he found it necessary to go into the Lobby with his Welsh friends, not because he objected to giving more money to Voluntary Schools, which he believed had their place and work in the Education system side by side with Board Schools, but because he held that if more money was given to them there must at the same time be some local control. So long as the Government opposed any form of local control, he should oppose any further grant of public money to Voluntary Schools. [" Hear, hear ! "]

Sir FRANK LOCKWOOD (York) said he gathered that there was not much difference of opinion between his hon. Friend who had just sat down and himself. Notwithstanding the views he held, his hon. Friend was unable to exercise sufficient self-denial to prevent him going into the Lobby with their mutual Welsh Friends. He held the views his hon. Friend held, but he should exercise self-denial on this occasion; but his hon. Friends from Wales must not suppose that he did not sympathise with the view they took, having regard to the exceptional circumstances by which they found themselves surrounded. The Government were responsible, rather than his hon. Friends, for this Amendment, for they had given absolutely no reason whatever for fixing the grant at 5s. The First Lord of the Treasury had not said a single word in justification of it. He did not for one moment complain that the sum was too great. He had no wish to deal with Voluntary Schools in a niggardly spirit, but he did hope that there would be some reciprocity in this matter—[" hear, hear ! "]—and that when other than Voluntary Schools were dealt with, the Government would deal with them in as liberal a manner as they were now dealing with Voluntary Schools. [" Hear, hear ! "] Hon. Members had continually, in the course of the Debate, expressed the desire that voluntary subscriptions should be maintained at their present rate, and he hoped that before the Bill passed into law something might be done to insure the maintenance of subscriptions. That was another reason why he was anxious that this sum of 5s. should remain in the Bill, in order that when they have to deal with Amendments in that regard, they might impress on the Government that something ought to be done to stimulate private subscriptions when such a large sum of public money was being allocated to this particular class of schools. Although he was not very sanguine that they would be able to induce the Government to do that, he thought they ought to be in a position to point out that Voluntary Schools were being generously treated, and that subscribers ought, therefore, to extend their generosity. He was most anxious, therefore, that the grant should be a liberal one, and for that reason he should vote against the Amendment.

Sir WILLIAM HART DYKE (Kent, Dartford) said that if hon. Members on his side of the House had not taken much part hitherto in the discussion of Amendments, it was because those Amendments had not been deserving of much consideration. He assured the Committee that when important questions like that of the distribution of the money under the association system were reached there would be nothing in the nature of a conspiracy of silence on the Ministerial side of the House. The right hon. Member for Rotherham had told them that there was a feeling of bitterness among the Members from Wales on account of the character of many of the schools in the Principality. He would ask the Committee whether they were prepared to ask the taxpayers of this country to spend millions in order to construct schools in place of Voluntary Schools merely because thirty Welsh Members felt that they had a serious grievance? Many hon. Members opposite had said that they would be willing that a grant of 5s. or even 6s. should be given if it could thereby be rendered certain that the schools would gain in efficiency. They might, he thought, feel fairly confident that that would be the result, because the Education Department was to be the arbiter in the matter of the application of the money. That Department, it should be remembered, had administered millions annually to the satisfaction of the country at large. If he thought that the associations of schools were to be intrusted with the distribution of the grant without the guidance and control of the Education Department he should not support the Bill. It was because he had complete confidence in the control of the Department that he was content. Hon. Members from Wales said that they did not know how much per scholar might be granted to schools. Of course no man could say how much per head would be granted. That was a question which must be determined by the Education Department.

*THE CHAIRMAN OF WAYS AND MEANS observed that the right hon. Gentleman was not confining himself to the point, which was the difference between 4s. and 5s.

SIR W. HART DYKE replied that as this was the first time he had ever been called to order in that House, he need hardly say that he at once bowed to the ruling of the Chair. The hon. and learned Member for York had complained that the right hon. Gentleman in charge of the Bill had never explained by what process of calculation the sum of 5s. had been arrived at. For his part he surmised that the sum of 5s. was the nearest estimate that the Education Department could make of the sum required by necessitous schools. But possibly the Department had arrived at a larger estimate, and the Chancellor of the Exchequer had intervened and prevented its acceptance.

SIR F. LOCKWOOD observed that they had not heard that that had been the experience of the Department, either from the First Lord of the Treasury or from the Vice President of the Council.

SIR JAMES WOODHOUSE (Huddersfield) said that he should vote against the Amendment, as he was anxious that the amount which the Government wished to give to the Voluntary Schools should not be diminished. He would, however, appeal to the Government to assent to conditions which would insure that the grant should be applied for the purpose of increasing the efficiency of schools and the remuneration of teachers. Conditions of that kind were inserted in the Bill of last year. The First Lord of the Treasury had told them that at present the average expenditure throughout England and Wales was about £2 per head in Board Schools and about £1 9s. in Voluntary Schools, leaving a balance of 11s. The difference in the remuneration of teachers accounted for 8s. 9d. or 8s. 10d. out of this balance. He proposed to move an Amendment on this subject, and he trusted that the Government would see their way to accept it, as it embodied the conditions which they thought right to insert in the Bill of 1896.

MR. PERKS said that, unlike some of his hon. Friends, he did not propose to support the Government on this question. Abundant reasons had been given why this extra shilling should not be granted. The saving of one shilling proposed by the Amendment represented an annual sum of £155,000, which, capitalised by 40 years' purchase, represented upwards of £6,000,000. The Committee were being asked to vote for the Voluntary Schools a sum which, capitalised, more than doubled the total sum spent on all the Voluntary School buildings in the country. The annual sum of £625,000 represented £24,000,000, and nobody had ever alleged that the total amount spent in the erection of the Voluntary Schools exceeded £11,000,000. If they voted this 5s. endowment for the support of these schools they would be making a present to the Voluntary School managers of upwards of £24,000,000. He would remind the Committee that the late Archbishop of Canterbury, at the annual meeting of the National Society last year, declared that a grant of 4s. was quite enough. Why did not the Government act on the view of the late Archbishop? It had been suggested that they would get some small concessions by-and-by from the Government, but he did not entertain any such illusory hope himself. ["Hear, hear!"] There had been too many indications that the Government meant, by the exercise of the Closure or by other means, to pass this Bill without altering a single line of it.

MR. ALBERT SPICER (Monmouth Boroughs) said that this was a question that appealed to the people of the country. His hon. Friends would not move the Amendments they did, which the right hon. Gentlemen said were not worth consideration, unless they felt that those who sent them there had sympathy with their views. He well knew that the Voluntary Schools needed this help, and more than this; but he complained of the way in which this Bill was being forced through—[*ironical laughter*]—and of the way in which those who were responsible for presenting the Education Estimates to the House were declining to take any part in the discussion. Hon. Members had been promised that Amendments would be favourably entertained, but up to the present he had seen no disposition evinced in this direction. He supported the Amendment, not because he thought the Voluntary Schools did not need more help, but as a protest against the way in which the Bill was being treated by hon. Gentlemen opposite.

MR. ELLIS GRIFFITH (Anglesey) said the question was whether or not the 5s. grant was enough for the Voluntary Schools. A greater authority on this point than the late Archbishop of Canterbury was the Government, who thought that 4s. was enough last year. What were the circumstances which had occurred since last year to render the extra shilling necessary? Was there any mystic efficacy about the 5s. which had recommended it to the attention of the Government? Had it not rather been chosen by chance and multiplied by another figure chosen by chance?

MR. SYDNEY BUXTON thought that some reply should be given by the Government to the question as to what was the basis upon which 5s. had been fixed instead of 4s., and why £620,000 was stated to be needed for necessitous Voluntary Schools.

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY: I can add nothing to the speech I have already made. The hon. Member was not in the House when I spoke. [*Cheers.*]

MR. ABEL THOMAS (Carmarthen, E.) pressed for a statement of some definite reason why 5s. had been fixed upon as the right amount. Surely the Education Department were in possession of the figures which had been acted upon.

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY rose in his place and claimed to move, "That the Question be now put."

Question put, "That the Question be now put."

The Committee divided:—Ayes, 291; Noes, 124.—(Division List, No. 65.)

Question put accordingly, "That the word '*five*' stand part of the Clause."

The Committee divided:—Ayes, 320; Noes, 94.—(Division List, No. 66.)

And, it being Half-past Five of the clock, the CHAIRMAN of WAYS and MEANS proceeded to interrupt the business.

Whereupon,

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY claimed to move, "That the Question 'That the words of the Clause down to the word "to," in line 10—("The Aid Grant shall be distributed by the Education Department to")—stand part of the Clause' be now put." [*Opposition cries of* "Oh, oh!"]

*THE CHAIRMAN OF WAYS AND MEANS: It is only right that I should say, in accepting this Motion, that I have satisfied myself that if it should be carried it would not cut out a single Amendment of any substance. Nearly three pages of the Amendments that follow are out of order. ["Hear, hear!"] I think it is only due to the Committee that I should give my reason for accepting the motion. These Amendments are for the most part excluded by the ruling of Mr. Speaker on the notices of Motion for Instructions on going into Committee. ["Hear, hear!"] Some of the Amendments are in the wrong place, and the two or three that remain are really not Amendments of substance. I therefore accept the Motion.

Question put, "That the Question 'That the words down to the word "to," in line 10, stand part of the Clause,' be now put."

MR. SAMUEL EVANS (seated, and with his hat on), as a matter of order, drew the Chairman's attention to the words of the Standing Order in reference to the application of the Closure. It was provided that the Motion for closing Debate might be moved on the interruption of business for a decision on any question consequent thereon. He submitted that this question was not consequent upon the Closure moved at half-past five.

*THE CHAIRMAN OF WAYS AND MEANS said the Standing Order provided that the Closure might be moved on the interruption of business, and the interruption of business was when he announced the numbers of the last Division.

MR. SAMUEL EVANS said the point of order he wished to have determined was whether the Closure could be put on any question not under discussion when the Closure was moved. The question the right hon. Gentleman now desired to have put was that the clause down to a certain word should stand part of the Bill. Would the Leader of the House be in order if he moved the Closure on the clause or even on the whole of the Bill?

*THE CHAIRMAN OF WAYS AND MEANS: I must decline to give an opinion in answer to the hon. Member's question as to all the clauses, but certainly the right hon. Gentleman would be in order if he moved that the question be put that the whole clause stand part of the Bill. If it is in order to move the whole clause clearly it is in order to move a portion of the clause.

Question put, "That the Question 'That the words of the Clause down to the word "to," in line 10, stand part of the Clause,' be now put."

The Committee divided:—Ayes, 280; Noes, 111.—(Division List, No. 67.)

Question put accordingly, "That the words of the Clause down to the word 'to,' in line 10, stand part of the Clause."

The Committee divided:—Ayes, 282; Noes, 105.—(Division List, No. 68.)

Whereupon,

*THE CHAIRMAN OF WAYS AND MEANS left the Chair to make his report to the House.

Committee report progress; to sit again To-morrow; and, it being after Six of the clock, Mr. Speaker adjourned the House without Question put.

House adjourned at Twenty-five minutes after Six o'clock.

HOUSE OF LORDS.

Thursday, 4th March 1897.

LORD FARNHAM (CLAIM TO VOTE FOR REPRESENTATIVE PEERS FOR IRELAND).

Ordered and directed, That a Certificate be sent by the Clerk of the Parliaments to the Clerk of the Crown in Ireland, stating that the Lord Chancellor of the United Kingdom has reported to the House of Lords that the right of the Lord Farnham to vote at the elections of Representative Peers for Ireland has been established to the satisfaction of him the said Lord Chancellor; and that the House of Lords has ordered such Report to be sent to the said Clerk of the Crown in Ireland; and it is hereby also ordered, That the said Report of the said Lord Chancellor be sent to the Clerk of the Crown in Ireland.

SAT FIRST.

The Viscount Gough sat first in Parliament after the death of his father.

THOMPSON'S DIVORCE BILL [H.L.].

House in Committee (according to order). Bill reported without Amendment. Standing Committee negatived; Bill to be read 3ª To-morrow.

RETIREMENT OF VESTRYMEN AND AUDITORS (LONDON) BILL [H.L.].

LORD MONKSWELL, in moving the Second Reading of this Bill, said the Measure passed their Lordships' House last year, but was not equally fortunate in the other House. It was based on the principle that there might be too much of a good thing. No doubt it was a good thing for the ratepayers of London to have occasionally an opportunity of recording their votes, but most people thought that at present there were too many opportunities of that kind given to the ratepayers. There were elections for the London County Council, the School Board, the Board of Guardians and the Vestry. The suggestion of the Bill was that the law with regard to Vestry elections should be assimilated to that now in force in respect of the election of Guardians. At present one-third of the vestrymen went out every year, and the consequence was that every year there was the election of a certain number of vestrymen. Guardians, however, had been empowered to petition the County Council to be allowed to have their elections triennially instead of annually, and every Board throughout the metropolis had availed themselves of the permission, and now Guardians were elected once in three years instead of annually. The Bill proposed that any Vestry might petition the London County Council that their elections should be held triennially, that the members should all go out together every three years instead of one-third of them annually. No doubt the London County Council would be perfectly ready to grant any request of that kind that might be made to them. He begged to move the Second Reading of the Bill.

LORD HARRIS said the Bill was practically in the same form in which it left their Lordships' House last year, and the Local Government Board had no objection to its proceeding.

Bill read a Second time, and committed to a Committee of the Whole House To-morrow.

LAND TRANSFER BILL [H.L.].

THE LORD CHANCELLOR (LORD HALSBURY), in moving "That this Bill be now read a Second time," said: This Bill is in substance the same as those which have so frequently passed this House. Substantially the same Bill has been read a Second time in the other House without a Division. The only point which seems to require explanation at this stage is why the Bill is not word for word the same as on previous occasions. It may be remembered that the late Government, after passing the Bill through this House, and reading it a Second time in the other House without a Division, referred it to a Select Committee in order (at the

An Asterisk (*) at the commencement of a Speech indicates revision by the Member.

request of the solicitors) to take evidence on the subject. The solicitors' evidence was taken; and events afterwards happened which stayed all further proceedings. I have thought it desirable to meet at once the criticisms to which my learned Friend's Bill was subjected by the solicitors before the Select Committee, and I think it will be found that every defect which was pointed out in the existing Land Transfer Act has been removed. The Bill now stands in this position. There is one quarter, and one only, from which opposition to the Measure has been experienced. I have taken the most prompt and unreserved steps to disarm that opposition as far as the system to which the Bill applies is concerned. Only one point remains—namely, the principle of compulsion; not compulsion any longer for a system open to objection, but for a system amended so as to have the approval of the objectors. On that point also I have gone as far as possible. The scheme proposed by the Bill is to proceed by the most gradual steps, and to act in a limited area to begin with, and only to proceed by the light of experience, and after full notice to any district likely to be affected. I cannot but hope that my endeavours to reconcile the only objectors to this Measure will be met in a similar spirit, and that we may not be reduced in another Session to deal with the subject in a controversial manner. We are sometimes charged with want of speed as law reformers, but, in truth, such of us as desire reforms of this kind are often surprised that we cannot obtain more assistance in passing our Measures from the lay classes who are oppressed by the unreformed procedure. I ought not to conclude without calling attention to the Report on the system of land transfer in other countries, which was laid on the Table last Session, and which shows with what ease and success the registration of title is made use of in a large part of the world. At this stage I have no more to say than that the matters contained in the Bill are practically set forth in the memorandum prefixed to the Bill, and to ask your Lordships to give the Bill a Second Reading.

*Lord THRING said it was now more than 40 years since he was first engaged in land transfer. This Bill would complete the edifice, it would make land transfer easy and feasible, and he trusted the House would read it a Second time. He could not imagine any objection to the Measure. With respect to compulsion, he admitted that some 20 years ago the late Lord Cairns and himself, when preparing a Bill, thought compulsion was not necessary, because they believed that the common sense of landowners would lead them to register. He was aware it was often asked of lawyers why they did not carry land transfer into practical effect, but he assured those who put such a question that no effort had been spared, especially by successive Lord Chancellors, to make the system of land transfer complete and satisfactory. He hoped their Lordships would pass the Bill, which, he was confident, would do more to relieve depressed landlords than those ambitious schemes which were so much talked about and pressed forward. [" Hear, hear!"]

Lord HERSCHELL said that this was substantially the same Bill that had been introduced on several occasions. He had so often expressed his views upon the subject that he would not do more now than express the hope that the Bill would ultimately pass into law. [" Hear, hear!"]

The Earl of KIMBERLEY said he was profoundly convinced that there was perhaps nothing more required by owners of land than an efficient system of land transfer. Those who would look at the reports which had come from other countries would find that not only was there a cheap, efficient, and speedy system there, but also that it had been found that no danger had arisen from the Acts. In these circumstances he most sincerely hoped that this Bill, or, at all events, some other efficient Bill, would pass through Parliament.

Read 2^a (according to Order), and committed to a Committee of the Whole House.

IRISH MAILS.

*The Earl of BELMORE rose to ask the Postmaster General whether, when the accelerated mail service to Ireland should have come into operation, whereby the mails then due at Dundalk about 8 a.m., were expected to be due there before 7.30 a.m., provision would be made for forwarding the mails for Enniskillen, Cavan, and other places in the north-west of Ireland, so as to do away with their detention at Dundalk which at present existed, and which would be otherwise considerably aggravated. He said he believed that in about a month's time the new accelerated mail service between this country and Ireland would come into force, and that about an hour would be gained between London and Dublin, about 25 minutes, he understood, upon this side, and about 35 minutes in the sea passage. At present the mails going to the north of Ireland left the Dublin Station of the Great Northern Railway of Ireland at a quarter before seven, and they were carried direct to Belfast and Londonderry, and certain towns between those places and Dublin. The mails which went in the direction of the north-west went by a branch line from Dundalk, formerly called the Irish North Western Railway, which was now a branch of the main system of the Great Northern of Ireland, and were detained nearly an hour at Dundalk, and then they went on by a stopping train, called the boat train, as it was connected with the steamer from Greenore to Holyhead. Under the altered system the mails would arrive at 26 minutes after seven, instead of a little after eight. Unless some change were made by the Post Office, the mails to the north-west would be delayed between an hour and an hour and a-half. As regarded Enniskillen and Cavan, which were both about the same distance from Dundalk, the train reached the former at 11.25, and the latter about 11.20. The time left for answering letters was about half an hour, but under the new system, if the mails could be sent off at once, they would have about three hours. He had been in private communication with the manager of the Great Northern, who was an old friend, and he found it was impossible to interfere with the nine o'clock train from Dundalk, owing to its being in connection with Greenore, and necessary for the traffic from Newry and places north of Dundalk. There could be no acceleration of that train; and the only remedy was to put on an extra train. That was a question of terms with the Post Office. All the business people in that part of the country were very anxious that that should be done, and, therefore, he asked the noble Duke if he could see his way to approach the Great Northern so that the extra train might be put on?

THE POSTMASTER GENERAL (The DUKE of NORFOLK): The point raised by the noble Earl is only one point in a larger scheme for the acceleration of the mails which is at present engaging earnest attention, and I feel I cannot do more than read to him the answer I have prepared. The matter referred to is being considered in connection with the revision of the Irish day mail services consequent on the acceleration of the mail service between England and Ireland. I shall not fail to place before the railway company the strong desire that exists for improvement, in the hope that some arrangement may be found to be practicable. I am glad to hear that the noble Earl is on terms of friendship with the general manager of the Great Northern of Ireland, and I trust that pressure will be made use of. I trust, also, that with the efforts to give every facility, those who have influence will not be slow to point out that it will be to their own interest that the companies should do everything they can to carry out this acceleration.

VISCOUNT CLIFDEN: Can the noble Duke tell us when the general scheme of acceleration will come into force?

THE DUKE OF NORFOLK: On the 1st of April.

WORKING MEN'S DWELLINGS BILL [H.L.].

A Bill to provide facilities for the acquisition by working men of their own dwellings—was presented by the Lord Norton, for the Earl Vane (M. Londonderry); Read 1^a; to be printed; and to be read 2^a on Tuesday next. (No. 24.)

House adjourned at Ten minutes before Five o'clock, till To-morrow, a Quarter-past Ten o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

Thursday, 4th March 1897.

PRIVATE BUSINESS.

DUBLIN PORT AND DOCKS BOARD BILL.

Read a Second time, and committed.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (IRELAND) PROVISIONAL ORDERS (No. 1) BILL.

MR. PATRICK O'BRIEN (Kilkenny) had on the Paper the following Notice of Motion:—

> "That it be an Instruction to the Committee to insert provisions in the Bill for the extension of the Municipal Franchise to all Parliamentary voters having qualification in the municipal borough of Kilkenny, except lodgers, and to such women as would, but for their sex, have been Parliamentary voters (other than lodgers), and to provide that the lodgers' lists of the Borough shall be revised and made up by the same persons and about the same time as the Parliamentary register."

*MR. SPEAKER: The Instruction of the hon. Member is out of order. The Provisional Orders (No. 1) Bill merely enables the town of Kilkenny to take compulsory powers to acquire land for waterworks. An Instruction proposing to extend the municipal franchise would be out of order on that Bill, and therefore I cannot put it.

MR. PATRICK O'BRIEN: On the point of order, may I point out that a similar Instruction was carried last Session in regard to the Dublin Corporation Bill, which only proposed to give power to the Corporation of Dublin to charge for water which they were previously empowered to sell. This is a Bill for the construction of waterworks which will cost the citizens £60,000, and out of a population of over 11,000 there are only 247 persons entitled to vote in the municipal borough. I might also remind you, Sir, that, in the case of Armagh, last Session a similar Instruction was put upon the Paper. It was withdrawn, and in the Committee, without the knowledge of this House, clauses extending the franchise to Armagh were inserted. In view of these circumstances I was in hopes that you would see your way to allow the House to pass this Instruction, which is not opposed. I have an assurance by the Government that it is not opposed. The Corporation of Kilkenny have passed resolutions unanimously in its favour—and the Corporation is composed of four political parties—and the citizens have also, by resolution, approved it.

MR. JAMES LOWTHER (Kent, Isle of Thanet): The hon. Gentleman says this Instruction is unopposed. I came down to the House to oppose it, and should have persisted in my opposition had it not been ruled out of order.

*MR. SPEAKER: I am quite clear that it is out of order. As to the case of Armagh, which the hon. Gentleman mentions, the Instruction was not withdrawn until I had ruled it out of order. In the course of the Debate on the Second Reading the hon. Member who put down the Instruction asked me whether it was in order. I said it was not, and that is the reason it was withdrawn. What happened in Committee upon that Bill was not brought under my notice. If it had been, I might possibly have had something to say on the subject. As far as any statement in this House as to what took place in the Committee is concerned, I hear it now for the first time. As regards the Dublin Corporation Bill, the hon. Member who moved that Instruction gave me an assurance very similar to that which has just been given by the hon. Member for Kilkenny—namely, that it was an unopposed Instruction, and was moved by general consent; and, as it was an Instruction on a matter which had been much debated in the House, and as I understood from what was stated in the House, without any contradiction, that it was in the nature of a compromise on a subject which it was desirable to settle, and as everyone was agreed upon it, I allowed the Instruction to pass. But I expressly stated that I doubted very much whether it was in order, and that nothing, except the assurance that the Instruction was unopposed, would have induced me to have allowed it to pass. Therefore it cannot in any way be taken as a precedent, and certainly the results of allowing it to go on are not such as to encourage further experiments in the same direction. I am quite clear that this Instruction is out of order.

QUESTIONS.

INCOME TAX FORMS.

Mr. **HUDSON KEARLEY** (Devonport): I beg to ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what is the object of Income Tax Form No. 8, list of all persons employed, to be delivered by persons employing others (whether paid by weekly wages or otherwise), under penalties, and what is the meaning of the note stating that the penalty is not incurred by omitting to include in the list the names of persons whose total incomes respectively do not exceed £160 a year; and whether employers are expected to question all servants and workmen not returned for as to their private means; if not, whether he will cause the wording of the instructions to be altered, so as to make it clear that the responsibility of the employer in respect of this list is limited to making a true return of salaries over £160 paid by himself to his servants?

The **CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER** (Sir Michael Hicks Beach, Bristol, W.): The form to which the hon. Member refers is issued under the authority of Section 50 of the Act 5 and 6 Vict., cap. 35, and the note is inserted because of the proviso to that section, which enacts that no one who is required to deliver such a list shall be liable to penalties for the omission of the name of any person in his employ, if it shall appear to the Commissioners for executing the Act that such person is entitled to total exemption from income-tax. I am unable to agree with the hon. Member that the responsibility of the employer is limited as he suggests. It seems to me that the law requires that, if the employer wishes to omit from the list the name of any person in his employ, he should use reasonable means to satisfy himself that the person is entitled to exemption.

VOLUNTEER BATTALIONS (ALDERSHOT).

Sir **HOWARD VINCENT** (Sheffield, Central): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for War if it is intended to allow provisional and other battalions of Volunteers to proceed to Aldershot for instruction in the bank holiday week in August from the metropolis and elsewhere, and in such case if definite notification thereof can be made as early as practicable, having regard to the necessity for zealous Volunteers in public and commercial offices to make arrangements several months beforehand to take their annual holiday at that period, and so devote it to the service of the country?

*The **UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR WAR** (Mr. Brodrick, Surrey, Guildford): The 2nd inst. was the day when the proposals of Volunteer corps as to their annual camps were due at the War Office. Their applications will be considered without delay, and those for permission to go to Aldershot will be acceded to as far as circumstances will allow. Notification will be made as early as possible.

PIERS (IRELAND).

Captain **DONELAN** (Cork, E.): On behalf of the hon. Member for West Clare (Major Jameson), I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, whether, in reference to the statement that the piers at Kilrush, Liscannor, and Carrigaholt, in West Clare, were built out of Imperial Funds, and not out of Irish funds, he will inquire if this is the case; and, if he finds it is not so, will he recommend a grant out of Imperial funds to make these piers effective?

The **CHIEF SECRETARY FOR IRELAND** (Mr. Gerald Balfour, Leeds, Central): The total cost of the erection of the piers at the places named in the Question was £33,324, of which £7,868 was provided by grants out of Imperial funds, £15,101 by grants out of Church funds, and £10,355 from local sources. I have already stated, with reference to the construction of piers by means of Exchequer grants, that it is not now the practice to provide such expenditure in the Annual Estimates, but that the Government were always prepared to inquire into and consider each case on its own merits. With reference to Liscannor pier, the only circumstance calculated to raise a question as to its effectiveness for fishery purposes was a complaint made some time ago that the harbour was being filled with sand. The Board of Works had deepened it previously to handing the pier over to the Grand Jury, and the duty of maintaining the harbour at a proper depth rests with that body. I am dealing with Kilrush pier in reply to the next Question of the hon. Member.

CAPTAIN DONELAN: On behalf of the hon. Member for West Clare (Major JAMESON), I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, whether, with reference to Question on the subject of pier at Kilrush, he will specially consider the need of expenditure on Kilrush pier and harbour owing to the increasing importance of the trade of this town both in respect to fishing and other commercial enterprise?

MR. GERALD BALFOUR: No money could be provided for the improvement and extension of the existing pier at Cappagh, Kilrush, from repayments of loans under the Sea Fisheries (Ireland) Act of 1883, because the need for the extension is a commercial need unconnected with fisheries. The question whether it is possible or desirable for the Government to assist in carrying out the extension from any other source is now under consideration.

VOLUNTEER OFFICERS (EXAMINATIONS).

MR. HERBERT ROBERTS (Denbighshire, W.): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for War how many Volunteer officers have passed the examination in all the following subjects: Tactics, field fortification, military topography, organisation and equipment, and military law; in accordance with paragraph 356 in the Volunteer Regulations 1896; and whether, in view of the importance of the examination, he will issue a Return giving the names of the successful officers?

*MR. BRODRICK: Three, Sir, in accordance with the Regulation in Section 356 recently issued.

ROYAL IRISH CONSTABULARY (PENSIONS).

MR. PATRICK O'BRIEN (Kilkenny): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland what is the amount of pension to which a sergeant and a head constable of the Royal Irish Constabulary are respectively entitled to on retirement after 21, 30, and 40 years' service?

MR. GERALD BALFOUR: Head constables and sergeants are entitled to pensions of $\frac{22}{50}$ths of their pay after 21 years' service, and to $\frac{2}{3}$rds of their pay after 30 years' service. There is no increase in the pension rate beyond $\frac{2}{3}$rds except in the cases of a few men who were appointed to the force before the 10th August 1866.

NATIONAL SCHOOL TEACHER'S PENSION (IRELAND).

MR. PATRICK O'BRIEN: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland (1) whether he is aware that Miss Margaret Ryan, who served with distinction under the Board of National Education for 44 years, 10 years of which she was head mistress of Templemore National School, 8 years as head mistress of Kilkenny Model School, and 26 years as organiser of Convent National Schools, has been granted on her retirement a pension of only £77 10s. per annum; (2) whether Miss Ryan was entitled according to the rules of the service, as administered in the case of other teachers of less distinguished services, to a pension of £90 per annum for 40 years' service as head mistress; (3) whether he is aware that Miss Ryan resigned the position of head mistress of Kilkenny Model School at the repeated and urgent request of the officers of the National Board of Education in order to take up the position of organiser of the Convent Schools; (4) is he aware that, in addition to these distinguished services, Miss Ryan educated and passed to the grade of first class nearly 40 teachers, who subsequently became distinguished in the service of the Board of National Education; and (5) whether, under the circumstances of the case, he will recommend the Board of National Education to reconsider Miss Ryan's claim to an increase of pension as has been done in the case of Dr. Joyce and others who more recently retired?

MR. GERALD BALFOUR: The facts appear to be as stated in the first paragraph. Miss Ryan left the Model School service in 1862, and in her new position of organiser of National Schools her case fell within the scope of the Civil Service Superannuation Act of 1859. The Teachers' Pension Act, under which she might have qualified for a higher pension had she remained in the Model School service, was not passed until 1879, 17 years after she had left the Model School service. The Commissioners of National Education have no knowledge of the facts alleged in the third paragraph. Her acceptance of the position of organiser was purely voluntary on her part. The Commissioners see no reason for questioning the accuracy of the statement in the fourth paragraph. There is no analogy, I am informed, between the case of Miss Ryan and that of Dr. Joyce.

LIGHTSHIPS (IRELAND).

MR. J. L. CAREW (Dublin, College Green): On behalf of the hon. Member for Dublin, St. Patrick (Mr. W. FIELD), I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade whether he can state up to what date the Board of Trade surveyors were employed in the supervision of repairs to the hulls, masts, and riggings of lightships under the jurisdiction of the Irish Commissioners; whether he can state why their services were dispensed with; and whether he can state under whose supervision the work is now carried out, and what was their practical experience of modern and composite shipbuilding at the time of their appointment?

THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF TRADE (Mr. C. T. RITCHIE, Croydon): Up to 1890, the Board of Trade surveyors were, on the application of the Commissioners of Irish Lights, from time to time employed in the supervision of repairs to lightships under the jurisdiction of the Commissioners. Since that date no further applications for the services of these surveyors have been made to the Board of Trade by the Commissioners, who, in 1890, informed the Board that they considered that their lately appointed foreman shipwright was in every way able to take full charge of the work under the Inspector of Lights. I have no information as to what had been the practical experience of those officers as to modern and composite shipbuilding, but evidence on this head can no doubt be elicited at the official Inquiry which I have ordered to be held into the loss of the lightship *Puffin*.

MR. CAREW: On behalf of the hon. Member for Dublin, St. Patrick (Mr. FIELD), I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade whether, seeing that the Irish lightships are not supplied with boats fitted with air tanks such as merchant vessels are compelled to carry, the Board of Trade will cause the Irish Lights Board to supply equally seaworthy boats to their lightships as are common to merchant vessels?

MR. RITCHIE: The question whether Irish lightships are properly equipped with boats and other life-saving appliances is one that will no doubt be fully gone into at the official Inquiry which I have ordered to be held into the loss of the lightship *Puffin*. When the report of that Inquiry has been received, the Board of Trade will be prepared to consider with the Commissioners of Irish Lights any recommendation which the Court may make on this subject.

MR. CAREW: Will the right hon. Gentleman say whether the Inquiry will be held, and when?

MR. RITCHIE: The Inquiry was ordered to be held some time ago, and a great many arrangements had to be made with regard to the witnesses, so that it is not possible to say when the Inquiry will be commenced.

MR. PATRICK O'BRIEN: Will the right hon. Gentleman say where it will be held, and whether he does not think it desirable to hold it in Queenstown, where most of the witnesses live?

MR. RITCHIE: I answered the question as to where it would be held some time ago. It strikes me that it was at Cork, but I cannot say.

SUCK DRAINAGE SCHEME.

MR. JAMES O'KELLY (Roscommon, N.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether his attention has been called to the statement, made by Mr. Commissioner

O'Brien, at Castlerea Session of the Land Court on the 17th ult., that the Suck drainage scheme had cost a great deal more than the benefit it had produced on the land; and, whether the Government will take steps to relieve the heavy taxation imposed upon the tenants in the Suck drainage district?

MR. GERALD BALFOUR: I have seen the statement purporting to have been made by Mr. Commissioner O'Brien on the occasion referred to. I am unable to say whether Mr. O'Brien based these remarks, if correctly reported, on personal examination or on anything beyond the opinions expressed at public meetings. The tenants are charged only with the estimated value of the actual improvements effected in their holdings by the Drainage Works, and I have no evidence before me that this estimated value is incorrect.

RECRUITING AREAS (COLONIES).

CAPTAIN PIRIE (Aberdeen, N.): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for War whether, having regard to the changes about to be made in the British Army, and to the fact that in many cases our territorial recruiting areas do not suffice for the demands made upon them by their territorial regiments, the Government will give serious consideration to a proposal to create regimental districts in the several greater Colonies of the Empire, especially, in view of the popular sentiment in favour of such a proposal recently exhibited in Canada, and in commemoration of the 60th anniversary of Her Majesty's reign.

*MR. BRODRICK: A proposal of the nature referred to in the question has been received from Canada and has been referred to the Canadian Government for an expression of their opinion upon it. Her Majesty's Government are fully alive to the desirability of encouraging such tendencies on the part of the Colonies, but it is obvious that any steps in this direction must need very careful consideration before action is taken.

CORDITE (H.M.'S SHIPS).

MR. SYDNEY GEDGE (Walsall): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for War whether inasmuch as when, on the 2nd ult., a hundredweight of cordite was fired in the open air in Woolwich Arsenal, twelve other hundredweights securely done up in twelve separate cases, and not in contact with the hundredweight which was intentionally fired, instantly detonated, and that the detonation was of the true shattering nature characteristic of nitro-glycerine and gun-cotton, and made a hole in the solid ground some 15 feet deep, it is intended to put it inside big guns or to carry it on board Her Majesty's ships?

*THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY TO THE WAR OFFICE (Mr. POWELL-WILLIAMS, Birmingham): The circumstances of the late experiment were not quite as stated in my hon. Friend's question. Twelve metal cases, each containing about 130lb. of small cordite not made into cartridges were stacked together, forming a pile in close contact. One was fired, whereupon the mass exploded. These cases were not, however, packed with cordite under service conditions—that is, with cartridges made up of the sized cordite in use for heavy guns. Cartridges of cordite will continue to be used and carried on board Her Majesty's ships.

BANDSMEN ASSAULTED (SCOTLAND).

MR. WILLIAM JOHNSTON (Belfast, S.): I beg to ask the Lord Advocate if his attention has been called to a decision of the magistrates at Airdrie, on the 25th February, when 13 young men, members of the Bellshill Conservative Flute Band, were fined five shillings each or three days' imprisonment for playing the "Protestant Boys" and the "Boyne Water;" and whether playing Protestant tunes in the streets is contrary to the laws of Scotland; and, if so, whether he is prepared to assent to an alteration of the law?

THE LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. GRAHAM MURRAY, Buteshire): On February 6th the Bellshill Flute Band passed through Holytown playing airs of no local significance. [*Laughter.*] On arrival at Marion street, Mossend, an entirely Roman Catholic quarter, they struck up airs of "Kick the Pope"—[*laughter*]—and those mentioned in the question. [*Renewed laughter.*] Some excitement followed, and eventually a Roman Catholic assaulted two bandsmen and was arrested, the band thereafter retiring to a public-house. [*Laughter.*] Several of the men referred to were charged with behaving in a noisy and disorderly manner and with parading the streets playing those tunes with the premeditated purpose of provoking and exasperating, whereby a breach of the peace was committed and they were convicted and sentenced. The Roman Catholic was charged with assault, was convicted and sentenced. I see no reason whatever to call in question the magistrates' decision in either case. [*Cheers and laughter.*]

MR. JOHNSTON: May I ask the right hon. Gentleman how they decided on premeditated intentions? [*Laughter.*]

[No reply was given.]

UNIVERSITY EXTENSION (ANNUAL GRANT).

SIR JOHN MOWBRAY (Oxford University): I beg to ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer whether he has considered a petition, numerously and influentially signed, presented to him in 1896, in favour of an annual grant by Parliament for the promotion and development of the system of higher education, commonly known as University Extension, and in particular asking that such grant should be administered by the four central authorities of the University Extension movement, namely, the Oxford Delegacy, the Cambridge Syndicate, the London Society, and the Victoria Committee, and also by the two Extension Colleges at Reading and Exeter; and, whether he is prepared to recommend to Parliament to make any such grant?

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER: I have carefully considered the petition referred to, but have not felt able to recommend to Parliament a grant for the general work of University Extension. Such a grant would be a new departure, for the work is of an entirely different character from that which is done by individual colleges. The two Commissioners who recently visited the University colleges which receive Parliamentary grants, the President of Magdalen College, Oxford, and Professor Liveing, of Cambridge, by my directions also investigated the two Extension Colleges at Reading and Exeter. They reported that these Colleges, though doing good work in many respects, were as University Colleges in an experimental stage, and they did not consider that they had as yet arrived at a position in which a grant could properly be given.

TRAMPS (IRELAND).

MR. W. JOHNSTON: On behalf of the hon. Member for North Fermanagh (Mr. RICHARD M. DANE), I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland is he aware that it is a common practice for tramps to seek shelter for the night in the union workhouses in Ireland, when on their way from town to town, upon a false plea of destitution; and that in the week ending 17th February in the present year the names of over 40 tramps were on the books of the Irvinestown Union, and for the week ending 24th February a similar number; and, whether any power rests with the workhouse officials to refuse such well-known tramps admission; if not, will the Irish Government take steps to have the law amended?

MR. GERALD BALFOUR: The fact is as mentioned in the first part of the question, though the same state of things unfortunately prevails, I understand, in England as in Ireland. The number of tramps relieved in the Irvinestown Workhouse for the weeks ended 20th and 27th February were 23 and 22, respectively. The official returns are made up at the close of each week and do not give the numbers and the dates mentioned in the question. Workhouse officers can refuse admission to any persons not considered destitute, and they have also the power to prosecute under the Vagrant Act 1847 any tramps going from union to union for for the purpose of obtaining relief. The Local Government Board have frequently drawn the attention of Boards of Guardians to the powers possessed by them in this respect.

IMPERIAL MUSEUM, CALCUTTA.

MR. M. M. BHOWNAGGREE (Bethnal Green, N.E.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for India whether a German gentleman was recently appointed to an important position in the Imperial Museum at Calcutta; whether, before filling up that post, the Government of India had made any endeavour to find a native of India competent to fill it; and whether, with reference to this appointment and any other similar appointments to which Indian gentlemen of education and special attainments would seem to justly have the first claim, any correspondence has taken place during the past few years between the Secretary of State for India and the Government in India; and, if so, will he place such correspondence upon the Table of the House?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR INDIA (Lord GEORGE HAMILTON, Middlesex, Ealing): In the early part of last year the trustees of the Indian Museum at Calcutta, after making inquiries, decided, subject to the approval of the Government of India and of the Secretary of State in Council, to appoint Dr. Bloch for a term of five years to the post of first assistant on account of his very exceptional qualifications for the performance of the special duties attached to it. The Government of India recommended the appointment for approval. The Secretary of State in Council, after careful consideration, decided not to withhold his sanction, but intimated his opinion that the post was one which might appropriately be filled by a qualified native of India, and that in future candidates for such appointments should in the first instance be sought among graduates of the Indian Universities. I shall be ready to lay on the Table the correspondence to which the hon. Member refers if he will move for it.

VOLUNTARY SCHOOLS BILL (EVENING CONTINUATION SCHOOLS).

MR. H. HOBHOUSE (Somerset, E.): I beg to ask the Vice President of the Committee of Council on Education if he will consider the advisability of repealing the 17s. 6d. limit for evening continuation schools as well as for elementary day schools?

THE VICE PRESIDENT OF THE COUNCIL (Sir JOHN GORST, Cambridge University): The Committee of Council have had this matter under consideration, but it cannot be dealt with in the Bill now before the House.

Mr. M. M. Bhownaggree.

NORTH EASTERN RAILWAY (ADDITIONAL POWERS) BILL.

MR. W. E. M. TOMLINSON (Preston): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade whether the Board of Trade have had their attention directed to sub-section 4 of clause 9 of the North Eastern Railway (Additional Powers) Bill; whether he is aware that the effect of the construction of the works authorised thereby will be to destroy the shelter now afforded to small craft entering and leaving the Hull Docks, thereby rendering the use of the docks for canal-borne traffic impossible or difficult; and whether, having regard to the probable consequent discouragement to traffic on canals, the Board of Trade will issue a special Report upon the Bill?

MR. RITCHIE: The proposals contained in the Bill referred to are receiving the careful consideration of the Board of Trade, and a Report with respect thereto will be presented at an early date.

LAND COURTS (IRELAND).

Mr. D. MACALEESE (Monaghan, N.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland (1) if he is aware that, on the 22nd ult., the registrar of No. 3 Sub-Land Commission Court sent a list of decisions in cases, previously heard at Armagh, to be posted on the notice board of the courthouse in that town; and that almost immediately after this list had been posted a person connected with an Armagh newspaper removed the list from the notice board, and carried it away, much to the inconvenience of those desirous to inspect it; (2) is this a case in which a prosecution would lie; and, if not, will he give instructions that in future registrars of Land Courts in Ireland shall send copies of decisions to all solicitors engaged in the cases?

MR. GERALD BALFOUR: The facts appear to be substantially as stated in the first paragraph. The list was returned, however, to the courtkeeper on the following day by the gentleman who had taken it away. No proceedings lie in the case, and the Land Commissioners do not propose to issue directions as suggested, as, under existing circumstances, solicitors engaged in cases can, on application, at present obtain information as to the decisions, either from the deputy registrars or from the office of the Land Commission.

MR. JAMES DALY (Monaghan, S.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether he can state when the Sub-Commission promised over a month ago will sit to fix fair rents in cases listed for moving from the Shirley Estate, county Monaghan; and whether he can give the names of the Sub-Commissioners who will try these cases; are they Ulster farmers; or what knowledge have they of land in Ulster?

MR. GERALD BALFOUR: The Sub-Commission Court will commence its sittings for cases arising from this district on the 18th inst. The Court will consist of Mr. Edge, Q.C., Judicial Commissioner, and Messrs. Patterson and Mowbray, lay Assistant Commissioners. The hon. Member will be able to obtain from the Return, which will be laid on the Table to-day, information as to the localities in which the two latter gentleman acquired a practical experience of land.

MR. MICHAEL AUSTIN (Limerick, W.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland if, having regard to the number of applications to fix fair rents in the liberties and county of Limerick, and to the urgency of their circumstances, he will direct an immediate sitting of the Land Commissioners in that county for the disposal of such applications?

MR. GERALD BALFOUR: A Sub-Commission Court will probably hold a sitting early in April for cases arising in the County Limerick. The number of cases received since November, when a Court last sat, is comparatively few. I have no power to control the arrangements made by the Land Commission.

JAMESON RAID (PRESIDENT KRUGER'S CLAIM).

GENERAL RUSSELL (Cheltenham): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies whether he is in a position to state to the House the exact amount of the claim made by the Government of the South African Republic on account of moral and intellectual damage; and whether he has received any details of these and the other claims; and, if not, whether, before seriously considering them, he will obtain such a detailed and classified statement, and will lay it upon the Table of the House?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES (Mr. J. CHAMBERLAIN, Birmingham, W.): I have no information beyond what I gave to the House on February 18, except a telegram from Lord Rosmead dated February 25, giving the Dutch words used for "moral and intellectual damage," in what Lord Rosmead calls the "additional claim for £1,000,000."

ENTERIC FEVER (INDIA).

GENERAL RUSSELL: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for India whether his attention has been called to the great increase of enteric fever in India; whether the medical authorities can give any explanation for this increase; and whether the Government propose to take any steps for the better enforcement of sanitary regulations at the various stations where this complaint has recently been most prevalent?

LORD GEORGE HAMILTON: I have noticed with regret the increase of enteric fever in India, the causes of which are still very obscure. The Government of India have adopted various measures for improving the sanitation and water supply of cantonments, and the question as to the means of checking this disease is one which is constantly engaging their attention.

SALISBURY PLAIN (TENANT FARMERS).

MR. E. A. GOULDING (Wilts, Devizes): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for War whether the Government have taken into consideration the necessity of giving full and adequate compensation to any tenant farmers who may be disturbed through the purchase of a portion of Salisbury Plain for military purposes, in respect of land laid down to pasture, or other agricultural improvements which have been carried out by them?

*MR. POWELL-WILLIAMS: It is hoped and believed that only a small number of tenants will be disturbed; but adequate compensation will be given in all cases where disturbance takes place. This has not been lost sight of in the negotiations which have been carried on and are progressing.

STEAMSHIP "UTOPIA" (CLAIM AGAINST OWNERS).

MR. J. G. BAIRD (Glasgow, Central): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether his attention has been called to an important shipping case which has been before the law courts of Naples for the last five years, and is still pending, in which the owners of the steamship *Utopia* are being sued, *in formâ pauperis*, for compensation for the loss of life of a number of Italian emigrants through the sinking of the *Utopia* in Gibraltar Bay after collision with the ram of *H.M.S. Anson;* whether he is aware that the owners have been held responsible without being allowed to adduce evidence, and have been refused the limitation of liability prescribed by the Italian Code; and what steps the Government proposes to take in the circumstances, the case being one of exceptional importance to British shipping?

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS (Mr. G. CURZON, Lancashire, Southport): The case of the *Utopia* has been brought to the notice of Her Majesty's Government. They understand that it is about to come before the Court of Appeal at Naples; and, agreeing with my hon. Friend that it is one of exceptional interest to British shipping, they have instructed Her Majesty's Consul carefully to watch the proceedings and to furnish a report thereupon.

CERTIFICATED TEACHER'S DISMISSAL (GAWBER, NEAR BARNSLEY).

MR. J. H. YOXALL (Nottingham, W.): I beg to ask the Vice President of the Committee of Council on Education (1) if he has received information that at Gawber, near Barnsley, a certificated teacher, described a year ago by the Vicar as a very worthy man, a scrupulous, steady, conscientious, and persevering teacher, who has been successful in satisfying the requirements of Her Majesty's Inspectors of Schools, and, according to the Diocesan Inspector, has raised the school to an excellent standard of efficiency, religious instruction having been given in a thoroughly satisfactory manner, who has helped in the Sunday school, played the church harmonium and trained the choir, has nevertheless been dismissed upon the ground, as alleged by the Vicar, that he does not possess the First Class Drawing Certificate, although he does possess the Special Drawing Certificate, and for the past three years has obtained the "Excellent" report and grant for teaching drawing; (2) whether the Vice President is aware that the villagers, in public meeting assembled, have unanimously protested against the dismissal; and, (3) whether anything can be done to give effect to the wish of the villagers that the teacher should be retained?

SIR J. GORST: The teacher referred to has been for five years at Gawber school, and has obtained satisfactory reports from H.M.'s Inspector. He has the Special Drawing Certificate, and for the past three years the school has obtained the "Excellent" grant for drawing. Otherwise, the Committee of Council have no information as to the statements in paragraphs (1) and (2) of the Question; but they would be unable in any case to interfere with the discretion of the managers in regard to the dismissal of a teacher. I have just heard from the managers that the teacher in question has accepted a post elsewhere.

CHILDREN'S METROPOLITAN ASYLUMS BOARD.

MR. B. L. COHEN (Islington, S.): I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board if he will lay upon the Table of the House the answers he has received from the guardians of the Metropolitan parishes to the draft order prepared by the Local Government Board for placing certain classes of children under the care of a new central authority in London?

THE PRESIDENT OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (Mr. HENRY CHAPLIN, Lincolnshire, Sleaford): In a large proportion of the communications I have received I was asked to defer a decision until a conference was held on the subject. This conference was held on the 26th ult., and resolutions were passed by large majorities to the effect (1) that it was desirable that separate provision such as is indicated in the draft order should be made for certain special classes of children, and (2) that it should be urged upon the

Local Government Board, before constituting a new board, to consider whether the duties created by the new order might not with advantage be conferred on some existing authority or authorities. At the conference referred to every board of guardians and the managers of each district school in the Metropolis were represented by delegates, and I have received no communication from any board of guardians on the subject since the conference took place.

MR. COHEN asked if the answers received from the guardians could be laid on the Table.

MR. CHAPLIN said he did not think further information could be obtained, but he would see what could be done.

MR. T. LOUGH (Islington, W.) asked if the right hon. Gentleman would consider favourably the recommendation to reconsider the decision to constitute a new authority rather than give the work over to one of the existing authorities.

MR. CHAPLIN replied that the whole matter was under consideration.

CHELSEA HOSPITAL.

CAPTAIN DONELAN: I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for War, in view of the fact that when pensioners are admitted as inmates of Chelsea Hospital they forfeit their pensions and are only granted an allowance of 2d. a day, whether steps will be taken to revise this rule, with a view to more generous treatment of old soldiers whose lives have been worn out in the service of their country?

*MR. BRODRICK: The money payment to in-pensioners of Chelsea Hospital has recently been doubled, and, in the interest of the men, it is not considered desirable to make it greater than at present. The evidence taken by a recent Committee, over which Lord Belper presided, shows that there is an increasing desire on the part of pensioners to obtain admittance to the Hospital; and it is beyond question that the advantages of the men in the Hospital are in excess of those enjoyed by similar pensioners outside.

CAPTAIN DONELAN: I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for War whether he is aware that some of the tombstones in the old grave-yard of Chelsea Hospital are in a very dilapidated condition; and whether it is intended to put them in repair, or to utilise this disused burial-ground for the benefit of the public?

*MR. BRODRICK: It is in contemplation to repair some of the dilapidated tombstones this spring, when all chance of frost is passed.

COLCHESTER BARRACKS.

MR. JAMES ROUND (Essex, Harwich): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for War whether any further extension of barracks is contemplated at the camp at Colchester; and when the rebuilding of the existing wood huts will be completed?

*MR. BRODRICK: An extension of the camp at Colchester is not in contemplation. The existing huts are to be replaced by permanent buildings; but, as only a portion can be dealt with at one time, the completion of the work will occupy a considerable period.

TRUNK TELEPHONE SYSTEM (SCOTLAND).

MR. J. W. CROMBIE (Kincardineshire): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury, as representing the Postmaster General, whether the trunk line of telephone passing through Bervie will be made available to the inhabitants of that town for communication with Glasgow and the north?

THE SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY (Mr. R. W. HANBURY, Preston): I understand that a local telephone exchange has not yet been opened in Bervie, and, until this has been done, it would be premature to consider the question of a connection with the trunk telephone system.

EVICTED TENANTS (IRELAND).

MR. JOHN DILLON (Mayo, E.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland (1) whether he can now state the number of applications which have been made to the Land Commission by evicted tenants under Section 47 of the Land Law (Ireland) Act 1896; the result of these applications; the names of the landlords on whose estates the applications have been made and the number of applications on each estate; how many tenants have been restored to their holdings under Section 47; and (2) whether the Government propose to take any further steps to carry out the policy of that section?

Mr. GERALD BALFOUR: The number of applications received by the Land Commission under the 47th Section of the Act of 1896 is 447. In twelve of these cases the applications were consented to by the landlord; in 295 cases objections were made by the landlord; in 69 cases the applications were refused as not coming within the provisions of the section; and in six cases the applications have been withdrawn. The remaining 65 applications are still pending. No tenants have yet been reinstated under this section. As I have already intimated to the hon. Member, it would be undesirable that the names of the landlords on whose estates these applications have been made should be published. The answer to the last paragraph of the question is in the negative.

GREAT NORTHERN RAILWAY COMPANY OF IRELAND.

Mr. CAREW: On behalf of the hon. Member for Dublin, St. Patrick (Mr. Field), I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade whether he is aware that on the Great Northern Railway of Ireland, on Monday 8th February, Signalman C. Farrell was taken ill and Signalman J. Gannon, his mate, came on duty in his place at 8 a.m., although he was not due on till 4 p.m., and he was kept on constant duty from Monday 8th until Sunday 14th, day and night, without any relief; and that this has occurred more than once at Navan Junction; and, whether, in view of the passengers' safety, he will prevent its repetition?

Mr. RITCHIE: The manager of the Great Northern of Ireland Railway telegraphs to the Board of Trade that Farrell was taken suddenly ill and his mate was called upon to take the night duty which was very light. The stationmaster believing the signalman would be well immediately did not ask for relief for a day or two, but immediately this was known relief was given for the few days. Gannon had not to work night and day, but 16½ hours. There are, as far as I can gather from the time table, only 18 trains passing in the course of the 24 hours, but 16½ hours is too long for any man to be on duty, and I shall ask the Great Northern of Ireland Company to impress upon their stationmasters the propriety of asking for relief men to supply the places of servants incapacitated by illness.

TILLETT, Mr. BEN (IMPRISONMENT IN BELGIUM).

Mr. H. BROADHURST (Leicester): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether he is in a position to make a statement to the House as to the negotiations between this country and Belgium relating to the recent imprisonment of Mr. Ben Tillett?

Mr. CURZON: The Belgian Government have agreed to the suggestion of Her Majesty's Government that the claim for compensation put forward by the latter in the case of Mr. Tillett should be referred to arbitration.

INDIAN FAMINE.

Sir WILLIAM WEDDERBURN (Banffshire): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for India whether his attention has been called to the statements of Reuter's Correspondent that in the poorhouse at Nagpur deaths occur daily, and that in one village in the Central Provinces over twenty deaths from actual starvation had occurred before 4th February; and whether he is in possession of any information as to the total deaths from famine up to date?

Lord GEORGE HAMILTON: I have seen the statements to which the hon. Member refers, but they are associated with explanations which are as worthy of attention as the statements themselves. The second set of famine papers, which have been in the hands of the printers for ten days and which will soon be ready, contain all the information I have received regarding famine mortality, including a comparative statement of the total deaths in the Central Provinces from all causes for the years 1895 and 1896.

Mr. SWIFT MACNEILL (Donegal, S.) asked when the noble Lord could answer the Question, and whether at Nagpur deaths were not occurring daily?

LORD GEORGE HAMILTON: There must be a lapse of time between the collection of statistics in India and their arrival here, and that cannot be reduced to less than three months. If there is exceptional mortality I have directed the Indian Government to inform me.

MR. MACNEILL said he really must press the noble Lord as to whether, aye or no, deaths were not taking place at Nagpur daily. [*Ministerial cries of* "Order."]

*MR. SPEAKER said the question had already been answered.

INDIAN COUNCIL.

SIR WILLIAM WEDDERBURN: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for India whether, in filling up the approaching vacancies in the Indian Council, he will consider the expediency of appointing an experienced and representative Indian?

LORD GEORGE HAMILTON: The suggestion which the hon. Baronet puts forward is one which I have already considered, but I have not been able to find that association of recent administrative experience and general representation of native views sufficiently combined in one individual to enable me to act upon it.

LIMERICK (NIGHT WATCH).

MR. MICHAEL AUSTIN (Limerick, W.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland (1) if his attention has been drawn to a letter, dated 22nd February 1897, from Sir Andrew Reid to the Town Clerk of Limerick, in which he stated that, in the event of the existing night watch of the city of Limerick being replaced by the constabulary, the existing free quota of police assigned to that city would not be sufficient to perform the additional duties of night protection, and that extra police should be appointed; (2) upon what basis Sir Andrew Reid calculated that the yearly sum of £1,325 would be required for such an additional duty; (3) whether he is aware that similar duties (night protection) are performed in Cork and Waterford without any charge to the local rates; and on what grounds, as suggested by Sir Andrew Reid's letter, special legislation would be required to place Limerick in the same position as the other Irish cities mentioned occupy; and (4) whether it is the duty of the Royal Irish Constabulary to protect day and night the persons and property of the inhabitants?

MR. GERALD BALFOUR: I have seen the letter referred to, which is to the effect mentioned in the first paragraph. The cost to the Corporation was estimated on a basis of an extra force of 30 men, which number was mentioned in 1885 as the extra force required to enable the Royal Irish Constabulary to take over the duties. In Cork and Waterford the free force of the Constabulary is sufficient to perform a certain amount of beat duty at night as well as by day. Such work as can be performed by the free quota is done without charge to local rates; and this is also the case in Limerick, where, however, the free quota is not sufficient to perform night duty to the same extent as in Cork or Waterford. In Limerick the duty at night devolves by statute on the night watch.

LIMERICK CANAL AND SHANNON SERVICE.

MR. MICHAEL AUSTIN: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland if he will explain why, contrary to the custom heretofore acted on, the wages due to the lock-keepers on the Limerick Canal and Shannon Service are not paid on the 2nd or 3rd of each month; is he aware that in some cases at present arrears of two months' pay occurs before one month's service is paid, although receipts for payment must be given in advance; and whether he will direct regular monthly discharge of wages to be made in future?

MR. HANBURY: The collectors on the Shannon Navigation retain their salaries out of the rents, tolls, and other monthly receipts in their hands, as far as the sum collected will cover them. About 4-7ths of the amount of the salaries is so retained. The receipts for their salaries are forwarded with their monthly accounts, and if, in any case, the collection has not been sufficient to pay the salary, the balance is forwarded to them. The Board of Works have been unable to find any instance in which arrears of two months' pay have accrued before the payment of one month's service is paid.

Recently there has been remissness on the part of some collectors who delayed their accounts, and this has had the effect of deferring payment. The delay in furnishing the accounts is being made the subject of investigation, which it is hoped will lead to punctuality on the part of the collectors, and the consequent payment to them of balances of salary without delay.

TRUCK ACT (METROPOLITAN DISTRICT RAILWAY COMPANY).

MR. LOUGH: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether his attention has been drawn to the old notice of fines posted on the District Railway, and to the new notice which has recently been posted on the same line, headed Truck Act, 1896; whether he is aware that in the old list for the first and second offences it is stated that only a caution would be given, while in the new list it says that a fine is to be inflicted in all cases; and that the highest fine stated in the old list did not exceed 2s., while the lowest fine posted under the new Truck Act is 5s., ranging up to 20s.; also, that this latter new scale of fines has been adopted by all the leading railway companies; and, if so, whether he can do anything to secure its abolition?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE HOME DEPARTMENT (Sir MATTHEW WHITE RIDLEY, Lancashire, Blackpool): I have seen these two notices, with copies of which the hon. Member has been good enough to supply me. The new one is that adopted by several of the leading railway companies, but not by all of them; the fines specified in it are, I am advised, illegal, being in contravention of the provisions of the Truck Act of last year—["hear, hear!"]—and I am communicating with the companies on the subject.

SCOTTISH RIFLES (5TH VOL. BATT.).

MR. JOHN WILSON (Falkirk Burghs): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for War whether orders have been given for the disbandment of the 5th Volunteer Battalion Scottish Rifles, with headquarters at Airdrie; if he is aware that no reason has been given for this step, and that no fault has been found with the battalion other than the unavoidable delay in filling up the vacancy caused by the forced resignation of the late commanding officer, Colonel Forrest; is this delay the warrant for the order, which has aroused serious indignation in the locality; and will he agree to suspend action until a full inquiry into the whole circumstances is held? The hon. Member further asked the Under Secretary of State for War if he was aware that, at the unanimous request of the officers of the 5th Volunteer Battalion Scottish Rifles, Major Black, of Airdrie, was nominated as commanding officer on the 19th October 1896, and submitted to the War Office for approval; has this nomination reached the War Office, and for what reason has that appointment not hitherto been made; is he aware that several officers have as recently as in January last received their commissions, who, if disbandment is insisted upon, will suffer loss and damage; and what action he proposes to take in the matter?

*MR. BRODRICK: Orders have been given for the disbandment of this Volunteer battalion, as, in the opinion of the military authorities, after most careful investigation, the reports on its discipline, and other circumstances connected with the corps, made no other course possible. Major Black's nomination for the command was considered, but he was not recommended for the appointment by those responsible. The only officer appointed in the present year is a surgeon-lieutenant, and only two were appointed in 1896.

MR. J. WILSON (Falkirk Burghs) asked whether the right hon. Gentleman was aware that the last annual inspection took place on June 20 last, and that the inspecting officer reported favourably on the discipline of the corps?

*MR. BRODRICK: No, Sir; I should not question any observation which the hon. Member may make as to the Report, but there were other circumstances which have come to light ranging now over two years, which have been carefully considered by the military authorities, and which point to a lack of discipline and efficiency in the corps.

MR. J. WILSON (Falkirk Burghs): May I ask the right hon. Gentleman whether he would produce the Inspecting Officers' Reports for the last ten years?

*Mr. BRODRICK: I have not the least objection to showing my hon. Friend the Reports on the inspection of the corps, but I would point out that the Reports of the inspection are not the only Reports on which the War Office has to act. Various irregularities in the administration of the corps have come to light, but I am most reluctant to enter into details which may give pain to individuals. ["Hear, hear!"]

ARMY HORSES.

Mr. J. C. FLYNN (Cork, N.): I beg to ask the Financial Secretary to the War Office whether he can now state the number of horses purchased by the military authorities in Ireland during the years 1887, 1888, 1889, 1890, 1891, 1892, 1893, 1894, 1895, and 1896 respectively; also the number purchased respectively in Canada and in foreign countries during the same years?

*Mr. POWELL-WILLIAMS: Since April 1, 1887, the total number of horses bought has been 15,018, of which 9,139, or nearly 61 per cent., have been purchased in Ireland.

Captain DONELAN: Is it not the fact that horses bought in Ireland are far superior in appearance and endurance to horses purchased abroad? [*Laughter.*]

Mr. FLYNN: Will the hon. Gentleman be able to give me a return of the respective numbers in the years mentioned in my Question?

*Mr. POWELL-WILLIAMS: The respective numbers in the years named bear about the same proportion as the total proportion—namely, 61 per cent. I shall have no objection whatever to furnish the hon. Member privately with the details for each year, if he desires them.

Mr. PATRICK O'BRIEN: Will the hon. Gentleman say how many horses have been bought in foreign countries during the same period, and how many of them are alive to-day?

[No answer was given.]

WEST HAM (ELECTRIC LIGHT).

Mr. H. V. DUNCOMBE (Cumberland, Egremont): I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board whether, having reference to a correspondence which appeared in the public press relating to the adjudication on tenders for an electric lighting installation at West Ham, and a Resolution of the Town Council of West Ham to request the Local Government Board to make an inquiry into the circumstances, the Local Government Board have resolved to institute the inquiry requested?

Mr. CHAPLIN: The Local Government Board have no authority under which they could undertake such an investigation as has been suggested, and the Board have informed the Electric Construction Company, who have been in communication with them on the subject, that if they consider that an offence has been committed under the Public Bodies Corrupt Practices Act, 1839, they might either themselves institute a prosecution or submit a statement of the facts to the Director of Public Prosecutions.

"COSTA RICA" PACKET CASE.

Mr. J. F. HOGAN (Tipperary, Mid): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether Her Majesty's Government have received official notification of the award of the arbitrator in the case of the *Costa Rica* Packet; and, if so, whether he has any objection to communicating the terms of the decision arrived at?

Mr. CURZON: The award of the arbitrator in the *Costa Rica* Packet case has been received, and is to the following effect: To Captain Carpenter a sum of £3,150 is awarded; to the officers and crew of the *Costa Rica* Packet £1,600; and to the owners of that vessel £3,800; with interest for all damages at the rate of 5 per cent. per annum, from November 2nd, 1891. The above sums, together with the costs of the arbitration, fixed at £250, are to be paid by the Netherlands Government.

SICKNESS AMONG SCHOOL CHILDREN (COUNTY DONEGAL).

Mr. MACALEESE: On behalf of the hon. Member for North Donegal (Mr. Thomas B. Curran), I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, whether the Commissioners of National Education in Ireland will issue instructions to the Examiner of Inishowen, County Donegal, to take into account the prevalence of influenza and other sickness in that locality?

MR. GERALD BALFOUR: The Examiners for Results Fees cannot depart from the provisions of the Rules under which no allowance can be made for epidemics in allotting the marks on which those fees are paid. But, on the general question of diminished attendances of pupils, owing to epidemics, every consideration possible within the limits of the Board's Rules, and of the Acts under which payments are made, will be given to the claims of the schools of the locality referred to, when the School Returns setting forth the causes of low average come to be dealt with.

MUNICIPAL VOTERS ACT (AUGHNACLOY).

MR. MACALEESE: I beg to ask the Attorney General for Ireland (1) whether his attention has been called to the case of Aughnacloy, which is a town under the Towns Improvement Act, 17 and 18 Vict., c. 103; (2) is he aware that by the last census the population of Aughnacloy was only 1,100, and that it has since then been gradually decreasing, although the Towns Improvement Act requires a population of 1,500 for its application; and (3) under these circumstances, will he state whether the town commissioners and the town court are legally constituted, and what authority exists in the place for the revision of the Municipal Voters Act?

*THE ATTORNEY GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. J. ATKINSON, Londonderry, S.): My attention has been called to the case mentioned in the Question, and also to the fact that by the last census the population of the town of Aughnacloy only amounted to 1,100. I have no means of ascertaining whether the population has since decreased. The Town Improvement Act only requires that a town before it can adopt that Act should have a population of 1,500, but makes no provision for the case of the decline of the population below that limit after the Act has been adopted. Aughnacloy had a population of the prescribed number when it adopted the Act, and is, in my opinion, still governed by its provisions.

MR. MACALEESE: Will the right hon. Gentleman answer the last paragraph of the Question?

*THE ATTORNEY GENERAL FOR IRELAND: I have answered the last paragraph. This town is, in my opinion, still under the operation of the Act.

MR. MACALEESE was understood to ask what was the proper authority in this case?

*THE ATTORNEY GENERAL FOR IRELAND: The same authority that exists in every case under the Towns Improvement Act.

SERVANTS' HOMES AND AGENCIES.

MR. S. WOODS (Essex, Walthamstow): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether his attention has been drawn to the recent disclosures made in the Marylebone Police Court with respect to servants' homes and agencies, in the case of Curtis-Bennett, with a view of remedying and rendering the repetition of such cases impossible; and whether he will consider the advisability of licensing all servants' agencies and homes so as to bring them under the control of the police.

SIR MATTHEW WHITE RIDLEY: I have seen the report of a case recently brought before Mr. Curtis-Bennett, which is, no doubt, the one referred to in the Question. The police occasionally receive complaints against houses of this kind, and I will ask the Commissioner to make further inquiry. On the information before me at present, however, I have no reason to suppose that a system of licensing is desirable.

PRISON CLERKS (PARLIAMENTARY ELECTIONS).

MR. WOODS: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he is aware that W. H. Scriven, Chief Clerk at the County Prison, Chelmsford, acted as poll clerk at the Parliamentary elections in Romford on 1st February, and at Walthamstow on 3rd February 1897; and whether it is legal for Government officials to act in such capacities during a Parliamentary Election.

SIR MATTHEW WHITE RIDLEY: The facts are as stated, but I am not aware that it is illegal for a Government official to act in this capacity. I may add that the work was undertaken by the officer while on leave, and did not therefore conflict with the discharge of his official duties; and that, not being an act of political partisanship, it did not infringe the rules which govern in this matter the servants of the Crown. ["Hear, hear!"]

COURT OF BANKRUPTCY (IRELAND).

MR. PATRICK O'BRIEN: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether the order which was submitted by the Judges of the Court of Bankruptcy in Ireland to the Lord Chancellor for approval to empower the official assignees of the Court of Bankruptcy in Ireland to act as official liquidators of public companies did, when first submitted by the Judges of the Court of Bankruptcy, also provide for empowering the official assignees to act in any other capacities than official liquidators; and, if so, in what other capacities?

MR. GERALD BALFOUR: Any communications that may have passed between the Lord Chancellor of Ireland and the Judges of the Court of Bankruptcy in reference to the framing of the proposed Order before its publication in the *Gazette* must be regarded as confidential, and therefore I cannot give the hon. Member the information which he desires.

MARYBOROUGH GAOL (PRISONER FITZHARRIS).

MR. PATRICK O'BRIEN: On behalf of the hon. Member for Dublin, St. Patrick (Mr. FIELD), I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, with regard to the allegation that Fitzharris, a prisoner in Maryborough Gaol, has only recently recovered from a very serious illness, and has had a relapse, whether he will appoint an independent medical inquiry to be made regarding the condition of Fitzharris?

MR. GERALD BALFOUR: With the permission of my right hon. Friend, I will reply to this question. It is the case that this convict had been suffering from influenza, and that he had a relapse; but, in the opinion of the General Prisons Board, the ailment was not dangerous, and the convict now appears to be convalescent. There are no grounds for ordering an independent medical inquiry into the case, as suggested.

QUEEN'S REIGN (VISIT OF COLONIAL PREMIERS).

MR. VICTOR CAVENDISH (Derbyshire, W.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies if he can give any information as to the number of Colonial Premiers who have accepted the invitation to attend the celebration of Her Majesty's Diamond Jubilee?

MR. J. CHAMBERLAIN: Acceptances have been received from the following six Premiers:—The Premiers of Cape Colony, Newfoundland, Victoria, Queensland, Tasmania, and Western Australia. The Premier of Canada, while stating the proposal will be heartily taken up, has requested to be allowed to consult his colleagues before giving a definite reply. The late Premier of Natal was compelled to decline the invitation on the ground of health, but it has been renewed to his successor. Answers are shortly expected from the two Premiers last mentioned, and from the remaining three, the Premiers of New South Wales, South Australia, and New Zealand.

BURIAL GROUNDS.

MR. H. C. STEPHENS (Middlesex, Hornsey): I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board whether he is aware that under the operation of Section 15 of the Burials Act 1855, c. 128, whereby it is provided that land purchased and used for burial purposes by local authorities shall not be liable to re-assessment, wealthy authorities owning burial grounds in adjoining poor parishes absorb rateable area, and pay a very small proportion of the rates for poor, sanitary, district, school board, and county, which, but for Section 15 of the above Act, they would have to pay; and, whether, as cases of great hardship exist, he will cause a return to be made of authorities having burial outside their own area within the intent and powers of the Burials Act 1855, c. 128?

MR. CHAPLIN: Under Section 15 of the Burials Act 1855, land acquired by a burial board for the purpose of a burial ground (with or without any building erected or to be erected thereon) is, while used for such purpose, not to be assessed to any county, parochial, or other local rates, at a higher value than the value at which it was assessed at the time it was acquired. I have no doubt that the result is that lands used as burial grounds are in many cases assessed at a lower rate than would otherwise be the case. If my hon. Friend will give notice of a Motion for the return which he desires the matter shall be considered.

Mr. FREDERICK WILSON (Norfolk, Mid): I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board whether his attention has been called to the fact that the Parish Council of Guilden Morden, Cambridgeshire, having recently adopted the Burials Acts, purchased land for a burial ground and raised £200 by loan; will he explain on what grounds, although an inspector from the Home Office and the medical officer of health for the district inquired fully into all questions relating to the sanitary suitability of the site, the Local Government Board caused a second inquiry to be made by a special inspector when the application was made for sanction to the loan; and whether with a view to economy, he will take steps to prevent in future the holding of two inquiries where one would suffice?

Mr. CHAPLIN: So far as the Local Government Board are aware there was no public inquiry as to the proposal to acquire the land in question except that which was held by the Inspector of the Board. It is no doubt very desirable that in such cases the visits of two Inspectors of different departments should be avoided, and I will communicate with the Home Secretary on the subject.

MUZZLING DOGS.

Mr. STEPHENS: I beg to ask the President of the Board of Agriculture whether, having regard to the importance of preventing the further development of rabies, and to the slight advantage and consequent difficulty under present circumstances of maintaining the muzzling order in the county of Middlesex, he will as soon as possible give effect to his statement that a muzzling order for the whole of the Metropolitan area would be issued by the Board of Agriculture; and whether he can now give the date when such order will be issued?

*The PRESIDENT of the BOARD of AGRICULTURE (Mr. Walter Long (Liverpool, West Derby): The new orders which I have it in contemplation to make with regard to rabies will be issued with the least possible delay, but I would point out that those orders are intended to give effect to the recommendation of the Departmental Committee that a determined and systematic attempt should be made to stamp out rabies not only in the Metropolitan area but throughout the United Kingdom. The adoption of this policy involves the settlement of several difficult questions which are now engaging my active consideration, but, in any event, adequate notice of the new requirements must be given to the public before they can take effect. In these circumstances I have suggested for the consideration of the Middlesex Council whether the most convenient course to be taken by them during the interim would not be that their regulations should be brought into harmony with those now in force in the other districts comprised within the Metropolitan area.

Mr. STEPHENS asked whether the right hon. Gentleman meant that the Middlesex County Council should take off the order now?

*Mr. LONG: The Middlesex County Council must take the course which in their judgment is the best in the interests of those over whom they have jurisdiction. I think that it might be more convenient that there should be an interregnum.

CRETE.

Mr. FLYNN: I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (1) whether the Foreign Office have received any official information concerning the mutiny of the Turkish gendarmerie at Canea, and the murder of their officer, Colonel Suleiman Bey; and that the mutineers also fired at Major Bor, a British officer appointed to re-organise the gendarmerie; and (2) whether, in view of these occurrences, the British representative will urge upon the Powers the advisability of withdrawing the Moslem troops and gendarmerie as a condition precedent to the withdrawal of the Greek troops?

Mr. CURZON: Official information has been received that on the evening of the 2nd instant about forty Albanian

Zaptiehs belonging to the old gendarmerie mutinied owing to non-payment of their arrears of pay. When ordered to disarm in presence of a detachment of the allied forces in occupation of the town, the mutineers opened fire, killing their colonel, Suleiman Bey, and wounding about six other persons, including one Italian seaman. The foreign forces were compelled to fire, and wounded five gendarmes. The mutineers were disarmed, and three ringleaders arrested. In answer to the last paragraph, Her Majesty's Government cannot assume the responsibility for giving advice that would in all probability be immediately followed by the most deplorable loss of life in the island.

MR. FLYNN: May I ask the right hon. Gentleman whether the Collective Note sent to the Porte mentioned the withdrawal of the Turkish troops as a gradual withdrawal?

*MR. SPEAKER: Order, order! That does not arise out of the question.

CAPTAIN DONELAN: May I ask the right hon. Gentleman whether these mutineers formed part of the force to protect the inhabitants of Crete?

MR. CURZON: No, Sir; these mutineers, as we understand, form part of the old Turkish gendarmerie, and not of the new International gendarmerie, which has been organised since the autumn of last year, and which is under the command of Colonel Bor.

MR. JAMES LOWTHER (Kent, Thanet): I wish to ask the right hon. Gentleman whether it is the case that a considerable number of the Christian members of the new gendarmerie deserted with their arms and joined the insurgents? [*Laughter.*]

MR. CURZON: I have no information to that effect.

SIR E. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT (Sheffield, Ecclesall) asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (1) whether he had any information regarding the Mussulman inhabitants and Turkish troops beleaguered at Candamos; and (2) whether the artillery used in the attack was supplied by the Greek invaders?

MR. CURZON: There are four ships of the allied fleets at Selinos. The captains have orders to do what lies in their power to disengage the besieged Mussulmans at Candamos. This has been notified by the Admirals to the Greek Commodore for the information of the commanders of Greek troops, holding them responsible if Candamos Mussulmans were massacred. The Greek Vice Consul at Canea, who has denied that Greek troops are at Candamos, has received orders from his Government to go to Selinos and try to liberate the Mussulmans besieged at Candamos.

SIR E. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT: Will the right hon. Gentleman be good enough to answer the last paragraph of my question?

MR. CURZON: I have answered it to the best of my ability, in that part of my reply in which I said that the Greek Consul had denied that Greek troops were at Candamos, and if not Greek troops, I suppose not Greek guns.

*SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT (Monmouthshire, W.): I beg leave to ask the Under Secretary for Foreign Affairs a Question of which I have given him private notice—namely, whether his statement in this House on Tuesday last that the Powers are in absolute agreement, and that the Government had received the full and formal assent of the Powers to the scheme of policy of Her Majesty's Government, is to be taken as applying to the agreement of the Powers as to the withdrawal of the Turkish troops from Crete?

MR. CURZON: As regards the actual words I used in the Debate referred to, I did not use the words "formal assent." I used the words "full assent."

*SIR W. HARCOURT: You were so reported in *The Times.*

MR. CURZON: Yes; I was misreported in the papers as having used the word "formal." I used the word "full." Inasmuch as the form of autonomy guaranteed by the Powers to Crete is described by them as an absolutely effective autonomy it is certain that they are in agreement with Her Majesty's Government that the Turks shall retain no military control or influence over the island.

*SIR W. HARCOURT: I also desire to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether he will state to the House the exact terms of the Collective Note presented by the Powers to the Sultan. We have had the terms of the Collective Note presented to the Greeks, but not the terms of the Collective Note presented to the Sultan; and particularly what are the conditions agreed upon by the Powers as to the withdrawal of the Turkish soldiers from Crete, as to the religion of the Governor to be appointed, and whether the Collective Note of the Powers declares the intention of the Powers to enforce such conditions upon the Sultan?

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR, Manchester, E.): I am afraid I cannot answer the questions of the right hon. Gentleman, because we have not heard from Constantinople whether the Collective Note has been submitted to the Porte. I believe there has been some interruption in the telegraphic communication. But I propose to lay on behalf of the Government—or my right hon. Friend the Under Secretary will do so—the text of both Notes as soon as they are received. Perhaps that will be the most convenient way to proceed.

*SIR W. HARCOURT: The right hon. Gentleman will excuse me for pressing him. If he can give us a statement upon this question of the agreement as to the terms of the withdrawal of the Turkish troops, he will see the great effect it must have on the action of the other Power—I mean Greece.

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY: Yes; but I am afraid it would be very improper for me to give what I believe to be the terms which will be submitted to the Porte until we know they have been actually submitted. I am sorry I am not able to give the information to-day. I had fully expected to be able to do so, but for the reason I have indicated, I am not in a position to do so.

*SIR CHARLES DILKE (Gloucester, Forest of Dean): Is it not possible to give the House the Greek Notes?

MR. CURZON: What Notes?

*SIR C. DILKE: There was one of February 10, to which the right hon. Gentleman referred in his speech the other night.

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY: Perhaps the right hon. Gentleman will put a question down with regard to this matter for to-morrow. Meanwhile, I may repeat that the texts of the two Notes—one Greek and the other Turkish—will be laid on the Table of the House as soon as we are in a position so to lay them.

Sir W. Harcourt.

CLARE ASSIZES (DIMINUTION OF CRIME).

MR. PATRICK O'BRIEN: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland (1) whether his attention has been directed to the address of Chief Baron Pallas, at the opening of the Clare Assizes, in which his Lordship pointed out that there were only seven cases to go before the Grand Jury; that there were no offences of an agrarian character in the county, except a few threatening letters; and that the authorities were able, in consequence of the improved condition of the county, to considerably reduce the extra police force during the past year; and (2) whether, in consequence of this very satisfactory condition of the county, he will recommend His Excellency the Lord Lieutenant to reconsider the cases of the Glendree prisoners, and others who have been imprisoned for a great number of years for alleged agrarian offences, with a view to their release during Her Majesty's Jubilee Year?

MR. GERALD BALFOUR: I have read a newspaper report of the learned Judge's address to the Grand Jury at the opening of the Clare Assizes, in the course of which he alluded to the gradual improvement in the state of the county, and to the fact that it had been found possible in recent years to effect a reduction in the extra police establishment of the county. As regards the second paragraph, I am unable to see any reasons for dealing with the kind of crimes for which these prisoners were convicted with any peculiar leniency.

COUNTY COURT JUDGE (COUNTY DOWN).

MR. PATRICK O'BRIEN: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland (1) whether Mr. Walker Craig has been promised the appointment of County Court Judge for county Down, in which capacity it will be his duty to revise the Parliamentary register; (2) whether he is aware that Mr. Craig was the Unionist candidate for Down in the last general election, and has since been selected as the Unionist candidate for South County Down at the next election; (3) whether there is any precedent in England or Ireland for appointing a political partisan as Judge in a county where he was a Parliamentary candidate, and whether it is intended to give Mr. Craig the appointment; if so, whether an opportunity will be afforded for discussing the matter in this House before the appointment is finally made?

MR. GERALD BALFOUR: It would be altogether irregular to announce the intentions of the Executive with regard to an appointment before that appointment is made. In the meantime, the second and third paragraphs appear to be irrelevant to the question of the appointment of a County Court Judge for the county Down.

WEST INDIA AND CAPE MAILS.

SIR EDWARD CLARKE (Plymouth): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury, as representing the Postmaster General, whether the Post Office authorities intend to alter the present practice of sorting letters from the West India and Cape mails in a travelling post office en route for London, and have determined that the country letters shall be detained at Plymouth for sorting, and the London letters be sent straight to London; what is the reason for this decision; and, whether he will undertake that such change will not be made without full opportunity being given to the Chamber of Commerce and Mercantile Association at Plymouth to point out the strong objections on public grounds to any such change?

MR. HANBURY: The Postmaster General has already explained to the hon. and learned Member in a letter that there is no scheme for discontinuing altogether the present practice of sorting in a travelling post office mails from the West Indies and South Africa landed at Plymouth. It will be readily understood, however, that the amount of benefit to be derived from railway sorting varies considerably, according to the time of day or night at which the mail packets may arrive; and as it has been found that costly arrangements for sorting in a travelling post office have sometimes been carried on without adequate advantage in the delivery of letters, the Post Office is considering the question of restricting this sorting to those cases in which there will be a distinct gain to the mails. Such a restriction would not in any way prejudice the postal accommodation of Plymouth; but any representations on the subject from the Plymouth Chamber of Commerce shall receive careful consideration.

JUDGES (TRANSVAAL).

SIR E. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies (1) whether the Volksraad have passed a law making the Judges of the High Court of the Transvaal subject to resolutions of the Volksraad, and giving the Boer Executive power to dismiss the Judges; (2) whether the High Court have formally protested against this violation of judicial independence, and have suspended their sittings till May; and (3) whether the Outlander lawyers recently imprisoned at Pretoria have been threatened with exile because they have protested against this new law?

MR. J. CHAMBERLAIN: As regards the first and second questions of my hon. Friend he is substantially accurate in his facts, though not verbally correct. As regards the third I have no information.

SIR E. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT: Will the right hon. Gentleman be good enough to point out the verbal inaccuracies?

MR. J. CHAMBERLAIN: I wished to spare the House that. [*Opposition laughter*]. It is not, for instance, verbally accurate to say that they have "suspended their sittings till May." What they have done is to say that they will administer the law until the 5th inst., when the present term ends, and will await the decision of the people. The next term begins on June 1. There are other trifling inaccuracies of that kind. [*Opposition laughter.*]

ONE-MAN COMPANIES.

MR. HERBERT LEWIS (Flint Boroughs): I beg to ask the Attorney General whether the attention of the Government has been drawn to the recent case of a one-man company, practically consisting of a single individual, and formed by him to take over his own business, and through which he continued to trade for his own benefit under limited liability; and also to the Judgment of the House of Lords (reversing that of the Court of Appeal), in which it was held that debentures issued to himself by such individual were validly secured upon goods supplied to the company by ordinary trade creditors, which had not been paid for, and were entitled to take priority in the distribution of the company's assets arising from the sale of such goods over the claims of the creditors who had supplied them; and, whether, seeing that such cases are of frequent occurrence, the Government will take immediate steps to check the abuses thence arising?

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir RICHARD WEBSTER, Isle of Wight): I am fully alive to the necessity that exists for an amendment of the law in relation to trading companies. I would point out to the hon. Member that a Bill has already been introduced in the House of Lords by the Board of Trade and is now before the Standing Committee on Law, which will give an opportunity of dealing with the matter to which the question refers.

SIR W. HART DYKE (Kent, Dartford): Arising out of that answer, may I ask my hon. and learned Friend whether he is aware that under the Act passed last year, the Light Railways Act, one individual may become a light railway company? [*Laughter.*] I propose myself to start a railway on those lines, and I should like to know whether I am likely to be harshly dealt with? [*Laughter*].

THE ATTORNEY-GENERAL: I do not think there is much connection between the two subjects. The question of the hon. Member on the other side of the House refers to debentures issued for the purpose of raising money by these trading companies, which are really one-man companies.

CORNISH MINING INDUSTRY.

MR. A. STRAUSS (Cornwall, Camborne): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether he is prepared to support a proposal for a Select Committee to inquire into the depression in Cornish mining, and report on the measures that should be taken for improving the mining industry of Cornwall?

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY: I have to say that I am aware of the greatly depressed condition of the mining industry in Cornwall, and of course the Government would be very glad to do anything they could to alleviate that distress or mitigate that condition. Perhaps my hon. Friend will allow me to consult the Home Secretary on the subject with him to see whether anything would be gained by appointing the Royal Commission he desires.

IMPERIAL TAXES (IRELAND).

MR. LOUGH: I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether he has noticed that the amount collected for Imperial taxes in Ireland in the year ending 31st March 1894, the last year included in the Report of the late Royal Commission, was £7,568,649; and that, according to Return No. 337, issued in August 1896, the amount exacted in the year ending 31st March 1896 was £8,034,384, being an increase of £465,735 over the amount pronounced, with the practical unanimity of the late Commissioners, to be two and three-quarter millions in excess of what Ireland could justly pay: and whether, as he has announced his intention of appointing another Royal Commission, which will take some time to report, the Government is prepared to undertake that such financial arrangements shall be made this year as will at least prevent any sum in excess of the revenue of 1894 being collected in any one year in Ireland until a definite decision has been arrived at upon the report made by the late Royal Commission?

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY: I think the hon. Gentleman has mistaken the nature of the argument advanced by the late Royal Commission in support of their conclusions. As a matter of fact, the disparity between what Ireland does pay and what in the opinion of the late Commission she ought to pay is less now than it was at the time the late Commission reported.

MR. LOUGH: But, leaving aside any error in the figures, will the Government arrange that, pending the consideration of the question whether the taxation of Ireland shall be reduced, no increase of taxation will take place?

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY: I hope the hon. Gentleman will put down on the Paper any question on the subject which he desires me to answer.

EMPLOYERS' LIABILITY BILL.

MR. WOODS: I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether the Government intend to introduce their promised Employers' Liability Bill on an early date; and, if so, about what date will it be introduced?

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY: I am afraid it is not possible in the present condition of public business for me to name a day on which the Employers' Liability Bill will be introduced.

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

VOLUNTARY SCHOOLS BILL.

Considered in Committee.

[The CHAIRMAN of WAYS and MEANS, Mr. J. W. LOWTHER, in the Chair.]

[PROGRESS, 3RD MARCH.—FOURTH DAY.]

Clause 1,

"(1) For aiding Voluntary Schools there shall be annually paid out of moneys provided by Parliament an aid grant, not exceeding in the agregate 5s. per scholar for the whole number of scholars in those schools.

"(2) The aid grant shall be distributed by the Education Department to such Voluntary Schools and in such manner and amounts as the Department think best for the purpose of helping necessitous schools and increasing their efficiency, due regard being had to the maintenance of voluntary subscriptions.

"(3) If associations of schools are constituted in such manner in such areas and with such governing bodies representative of the managers as are approved by the Education Department, there shall be allotted to each association while so approved,

"(*a*) a share of the aid grant to be computed according to the number of scholars in the schools of the association at the rate of 5s. per scholar, or, if the Department fix different rates for town and country schools respectively (which they are hereby empowered to do) then at those rates; and

"(*b*) a corresponding share of any sum which may be available out of the aid grant after distribution has been made to unassociated schools.

"(4) The share so allotted to each such association shall be distributed as aforesaid by the Education Department after consulting the governing body of the association, and in accordance with any scheme prepared by that body which the Department for the time being approve.

"(5) The Education Department may exclude a school from any share of the aid grant which it might otherwise receive, if, in the opinion of the Department, it unreasonably refuses or fails to join such an association, but the refusal or failure shall not be deemed unreasonable if the majority of the schools in the association belong to a religious denomination to which the school in question does not itself belong.

"(6) The Education Department may require as a condition of a school receiving a share of the aid grant, that the accounts of the receipts and expenditure of the school shall be annually audited in accordance with the regulations of the Department.

"(7) The decision of the Education Department upon any question relating to the distribution or allotment of the aid grant, including the question whether an association is or is not in conformity with this Act, and whether a school is a town or a country school, shall be final."

*THE CHAIRMAN OF WAYS AND MEANS ruled out of order a number of Amendments, including the following Amendment standing in the name of Mr. F. A. CHANNING (Northamptonshire, E.):—In Sub-section (2) after the word "Department," to insert,—

"And for the purpose of determining with respect to every county the number of schools which are to be deemed to be necessitous, and the proportion of such aid grant as may be payable to each such school, the Education Department shall, on the passing of this Act, hold such local inquiries by inspectors of the Department or otherwise, and call for such returns from School Boards or school attendance committees or other local authorities, and require such accounts with vouchers from the managers of any schools as may in their opinion be necessary, and shall publish a list of all schools determined to be necessitous, and the proportion of such aid grant to be assigned to each such school in respect to the average attendance in such school."

MR. CHANNING, on a point of order, suggested that, from the wording of the Sub-section, there could be no objection to an Amendment authorising the Education Department to take steps for the grant to be distributed independent of the associations.

***THE CHAIRMAN OF WAYS AND MEANS**: The hon. Member's Amendment is out of order, because it is in the wrong place. It ought to come at the end of the sub-section or as a new clause.

MR. ELLIS GRIFFITH (Anglesey) moved in Sub-section (2) to leave out from the word "to" to the end of the sub-section, in order to insert the words, "all voluntary schools at the rate of five shillings per scholar in average attendance."

He said that the object of the Amendment was to provide that the 5s. grant should be paid direct to the schools; and one of its great advantages was that it would remove from the Bill these proposed associations of schools. If the grant were paid direct, it would be enjoyed by the best schools in the country as well as by the worst, and thus an injustice to the schools which had done the best for education would be prevented, for under the scheme of the Government it was the worst schools which would be subsidised. He knew it had been said that many of the poor Voluntary Schools would be shut up if aid were not afforded to them; but he did not believe that that was said *bonâ fide*. It was simply a threat to blackmail the taxpayers. As to the Boards of Managers in connection with Voluntary Schools, those bodies were not thought highly of in Wales; but whatever they were, these proposed associations would simply be composed of their representatives—that is, the representatives of unrepresentative men. Surely it would be better to deal with the men themselves, however unrepresentative and incapable they might be. Another advantage of the Amendment was that the country would be saved the expense, friction, and strife inseparable from these associations, which were now to be compulsory. In the Bill of last year they were to have been voluntary, and what had happened since last year to induce the Government to abandon the voluntary principle? There was a suggestion in the Bill that the Department might make different rates for town and country; but, in any case, the money ought to go direct to the school instead of being pooled by an association. The Vice President of the Council had said, "Parliament had set before it the task of devising some means of replacing the School Board system in rural districts where it had been a failure by some better system." He supposed that this clause would hardly be defended on that ground. The existing machinery at the command of the Department was amply sufficient for the purposes of this Bill, without the creation of these associations. By accepting the Amendment, the Government would have an opportunity of showing a generous and conciliatory spirit, and of removing one of the blots of the Bill. He begged to move.

Mr. Ellis Griffith.

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR, Manchester, E.) said the hon. and learned Gentleman was probably justified, according to the Rules of the House, in referring to the associations which were dealt with later on in the Bill, but it would probably not be for the convenience of the Committee that they should, at the present stage discuss the special machinery by which distribution, according to merit or need, should be carried out; but they should confine themselves to the question whether they ought to distribute according to fixed amount, irrespective of need, or whether they should, through the machinery in the Bill or some better machinery, attempt to discriminate between different schools and different parts of the country. The answer to the Amendment was a very simple one. In his first argument the hon. and learned Gentleman was wrong in point of fact. Our educational legislation had always, from 1870 onwards, recognised that schools might require more money from the Treasury if they were specially situated. There was the provision in Section 97 of the Act of 1870, under which a considerable sum of public money was annually given to schools for no other reason whatever than that they were situated in districts where the rateable value was exceedingly small; and, in addition to that, there was the well-known provision in the Act of 1876, by which small schools in fact received an immense exceptional endowment at the hands of the Chancellor of the Exchequer. In these circumstances the hon. and learned Gentleman would, he thought, feel himself forced to abandon his first position—namely, that the Government were now introducing some inequality in the treatment of different schools according to the necessities of these schools. Coming to the second argument, which, if he might say so without offence, seemed to be no argument at all, he held that schools had no *primâ facie* title whatever to public money. They were only entitled to public money, in his judgment, when they were necessitous; if they were not necessitous they could not be said to have even a *primâ facie* claim to the grant of 5s. to each scholar in average attendance. If the Government had brought forward any plan of this kind they would have been denounced not only in the House but from one end of the country to the other as squandering public money, by their own confession and avowal, on schools that did not require the money—[" hear, hear!"]; and he, for his part, felt so much the strength of that argument that he was willing to fight the question of the machinery by which the distribution was to be made rather than adopt the simpler, and, no doubt, easier plan of simply dividing the money equally among all Voluntary Schools according to the number of children in average attendance. He felt the strongest objection to the plan suggested from two opposite points of view—that of the Chancellor of the Exchequer or the public taxpayer, and the point of view of the Voluntary Schools themselves. He objected to the Amendment from the point of the Chancellor of the Exchequer, because he did not wish to see public money given to schools which did not require it; and he objected to it from the point of view of the schools, because he thought 5s. per scholar was very much too little for many schools, and therefore, unless some schools which did not require it were not given a full amount, there would be no surplus to give to those schools, to which it was in the highest degree to the public advantage that greater assistance should be granted. The broad case of the Government was, he submitted, unanswerable, or, if it was to be answered at all, it could only be by showing later on that no machinery could be devised under which their end could be attained.

MR. A. H. D. ACLAND (York, W.R., Rotherham) was not quite so sure that if the Bill had contained a proposal to give the grant all round in the first instance, the Government would have been denounced up and down the land. At all events, in last year's Bill such a proposal was made, and he could not recall many denunciations about the Bill on that account. What the Opposition protested against in laying this alternative scheme before the House was the compulsory association of schools. A great many of the most experienced men in this country who understood this problem best, and who did not by any means belong to one political party, were firmly convinced that, try as they would, it was quite impossible to draw any distinction between necessitous and non-necessitous schools, and yet such a distinction and definition was the very basis, as he understood it, of the Bill. Comparing the case of the average Lancashire school with that of the average London school, no one could doubt that the former was more necessitous than the latter. Therefore, if they were to be equally treated under this Bill, the Lancashire schools should receive 7s. 6d. of the grant and the London schools 2s. 6d. The same comparison would apply to the dioceses of Canterbury and Chester—one of them ought to be a 7s. 6d. diocese and the other a 2s. 6d. diocese; and if the Government were to give each of them the 5s. grant they would be laying themselves open to the charge which they made against the Opposition of proposing to give 5s. equally to those schools which did not want it and to those schools that wanted more. There was no attempt made in the Bill to divide the country into necessitous and non-necessitous areas. It was impossible to lay down any principle for the distribution of the grant between necessitous and non-necessitous schools. The difficulties of laying down such a principle of distribution had been very clearly pointed out in *The Times* during the early stage of the Debate upon this Bill. The right hon. Gentleman the Vice President of the Council had pointed out that if a great number of schools stood out of the association it would be an impossible task to form such associations, and that the power of refusing the grant to those schools which declined to join the associations would have to be pretty freely used if the associations were to be prevented from falling to pieces. In other words, that meant that schools would have to be compelled to join the associations if they desired to participate in the grant. How were they going to use compulsion as between parish and parish? *The Times*, in a leading article published on February 16, wrote:—

> "If, in two neighbouring parishes, one school kept up in a state of solvency and efficiency by the liberality of the squire and the parishioners is recommended for only a small grant, while another, where the subscriptions are niggardly, obtains a large amount of relief, on the ground that it is necessitous, what is likely to be the result? It will be hardly consistent with human nature if the parish in which the subscriptions are adequate and liberal is not tempted to bring down its contribution to the

level at which it can claim a larger share of the grant."

["Hear, hear!"] If such a levelling down process were to be adopted, the Voluntary Schools would not only lose a large portion of their subscriptions, but they would be so reduced as to claim the 5s. grant all round as a right. In adopting the principle of a varying grant they were making a new departure. The Act of 1870 gave an equal grant, and so did the Free Education Act of 1891. There were, of course, the exceptional cases of very small schools having from 60 to 90 scholars, in sparsely-populated districts, which required additional assistance to enable them to pay their teachers. But this grant of between half and three-quarters of a million was to be given to all the Voluntary Schools on the understanding that it was to be apportioned between necessitous and non-necessitous schools according to their requirements. But who was to decide what was a necessitous and what was a non-necessitous school? In one parish they might say that they had for years watched with interest the growth of their school, that they had never allowed it to fall behind in regard to efficiency, and that they had constantly appealed to their friends for assistance in order to prevent deficiencies in the accounts, with the result that, by means of careful management, they had been able to maintain their school in excellent condition. Such a parish would ask why in these circumstances they were not to be assisted, and why, in view of all the facts, they were to lose the grant instead of being rewarded for the exertions they had made in order to maintain the efficiency of their school. They might say that they wished to teach cookery and cottage gardening, or other subjects of study, but were prevented from doing so by want of funds; and they might ask why they were to be treated less generously than the neighbouring parish which had neglected their school and had allowed it to become necessitous. In his view, if the compulsory principle were to be eliminated from the Bill the greater part of the sting would be taken out of the Measure. He was not often the depositary of the views of those who were represented by hon. Members opposite, but during the last few weeks he had received an extraordinary number of communications from Conservatives, Churchmen, and clergymen, who were all opposed to him in politics, complaining of the compulsory character of the Bill, which would strike a blow at independence by forcing them into associations. He believed that this complaint was amply justified. ["Hear, hear!"] The result of the adoption of such a compulsory principle would be to make the managers of the schools extremely discontented, and to drag the schools down to a level of inefficiency. ["Hear, hear!"] Why should they not adopt the principle of enabling groups of Church schools to join together? That would put an end to discontent, while the richer schools would be willing to give their portion of the grant to aid the necessitous schools. What did they intend to do with regard to endowed schools in reference to this grant? If they refused the grant to a school on the ground that it was endowed, they would be practically alienating a part of the endowment of the school and handing it over to another parish. ["Hear, hear!"] For whom was this compulsory association necessary? He could hardly believe that it was necessary for the Roman Catholics, in fact, he was not sure that they would get any advantage at all out of it; he was perfectly confident that they could do all they desired to do by voluntary association. ["Hear, hear!"] Was it demanded by the British schools? Did they want to be associated together and dole out the money by compulsion? Was it desired by the Wesleyans? He did not believe there was a demand for it from either of these two quarters; so that the demand was solely made in the interests of Church schools, though he believed that a great many of the managers of these schools did not at all like the suggestion that they should be compelled to enter into association. He believed that many of the Bishops were very anxious for this, but he thought they were misled in supposing that even with the most benevolent intentions they could work compulsory association as they had hitherto worked voluntary funds. ["Hear, hear!"] The task imposed on these associations by the Bill was to draw up a schedule of schools in their areas and submit it to the Education Department. Each association was to be responsible for distinguishing between schools and schools over an area containing, perhaps, 1,000,000 people, and for presenting a scheme—which to many of the schools would be extremely unsatisfactory—to the Education Department, who would act as their bankers and send out the money to the various schools. He was perfectly confident that the line taken by Canon Barker, Archdeacon Wilson, and by the Northern Counties Voluntary Schools Defence Association, was the right one. What did the latter body say? They said they wanted to omit the word "necessitous" altogether, and to substitute the word "those," the feeling being that all Voluntary Schools which satisfied the demands of the Education Department and were efficient in themselves should have from public sources the full sum necessary to maintain that standard. Did that not mean that they wanted to get rid of the compulsory character of association? As far as he could understand it, they required something much more like a grant all round. ["Hear, hear!"] But there were even wider reasons from his point of view, reasons in the broader interests of education. It had been lightly suggested that the Education Department had admirable representatives in the country villages who could grapple with this task to a large extent. It would be a most thankless task, and he should be very sorry to see the inspectors, who were now welcomed in all schools, involved in it. ["Hear, hear!"] They had plenty of work to do of a practical educational kind, and were not at all fitted for work so difficult in its character and so dangerous to their own influence. The proposal of the Bill would also involve the officers of the Department in an enormous amount of work which would divert them from their regular duties; and the character of these officers would be altered the moment they were involved in the difficult task of distinguishing between schools. It would make the association unpopular, and it would to a large extent make religious bodies unpopular. It would raise a new cry against religious bodies which it was not desirable to raise, and it would make it much more likely that a demand would be made to upset arrangements in the future. He felt quite certain that the proposal made on his side of the House for a grant all round and a modification of that grant only where it was desired among schools which had grouped themselves to help one another, was the better one. A grant all round and voluntary association were much more likely to lead to a permanent settlement than the scheme of this Bill. ["Hear, hear!"] He felt no hesitation in saying that, so far as permanent settlement went under this Bill, the House would do much more wisely to adopt a scheme such as that, than to try and force into association schools which did not want to go into association. It would avoid the irritation that would be involved in taking away money from schools that thought they were entitled to it, and he sincerely believed that when these associations had done their best to distinguish between school and school, they would find that in 90 per cent. of the cases it would be almost impossible to do so, and they would demand the very scheme now being put before the House of equal grants all round. ["Hear, hear!"]

MR. G. C. T. BARTLEY (Islington, N.) said that he agreed that from the sentimental point of view it would be desirable to adjust this new grant in proportion to the necessities of schools, but those who had had to do with schools would acknowledge at once that, practically speaking, when they had got association, it would be impossible under any fair system to adjudicate between school and school. ["Hear, hear!"] Although some schools were better off than others, the schools that were better off were anxious to spend more money in useful and legitimate objects, which they were only prevented from doing by want of funds. It seemed to him that compulsory association would involve an immense amount of friction. The main object of each school would be to get as much as it could. ["Hear, hear!"] In the case of voluntary association an altogether different spirit would be displayed. He had heard it said that some schools were to get 10s., 12s., or even more, while others were to get nothing. He was quite sure that no such an arrangement would follow compulsory association. The association would meet, each school would desire to have its full quota, and the result would be that every school would get 5s. ["Hear, hear!"] That, he acknowledged, was not a desirable plan, and speaking with some practical knowledge on the subject, he said that in his opinion a compulsory system of association would lead to assimilation, and the only possible solution of the difficulty would be to recommend that every school should have 5s. ["Hear, hear!"]

MR. HENRY BROADHURST (Leicester) said that if the Amendment were accepted, and this portion of the Bill omitted, much of the opposition to the Bill would undoubtedly be removed, or at least largely modified. They would prefer rather that the money should be more under the control of the central authority which was known, than under the control of a newly-constituted body which they did not know and which they very much feared. He objected to the association altogether. It appeared to be forgotten by the Leader of the House that there were large communities in this country not associated with the Church of England who had consciences and religious convictions. More than half a million of Nonconformist children were driven at the present time into Church Schools; and under this clause the control and the authority of the Church over these schools would be enormously increased. This was one of the reasons why they so strongly opposed this portion of the Bill. No one knew exactly what the machinery was to be, and as it appeared in the Bill it seemed to him to be full of confusion. An intense feeling of suspicion and alarm existed in the minds of Nonconformists with regard to this unknown body of associations. Nonconformist schools had not asked for this Bill; they did not want it and they did not support it. On the contrary, the largest and most influential Nonconformist bodies in the country were almost entirely opposed to the Bill; and it was reasonable to ask the Government to pay some attention to their wishes and feelings. But Nonconformists had received no consideration from the Government, and he urged that this was not a wise policy for the Church itself or for its future interest or position. He supported the Amendment on the ground of religious equality and freedom, and in order that Nonconformists might be released from the bigotry and despotism which would be exercised by the clergymen in the villages in the allocation and management of the fund which was contributed by all classes of the community.

Mr. G. C. T. Bartley.

*MR. ERNEST GRAY (West Ham, N.) said that the Amendment involved two questions which were separate and distinct: (1) the fixed grant as against the variable grant, and (2) compulsory federation. In his judgment the first was the only question which should be raised now. Anyone who had knowledge of the needs of schools would not only agree that this new grant should be distributed in varying proportions between school and school, but would regret that the existing grants now paid were not distributed on the same principle. He admitted that the grants to the poorer schools should be larger than the grants to the rich schools. If there were one great merit which attached to the proposed grant in this Bill it was the attempt which was being made to differentiate between the needy and the rich schools. Whether this attempt could be achieved was a different question, but he certainly did not think it would be attained by the machinery in the Bill. ["Hear, hear!"] When the question of compulsory association was brought forward he should not hesitate to offer opposition to the proposals outlined in the Bill. Whether it was possible or not, in considering the principle of the fixed as against the varying grants, to distinguish absolutely between the necessity of one school and another school, he would not now inquire; but it was perfectly possible for the Education Department, by means of its inspectors, to lay down a series of rules having reference to the average attendance in schools under which the whole grant might be well distributed. He could not understand how in the speeches of some Ministers the suggestion should be made that the larger grant should be given to schools in urban districts rather than to schools in rural districts. ["Hear, hear!"] Again, if the Education Department had to revise all the schemes it might as well frame them, and he thought that the proposal would lead to a large amount of friction in many localities. Owing to the large number of schools that would be under the control of each association he thought that the machinery provided would be almost unworkable, in addition to being exceedingly expensive, as well as leading to the diversion of a large proportion of the voluntary subscriptions from the schools. All the best

Voluntary Schools would, he felt sure, send up vigorous protests against the proposed machinery.

MR. J. M. PAULTON (Durham, Bishop Auckland) said that in this case they had to choose between waste and injustice, and, for his part, he was inclined to think that the lesser of the two evils would be a certain amount of waste, which, he quite admitted, would result from the operation of a fixed grant all round. But, to his mind, the important thing in the whole matter was the question of efficiency, and it did seem to him that, under the proposal of the Government, every sort of discouragement would be given to those schools which had done most to deserve recognition. In short, under this system they would give most to those who deserved least. The principle of compulsory association appeared to him to be a very doubtful and dangerous experiment. Under Section 7 of the Act of 1891 the schools had had the opportunity of forming associations, and they had done so only to a very slight extent, if, indeed, at all. Obviously, if this principle was so desirable, they would have availed themelves of it to a much greater extent; and, if it was not desirable, surely it was a dangerous thing to put it into compulsory operation. *The School Guardian* had pointed out that the advantage, from their point of view, of this principle of compulsory federation was not alone, and it would give a means of distributing the money. It said:—

> "They"—the associations—"will prove useful in many other ways. At present there is little control over individual schools. The Board of Management may any day close their school or surrender it to the School Board without consulting anybody. The association would be able to exercise a supervision which would render such independent action on the part of the management practically impossible."

Was that the way this principle of association was going to be worked? There was nothing whatever, so far as they could see, to prevent it from being so worked. Not only on its merits was it desirable that they should adopt the Amendment, but he thought it was also most important that they should enable the Committee, by adopting it, to get rid of the difficulties and the dangers of this principle, which, he felt sure, would never be satisfactorily worked.

VISCOUNT CRANBORNE (Rochester) said he should like to say one word as to the attitude of the Church of England, so far as he was acquainted with it, upon this question of federation. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Rotherham said he had received a large number of letters from warm supporters of the Church and of the Government protesting against these provisions in the Bill. He thought it was always a very suspicions thing when the arch-enemy of Voluntary Schools was the recipient of the confidences of supporters of the Government and of Voluntary Schools in the country. He confessed that he viewed that correspondence with a certain amount of suspicion. He could say with absolute confidence, because he knew, that to a very small extent had protests been received by the National Society, and, indeed, it was not surprising, because the National Society itself had passed the strongest resolutions in favour of this part of the Bill. He did not know whether hon. Gentlemen recollected that it was an essential part of the scheme put forward at the Church House in the winter that the special aid should be paid to federations, and, as far as he knew, it was not opposed by any very large section, and it was certainly adopted as the programme of the Church as represented by that meeting of enormous importance. He did not believe there was any very large section, with, perhaps, one exception, of those who took an interest in the welfare of Voluntary Schools, who had in any way signified their protest against the federation clauses of the Bill. He did not think that voluntary federations had been an entire failure; but he thought they had been partially, and for very obvious reasons. However much in theory the supporters of Voluntary Schools, whether rich or poor, might approve of federation, when it came to the actual point of sharing a sum of money, which they might keep themselves, with others, he thought it was expecting too much of human nature, even of clerical human nature, to be entirely unselfish in this respect. He was not at all sure if he were a manager that he should feel entitled to enter into a voluntary federation of this kind. He should hold his position as a trustee; and what right had a trustee to part with the money granted to him by Parliament, to be administered under that trust for the needs of a particular school in a particular parish, for other schools in other parishes? He saw immense difficulties in the way of the success of voluntary federation. As to the necessity of discriminating between school and school, it was so obvious that he did not think it was seriously denied by anybody. Let him give an illustration to the Committee. Take the five school districts which appeared in the Return for the county of Oxford. In the first case, the cost per child was £3 2s.; in the second, £3 10s.; in the third, £1 12s.; in the fourth, £3 7s.; and in the fifth, £2. Was it not absurd to give exactly the same assistance to the case of a school which only paid £1 12s. and to the case of a school which paid £3 10s.? That was manifestly absurd. Some kind of discrimination there must be. He had never defended the provisions of the Bill as perfect, none of these methods of discrimination as between association and association were perfect, and until his hon. Friends realised that a certain mixture of rate aid should accompany the aid proposed in the Bill there could not be a perfect discrimination. Until they had realised the advantages of the proposal put forward by the Church of England, he was content with what he could get. He recognised the desire of the Government to make this discrimination. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Rotherham, said one effect would be that there would be a desire on the part of subscribers, when less than the 5s. grant was awarded them by the association, to diminish subscriptions. He could not conceive any such foolish policy. A certain amount of discretion ought to be reasonably expected. An association would take into consideration the warm efforts made by subscribers, special regard would be had to unselfish efforts made, and, certainly, the first consideration would be not to diminish sources of present income. Everything must be done to maintain these subscriptions, valuable in themselves, and valuable as implying moral support. He did not apprehend any such danger as the right hon. Gentleman had indicated. He believed that this provision could be wisely and strictly administered, all regard being paid to the consideration that subscriptions should not suffer. He should vote most cordially against the present Amendment, for he believed that this discrimination was absolutely essential to the proper working of the Bill.

Mr. H. H. ASQUITH (Fife, E.) regarded this as one of the first important Amendments that could be presented, and could not agree with the noble Lord that the sole question raised was the expediency of providing a fixed sum. He could not dissociate from the questions raised by the Amendment the compulsory machinery proposed to be constituted, and which, in his view, would certainly lead to disastrous results from the point of view of educational efficiency, and from the point of view of regular and equitable distribution of money contributed by the taxpayers. It was quite true that the Amendment as it stood, and in the form in which it appeared before the Committee, might have the possible result that some of the money might go to schools having no practical need of it. No schools were so prosperous or in an educational condition so ideally perfect that they could not make a sufficient use of this 5s. grant, no one would deny that; but he agreed that there were a certain number of schools where there was no urgent need for this additional sum, therefore it might be that in some cases a fixed grant might lead to something of the nature of waste. But the Committee had to choose between alternative proposals, between this comparatively slight risk and the demonstrable administrative evil of inequality by the method of distribution proposed. The Government might have proposed, as had been pointed out, that the sum granted by way of relief should be an amount proportionate to the number of children in necessitous schools. They might have supplemented that by a definition in the Bill—he would not undertake the task, he would rather leave it to a better draftsman—of what a necessitous school is, and what were the criteria of necessity. The Government could not put that into an Act of Parliament, but they would give to associations throughout the country the determination of a question which, as a matter of drafting they could not solve for themselves. The Government might have adopted that plan, and he did not envy them the task, but if they had done so they would be in a logical and intelligible position. What was their position? A sum was to be distributed, the amount of which had no relation whatever to the number of children in necessitous schools, it was proposed to be arrived at by a process nobody had yet explained. The sum the Chancellor of the Exchequer could afford was arrived at by the number of the children in Voluntary Schools, and that sum was to be distributed among necessitous schools. But then the Government refused to give a definition of necessitous schools, and proposed to intrust to a perfectly irresponsible authority, an authority compulsorily constituted, the determination of what schools fell or did not fall within the category of schools to be relieved, the Educational Department having a superintending but absolutely illusory authority. If the Department exercised that authority in a practical and effective sense not only would it impose vast additional work—and the Department was already overladen, as they knew on the authority of the Vice President, and incapable of transacting the business it had at present—but by bringing inspectors and officials into contact with local jealousies and local rivalries with which they were unfitted to deal, there would be prejudiced that universal belief now prevailing in the impartiality of the Department. How did the matter stand? A sum of money was aggregated, not on the ground of necessity at all, and distributed among necessitous schools, there being no definition of necessitous, and the instrument of distribution was to be not the Education Department or an authority responsible to Parliament, but these associations, to be formed in some manner not yet defined, throughout the country. ["Hear!"] The noble Lord had defended the compulsory association, and he said managers would not go into association voluntarily, that it would not be in human nature to do so. He implied that human nature would not permit any clergyman or set of managers of any particular denominational school, being willing, voluntarily, to part with any of the amount that might come to them.

VISCOUNT CRANBORNE said he explained that trust deeds would stand in the way.

MR. ASQUITH said the noble Lord first argued on the broad ground of human nature, and his view of the matter was that managers of Voluntary Schools, if left to themselves, apart altogether from their trust deeds, would feel themselves so constrained to look exclusively to the interests of the schools with which they were connected, that even the important considerations of supporting denominational education would not induce them to give up a shilling of the grant to relieve the urgent needs of other schools. That being the noble Lord's idea, he recognised the necessity for compulsion. Human nature was to be coerced, and managers were to be forced to associate whether they desired to do so or not, at the risk of losing that which they honestly believed ought to be given to the schools with which they were connected. With that idea he did not agree, he took a broader, more elastic view of the conduct likely to be pursued. He recognised the probability of voluntary association among schools of the same denomination, and that there would be sufficient public spirit and zeal for education to bring about an amicable arrangement for distribution according to needs. On another point raised by the Amendment he invited explanation. The proposal in the Bill was bad from the point of view of the taxpayer, it was still worse from an educational point of view. What answer could be made to the argument urged by his right hon. Friend, that if this money was granted to exclusively necessitous schools it was putting forward a bribe or a premium to schools that had raised themselves above the level of the necessitous to reduce themselves to the category of those entitled to the relief? Take the case of the two schools side by side, one of which, by the strain of an excessive effort of generosity on the part of a not always rich but often very poor clergyman who had contributed out of his own means far in excess of what duty required, had been kept in a state of efficiency largely by the self-sacrifice and spontaneous zeal of the clergyman and a few supporters. That school was not inefficient, and it would not get a halfpenny. In the next parish, owing to the neglect of the clergyman and want of zeal on the part of the parishioners, there was a school which had been allowed to come into the category of an inefficient or necessitous school, and because of its inefficiency it was entitled to a share of this grant. How could they contend that where they had a state of things in which one of these schools was rewarded for its inefficiency and the other punished for its efficiency the effect of the Measure would not discourage educational zeal and lower the standard of the Voluntary Schools? ["Hear, hear!"] That was, to his mind, even a more important consideration than that which related to the point of view of the taxpayer, and on the ground that this was a most improvident and irresponsible surrender on the part of Parliament of the control over the expenditure of public money, and on the ground that it was putting a premium on educational inefficiency and want of zeal, he should heartily support the Amendment. [*Cheers.*]

Mr. C. A. CRIPPS (Gloucester, Stroud) remarked that there was one part of the right hon. Gentleman's argument with which he thoroughly agreed, and that was that the present Amendment was really a discussion of the most important portion of the Bill. But when the right hon. Gentleman put it on the one side as waste, and on the other as a system of inequitable distribution, he admitted the argument, so far as waste was concerned, but he thought the argument was easily answerable so far as an inequitable distribution was concerned. The reason why this portion of the Bill should be supported as an essential part of the Government's proposal was that it was so drawn as to insure, as far as possible, equitable distribution, and to maintain the control of Parliament, because he thought, upon this point, the right hon. Gentleman had misunderstood the provisions of the Bill itself. Before dealing with the proposal itself, there was one other argument to which he should like to refer, and that was what the right hon. Gentleman had called the education argument. He supposed so little public spirit in the managers of Voluntary Schools and so little zeal on their part in the interests of real education, that they would throw away funds and bring themselves to a condition of poverty in order—having brought themselves to that condition—that they might get some of this 5s. grant. He appealed to the right hon. Gentleman on what he called the argument applicable to human nature, was it in accordance with human nature that they should throw away money with one hand on the chance possibility of picking it up with the other, and were they to do that in the case of voluntary education, in which he, at any rate, gave credit to the voluntary managers for having at heart efficient religious education in this country? As to the proposal itself, it was of the very essence of the Bill that relief should be given by discrimination to necessitous schools. If they went outside the principle of helping schools which wanted help he thought there was much to be said, as had been argued by hon. Gentlemen on the opposite side, by treating all schools, whether Voluntary or Board Schools, in the same way, as regarded the Parliamentary grant. But if they were not going to do that—and that was not proposed to be done at the present moment—what was the only fair test they could make? It was, whether the schools were Voluntary or Board Schools, that Parliament was asked to come forward and help their necessities in order that the efficiency of education in their necessitous schools might be increased and advanced. If hon. Gentlemen succeeded in taking the word "necessitous" out of the Clause, they would then say that there was no principle as regarded the Government proposal for helping education at the present moment. They might have taken the principle of "necessitous" and applied it both to Board Schools and Voluntary Schools, but once take that word out and it appeared to him they had no sound argument for giving the grant to non-necessitous Voluntary Schools that would not equally apply to the giving of it to non-necessitous Board Schools, because the test, as he said, was the necessity of the additional money in order to insure in the case of the poor schools, whether Board or Voluntary, a more efficient system of education. The right hon. Gentleman opposite asked what was meant by a necessitous school? He thought the answer was easy enough. A necessitous school was one in which the funds, from whatever source derived, were insufficient to provide an efficient education, having regard to the cost of education so far as that particular school was concerned. If they took that definition, which was the only true one, then everyone who was in favour of enhancing the efficiency of education at the present time ought to vote for an increased Parliamentary grant, where the funds were insufficient for bringing about an efficient and adequate system of education. That was the real basis of the demand now made for the Voluntary Schools. It was not made for all Voluntary Schools, but for all necessitous Voluntary Schools, because in those cases, without they had further aid the interests of education might suffer. On the principle of discrimination he could not help thinking that the right hon. Member for Fife had not observed what the real proposals were. The association which it was proposed to set up had nothing to do, either with the local management, or with the question of local subscriptions. If it had he, for one, should be opposed to it, because he believed that if they set up by compulsion an association which superseded local management as regarded their Voluntary Schools they would do very much to injure the management itself, and certainly destroy a large number of voluntary subscriptions. The principle of association, however, had nothing to do with local management, it merely had to do with the distribution of the proposed 5s. grant. It was limited to that, and to that alone. Let him point to a second way in which the power of the association was limited. It was not accurate to say that this money was to be distributed by an irresponsible federation or association. It was to be distributed by the Education Department, and the only force of the association was that the Education Department might be advised by it in an admittedly difficult manner. The right hon. Gentleman said he objected to the Government proposal, because they were dealing with the taxpayers' money without retaining the control of Parliament. The answer was that the right hon. Gentleman had not appreciated the proposal. The whole responsibility as regarded the distribution was thrown upon the Education Department, who would be responsible in respect of this 5s. grant, just as they were at the present moment as regarded the sum of nearly 30s. a head distributed to Voluntary and Board Schools alike. Again, this had been described as a compulsory association. But the only compulsion was that in Sub-section (5), which was merely that the school must not refuse unreasonably, according to the opinion of the Education Department, to join one of these federations or associations. The true basis of it was that it was to be an association entered into for the purpose merely of distributing this 5s. grant, and the only risk that was run by the schools which did not join in it was lest they should lose the five shillings, supposing their conduct was held to be unreasonable. If they looked at the proposal from that point of view, he said the associations of the Bill ought to be most cordially supported as one of the most essential factors for making this great Government scheme of assisting Voluntary Schools of the greatest utility when the Bill was first passed and as regarded education in the future. The right hon. Gentleman had said they must not have waste. In order to secure that, they must have discrimination, and, as the right hon. Gentleman had said, Parliament must retain control. Parliament did retain control, because the fund was to be distributed by the Education Department. On the question of association he believed that a large number of Members would be agreed, when they appreciated what was really proposed by the Government, that it was no interference with local management, or the question of local subsriptions, but merely an association that might advise the Education Department to distribute this sum of five shillings in the most efficacious way for promoting the efficiency of education. When these points were understood, he thought the proposal of the Government ought to have the most cordial support of all who were really interested in the future of education, and he should certainly vote most heartily, and without any misgivings, against the Amendment.

Mr. J. H. YOXALL (Nottingham, W.) said that if a necessitous school was, as the hon. and learned Member for Stroud defined it, a school the income of which, from whatever cause, was insufficient to meet the claims upon it, then there were hundreds and thousands of such schools. Could a school be regarded as necessitous when a tithe was taken by the clergyman for rent? There were thousands of schools where, under good management, the sum received from the State would be ample if it were not "milked" in that way. As it was, such schools were now defined as necessitous. He believed that a year after the Bill was passed there would be two necessitous schools for every one that now existed. It had been suggested that Voluntary School managers might throw away local income to get more State income. It was a question of local contributors withholding local income. [*Cheers.*] A Tory squire and Churchman, and a great supporter of Voluntary Schools, had written to him saying he had conferred with other subscribers, and he assured him that what would happen would be that subscribers to Voluntary Schools not strictly necessitous would say, "Why should we go on subscribing when, if we withdraw our subscriptions, the maintenance of the schools will fall on the State?" If so, necessitous schools would multiply, and practically every Voluntary School in the country would become necessitous, and 5s. per head would have to be allotted all round. If it were provided that the withdrawal of existing subscriptions should prevent any claim for State aid under the Bill, the catastrophe might be averted, but they had no assurance that there would be any such safeguard. There were other modes of differentiation than those in the Bill. There might be differentiation of the grant between school and school, or the Education Department might have a sliding scale of grants, giving more per child the smaller the school, and less per child the larger the school. The differentiation proposed by the Bill was bad. It would reduce all schools to the same level, and 5s. per head would have to be given all round.

Lord EDMUND TALBOT (Sussex, Chichester) wished to correct the impression left by the speech of the right hon. Member for Rotherham (Mr. Acland) that Catholics did not favour the priciple of the association of schools. The Catholic Bishops recently issued a statement, signed by all of them, on this Bill, in which the following occurred:—

> "We welcome the proposal to establish associations that will secure an equitable grant in aid and promote the general advancement of public elementary education."

So that the Catholics of this country, headed by their Bishops, warmly approved of the principle of association contained in the Bill.

Mr. J. H. Yoxall.

Sir JAMES JOICEY (Durham, Chester-le-Street) contended that the definition given of necessitous schools would be of no use whatever to the associations to be formed under the Bill, and they would have as much difficulty as the Government in deciding what were necessitous schools. As to the Bill not interfering with local management, he thought the Bill would give the associations a large controlling influence. If a school did not comply with the desires of the association as regarded religious education it was quite possible the majority in the association would do all in their power to prevent it from getting any portion of the grant. Besides, this would undoubtedly tend to create a larger number of necessitous schools, which did not exist at the present time. He was a large contributor to Voluntary Schools—one of the largest in the House—and he regarded with some alarm the prospect of schools to which he largely subscribed not getting the 5s. to which they were entitled. Why, in many instances, were voluntary subscriptions given? Often to prevent the formation of Board Schools—[*cheers*]—the subscribers thinking Board Schools were more expensive. ["Hear, hear!"] Most of the subscribers, when they found the schools were not to have their share of the £620,000, would be inclined to say, "We will discontinue our subscriptions, and the result will be that a large number of the schools will be compelled to appeal to the Board Schools, or become Board Schools instead of Voluntary Schools." He defied anyone to give an accurate description of a necessitous school. The Bill in its present form would cause untold difficulties and quarrelling in various localities. It was impossible to put the task of deciding what were necessitous schools on the inspectors. They had work enough to do, and they were constantly getting into difficulty with the managers of the various schools, and if the powers proposed were put into their hands they would increase their difficulties. In his opinion, it was unwise to make it compulsory for every school to join an association. He could not see why a school, which had been maintained up to the present by voluntary subscriptions should not be entitled to this grant as well as any other which might not have been carried on efficiently, owing to a want of private funds. He hoped the hon. Member would press his Amendment to a division. If the Bill was passed, without some other means of distributing the money than the provision with regard to associations, it would give great dissatisfaction in the country, and he believed these schools would become Board Schools to a large extent.

*Mr. HENRY HOBHOUSE (Somerset, E.) said the discussion, which for the last two hours had been on the desirability of compulsory association, was quite foreign to the issue now before them. ["Hear, hear!"] There was nothing about associations in the sub-section they were discussing, or in the Amendment. With regard to the compulsory character of the association, they need not deal with that until they came to Sub-section (5) of this clause, when they would have had more time to make up their minds as to that very important, and, he must say, difficult question. He was somewhat surprised at the support which the Amendment had received from the front Opposition Bench. They were now told, and he believed for the first time from that Bench, that the desirable plan, if they gave the money at all, was to give it as a dole without any discrimination whatever. The inevitable effect of the Amendment would be, that this very large sum would be distributed equally per head among all schools, whether in the West End or the East End, whether in poor or wealthy districts, whether the schools were small or large, or were heavily endowed or not endowed at all. He submitted that they would make a very great mistake, both from a financial and an educational point of view, if they abandoned once for all any power of discrimination between necessitous and non-necessitous schools. ["Hear, hear!"] He believed there were various ways that might be adopted of devising machinery for reserving some power of discriminating between the amounts to be granted to various schools; but this was not the time to discuss that machinery. If they refused to give any power of discrimination to the Education Department or to any other authority, the inevitable result would be a great deal of waste. He should, without hesitation, vote against the Amendment.

Sir HENRY FOWLER (Wolverhampton, E.) said the hon. Member had declared himself a very strong advocate of discrimination, and had indicated that, at some future time, they should be better able to discuss the best mode of deciding that question. He had, however, thrown no light upon that scheme, although he had intimated the possibility that he might suggest another scheme. He ventured to think that now was the proper time to raise this question. If they could, by some certain and infallible process, ascertain what schools needed the money most it would, no doubt, be the wisest course to give those schools the money. But they had to take this scheme, with all the imperfections not only of human and clerical nature, but of House of Commons nature. They must necessarily see whether the machinery suggested by this Bill justified them in departing from what had been the uniform practice in distributing grants for education. A grant of money for education had in that House always been distributed either on the principle of capitation or because the merit and efficiency of a school entitled it to a grant. They had never, until the present occasion, raised the question of the income of the school or the income of those by whom the school was supported. The Bill, however, introduced a new principle—they were going to give public money to necessitous schools. Until that night they had never had a definition from the other side of "necessitous." The First Lord of the Treasury did not give them a definition; he told them that in the Act of 1870 there was a definition of necessitous schools, and that under Section 97 of that Act provision was made out of the public Exchequer for necessitous schools.

The FIRST LORD of the TREASURY said it was true that he referred to Section 97 of that Act, but he did so to remind the Committee that the contention first advanced by the Mover of this Amendment, and now repeated by the right hon. Gentleman, had really no foundation, and that Parliament had not gone on the principle of distributing a fixed grant apart from the necessities of the schools to which the grant was given.

SIR H. FOWLER apologised for misunderstanding the right hon. Gentleman, but pointed out that what Parliament did in 1870 was to recognise the necessitous school districts—["hear, hear!"]—not the necessitous schools. There was a vital distinction between the two. ["Hear, hear!"] When Mr. Forster inserted that clause into his Bill, his contemplation, and that of the Government of that day, was that the additional cost of education would be met by a 3d. rate. At that time the subscriptions of the voluntary subscribers represented about one-third of the cost of the school, the actual average being something over 7s. The clause was introduced in order that, where a rate of 3d. in the pound would not produce 7s. 6d. per head of all the children in the schools, the Government out of the grant were to make up the difference between the rate and the 7s. 6d. That was the definition, if he might so express it, of the Parliament of that day of a necessitous School Board district. They were not now dealing with the School Board districts, however, but with Voluntary Schools. The hon. Member for the Stroud Division said it was an essential part of this scheme that the money should be given to necessitous schools only. They joined issue upon that point. They contended that it was impossible to discriminate as to what was a necessitous school. They might say that there was a class of subscribers that were necessitous, or a class of subscribers that would not give what they ought to give—which he thought was the more general rule—["hear, hear!"]—and they might give the money to that class of subscribers, but that was not giving it to necessitous schools. An hon. Member just now defined a necessitous school as a school in which the funds were insufficient to defray the cost. But there was a question behind that—namely, why they were insufficient. ["Hear, hear!"] His hon. Friend the Member for Durham had told them of a wealthy coalowner who handsomely subscribed to the Voluntary School of the district for the economical motive of keeping out the School Board. Under the Bill that school was not a necessitous school, because there were sufficient funds to pay the expenses. But if there was a wealthy coalowner in the next parish who did not give anything to his school, that school was to be subsidised at the rate of 5s. per child in attendance. If that were so, it was probable that the first wealthy coalowner would drop his subscription to his school, which would then become necessitous, and would receive an extra grant under the Bill. [*Laughter and cheers.*] This was a question that he did not desire to approach in any controversial spirit. The House had determined that this £620,000 was to be given for the relief of Voluntary Schools, and the question now before them was whether the machinery of compulsory Associations was a preferable or even a practical mode of carrying out that desire. He should like to say in passing that he did not agree with the assumption that the Government were wrong in having admitted that there was a stronger case for urban schools as against rural schools. He agreed with the Government in that view. In towns where there were School Boards, there was a far greater pressure on the Voluntary Schools than on similar schools in the rural districts, where there were no School Boards. That question came to the front immediately they proceeded to deal with necessitous schools. What the managers of schools in all the large towns desired was to increase their expenditure in order to make the schools better, and he believed this 5s. per head would be as much wanted by the best Voluntary Schools in towns as it would be by the most impecunious Voluntary Schools in country districts. The hon. Member for Stroud had said that the object of forming the Associations was to insure the equitable distribution of the grant. Then why was that not set out in the Bill? The Government did not prescribe in the Bill the formation of the Associations. They had not sufficient confidence in the wisdom of the Associations to make the formation of the Associations compulsory. Their form was left entirely optional, and Associations thus constituted were to have practically the distribution of the money. And why? The Vice President of the Council had said that if the Department had the distribution of the money it would break down under the labour of deciding which schools were necessitous and which schools were not necessitous. It was, indeed, impossible that the Department could do it, and so they were reduced to this—that those irresponsible Associations would have the ultimate and final power of distributing this money. It was said that the Department would hear appeals. If that were so, he thought the Department would soon find appeals would be so numerous that it would be far better for them to undertake the distribution of the grant. Every school that would not get a grant would think itself injured and would therefore appeal. What was the objection of giving a grant all round? The new Associations would not be strong enough to say that a certain class of schools should have only 2s. per head and that another class should have 10s. per head. The managers of the schools would not submit to such discrimination. He thought, therefore, they were entitled to ask the Government frankly what they mean as to the constitution of those Associations. The Bill was vague and uncertain. It was an essay. It was a theory. The whole working part of it was left out of the Bill altogether. If the Government thought this a vital part of their scheme to which they intended to adhere, they must have made up their minds as to what the framework of these Associations was to be; what was to be their constitution; what was to be their powers: what responsibility they would have to Parliament; how Parliament was to exercise that responsibility; whether there was to be a general scheme of the Education Department to apply to all Associations and to be laid on the Table of the House for discussion. He thought that it would save time if, before they went any further into this Bill, the Government gave the Committee their views on this important question of the machinery for the distribution of the money.

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY said that the right hon. Gentleman opposite, with, he was sure, the best intentions, had recommended the Committee to make this the opportunity not merely for a general consideration of the machinery of the Bill as to the distribution of the money, but for a detailed consideration of the plan of the Government. In the observation he had already had the honour of making to the Committee, he had said that he would confine his remarks, as he did rigidly, to the consideration of the questions whether they ought to give this money according to the needs of the schools to whom it was to be given, or whether they should confine themselves to the grossly imperfect plan of giving 5s. per head all round. He still thought the Committee would have been well advised if they had followed the advice which he then gave them. But, of course, he recognised that it was strictly in order to this Amendment to ask whether the particular machinery the Government had proposed for the distribution of the money was good or was not good. But inasmuch as that point must be inevitably raised on later Amendments dealing with the associations, he would suggest, in the interest of the rapid discharge of business, the orderliness of Debates, and the avoidance of repetition, that they should as far as possible postpone till then all dealing with the details of the plan of the Government in regard to the Associations. He would not even criticise the phrase, so often inaccurately used, that these associations were to be compulsory. He would leave that until the time came to move Amendments practically raising that issue, and he would appeal to the Committee to bring this particular branch of the subject as to the distribution of the money to an early termination in order that they might come to the important questions that would, he admitted, have to be raised before they passed the three sub-sections of the clause. But he would deal with some of the points raised by hon. Gentlemen opposite. They had been told that they could not define necessitous schools, and that it was beyond the power of the draftsman to do so, and they were also told that the scheme of the Bill would involve injustice, and bring about a state of things approaching something like disorder. He confessed that these gloomy forebodings did not influence his judgment in the least. ["Hear, hear!"] On the other hand, he did not pretend that he looked forward with absolute foreknowledge to the future of those associations, or to the distribution of the grant. He admitted that undoubtedly the task that would be thrown on the associations would be one of some difficulty, and that it would demand on their part the exercise of public spirit and uncommon devotion to a common cause. ["Hear, hear!"] But, in the circumstances granted, was the task of discrimination one that it was impossible to accomplish fairly and justly? ["Hear, hear!"] He thought not. In his judgment, the framework of the Bill was so contrived that it would obviate the danger of assisting schools where the poverty was, as it were, self-made, and that it would not operate as the right hon. Member for Fife had stated, as an inducement to schools to make themselves "necessitous" in order to participate in the grant. ["Hear, hear!"] He was aware that some hon. Gentlemen opposite, apart altogether from any Party feeling, did look forward with some apprehension to the attempt about to be made in favour of discrimination between the schools. But, after all, was not the experiment worth making? ["Hear, hear!"] If the Committee agreed to the Amendment just as it was, they would give up for all time any hope of carrying out the plan proposed, and hon. Members must admit that that plan of accomplishing the object in view was the best that had been devised. ["Hear, hear!"] If, as he hoped, and firmly believed, the difficulties of the task were not beyond the patriotism and public spirit of the managers of the schools, nor beyond the administrative capacity of the Education Department, the advantage of retaining the Bill in its present form would be that there would be no squandering of the public money. [*Cheers.*] For those reasons he would earnestly press upon the Committee not to accept the Amendment, which would seriously mutilate a Measure that otherwise he sincerely believed would prove to be of incalculable benefit to education generally. ["Hear, hear!"]

MR. LLOYD-GEORGE (Carnarvon Boroughs) said the proof that the Government had no confidence in the public spirit of Voluntary School managers was shown by the fact that the managers were penalised by Sub-section (5) if they refused to enter the projected associations. In Section 97 of the Act of 1870 there was a distinct principle for ascertaining whether a district was necessitous. The district must be one in which a 3d. rate did not produce a certain amount. Again, in the Act of 1876, to which the Government was always referring, there was a principle laid down—the necessitous district was defined by a population limit. Where the population of a district within two miles of the school was less than 300, and there was no other public elementary school recognised by the Department, the Act provided that a special Parliamentary grant should be made to the school. But in this clause the Government were making a distinction on a principle entirely opposed to that of the Act of 1870 or of 1876. They were discriminating in favour of the towns as opposed to the country districts in favour of the districts of large rateable value and population, as against the districts of small rateable value and population. The noble Lord the Member for Rochester had said that if he were the manager of a Voluntary School, and the question were left to his discretion, he should not vote for any portion of the grant payable to his association being taken from his school to be given to a more necessitous school. The noble Lord said that he did not think it would be right to do so. And yet the noble Lord was going to support a Bill which would compel managers to do the very thing which the noble Lord thought it would be wrong for them to do.

SIR JAMES FERGUSSON (Manchester, N.E.) said that the hon. Member had referred to the case of Manchester as a town in which the subscriptions per scholar were not up to the average over the country. This was an argument which had been exposed over and over again. The explanation was that in Manchester a very much larger proportion of the population sent the children to Voluntary Schools, and where the subscriptions were low, the population was exceedingly poor.

MR. LLOYD-GEORGE pointed out to the Committee that there were eight schools in Manchester where the subscriptions were above the average, and that, under the Bill, they would suffer for the benefit of the others.

SIR J. FERGUSSON said that it was perfectly evident that only an authority well acquainted with the district would be qualified to judge of the best manner of distributing the grant.

MR. ALBERT SPICER (Monmouth Boroughs) said that the hon. and learned Member for Stroud and the First Lord of the Treasury had repeatedly insisted on the fact that these associations would have nothing to do with the local management of schools, but only with the distribution of the grant. Being a member of a Voluntary Church, he had had some experience of somewhat analogous conditions, and he was sure that the Government did not clearly apprehend what the effect of these associations would be. If there were to be discrimination between school and school, it was inevitable that sooner or later local management would be touched. Any association wishing to distribute the grant according to the necessities of its different schools must make inquiries to get at the facts. They would find all sorts of circumstances existing. For instance, they might find in one school district that a Broad Church squire refused to subscribe to the school because it was conducted on the principles of a High Church clergyman; and the association would be bound to refuse aid to any school which did not meet reasonable local requirements. The Government were discriminating from the wrong end. If they had admitted some principle of local control all might have been well. But this they had persistently refused.

Sir FRANCIS POWELL (Wigan) denied that the deputation of Lancashire Members, to whom reference had been made, were opposed to the principle of association. It would be unfair, he thought, to those who desired to see this Bill passed that such a statement should go without contradiction.

Mr. R. W. PERKS (Lincolnshire, Louth) hoped he was right in gathering from what the First Lord of the Treasury had said that the Government might not, at some later stage of the discussion, be indisposed to seriously consider the abandonment of the compulsory form of association of schools. As to the question of the aid grant, or, as some people called it, the 5s. dole, the scheme for discretionary distribution or favouritism, or picking and choosing between school and school, had been very carefully considered by the Committee who had charge of all the Wesleyan schools, and who had to consider the interests of something like 300,000 Wesleyan children in Anglican elementary schools. Although the Committee embraced some political supporters of the right hon. Gentleman, they came unanimously to the conclusion that there was no just and equitable method of differentiating between school and school. There was one point which did not seem to have occurred to the Leader of the House, and that was the view which the parents might take of this question. Some schools might receive out of the public funds 25s. or 26s. per head, while other schools might get 32s., 33s., 34s., or 35s. Was it not extremely probable that the parents of those children in the schools receiving the lesser amount, would seriously complain that less was being spent upon the education of their children, than upon those in the schools receiving larger sums. Already protests were being made against the scheme of federation, even by the managers of Voluntary Schools. The *Worcester Herald* had gone to the trouble of ascertaining the opinions of Voluntary School managers in and around Worcester, and it had been ascertained that no less than one-fourth of the managers in that district strongly repudiated the system of compulsory association. And leaders of opinion in the Church of England like the Bishop of Hereford, Canon Barker, and Archdeacon Wilson had joined in repudiating this portion of the Bill. He wished that at some later stage of the discussion the Government would announce that this cumbrous and unnecessary machinery would be dropped.

Mr. COURTENAY WARNER (Staffordshire, Lichfield) said that the system of federation was impossible in practice. The First Lord of the Treasury had spoken about some virtuous individual who would see to the interests of the schools, but that individual would not be able to vote against his own school getting a large grant, however rich that school was. There was nothing to show which school was to get large help and which school was to get small help, and the result must be that every member of an association would be pledged to do all he could to benefit his own school.

The FIRST LORD of the TREASURY claimed to move, "That the Question be now put."

Question put, "That the Question be now put."

The Committee divided: Ayes, 224; Noes, 90.—(Division List, No. 69.)

Question put accordingly, "That the words 'to such Voluntary Schools' stand part of the Clause."

The Committee divided:—Ayes, 228; Noes, 88.—(Division List, No. 70.)

On the return of the CHAIRMAN of WAYS and MEANS, after the usual interval,

*SIR JAMES WOODHOUSE (Huddersfield) moved, in Sub-section (2), to leave out all the words after "schools," to the end of the sub-section, and to insert

"in accordance with regulations which will insure that it shall be applied—

"(*a*) in improving the teaching staff as regards number, qualification, or salary; and so far as it is not in the opinion of the Education Department required for that purpose—

"(*b*) in the payment of the teaching staff, the provision of special teachers whether on the permanent staff or not, and in the improvement of the eduaction of pupil teachers; and

"(*c*) in the improvement of the educational fittings and apparatus of the school, and in otherwise increasing its efficiency."

He said that the sub-section of the Bill now under consideration dealt with the distribution of the grant, and he was encouraged to move the Amendment by the fact that, in the only speech which the Vice President of the Council had delivered on the Bill, the right hon. Gentleman used these remarkable words:—

"I am quite certain that any Amendment which merely goes to secure that this State-aid grant shall be used merely for the purpose of promoting and improving the education of the country will be welcomed by the Government."

It was true that the right hon. Gentleman spoke, as he said, in the absence of the First Lord of the Treasury, but he could not doubt that, when he used those words, he not only spoke the mind of the Education Department, but really represented the collective wisdom of the Government. This grant might be applied in one of three ways. In the first place, it might be applied in promoting educational efficiency; in the second place, it might be applied in relieving voluntary subscribers; and in the third place, it might be wasted altogether. The last course was not at all an improbable one, and constituted a real danger, as was evidenced by what the Duke of Devonshire said when he received a deputation of Church dignitaries in November 1895. On that occasion the Lord President said:—

"another objection to the increase of the grant is that in some cases it does not appear to be needed, and would therefore involve a very considerable waste of public money."

That contention had been put forward on more than one occasion by those on his side of the House; and he was glad to have the high authority of the Lord President of the Council that that was a danger which ought to be specially guarded against. He wanted to see these provisions in the statute itself. It was a precaution which the Government felt in providing for the application of a lesser grant last year. No one had made more clear than the Duke of Devonshire and the Vice President the necessity of a provision of this character. The Duke of Devonshire said:—

"It seems to me there is a real danger unless any increase of a fixed grant should be guarded very carefully; it is rather difficult to see how any increase would be used for the purpose which you desire—the placing of Voluntary and Board Schools on an equal footing."

He was referring to the contention that the Church was unable to continue the expense of keeping the Voluntary Schools in an efficient state, because of the competition and the inequality which existed between Voluntary and Board Schools. A no less remarkable declaration was made by the Vice President in November last, when he said:—

"Unless effective precautions were taken a grant would do little to relieve the financial difficulties of managers; it would be swallowed up in relieving subscribers, and there would be nothing left for managers to spend on the schools."

It was in consequence of these declarations that he invited the Committee to put into the Bill what one of the Education Ministers called "careful safeguards," and what the other called "effective precautions," against any misapplication of the money to other purposes than the promotion of educational efficiency. During the last few weeks two very important bodies had been considering this subject, both strongly representing the interests and necessities of Voluntary Schools—the Northern Association of Voluntary Schools and the Northern House of Convocation. Both of these bodies pressed for the deletion of certain words in the sub-section; what were they? The words were, "Due regard being had to voluntary subscriptions." Why was this asked? Was it because they thought that, by retaining them, educational efficiency would be promoted? No; they could only surmise that the reason for the deletion of the words being asked was a fear that the money could not be applied to the relief of voluntary subscriptions. The Dean of Manchester said that he wanted the words "due regard" deleted—

*THE CHAIRMAN OF WAYS AND MEANS: I do not exactly see how the question of voluntary subscriptions arises on the Amendment of the hon. Member.

SIR J. WOODHOUSE said his point was this: If the money was not applied as he proposed—namely, to educational efficiency—it would be applied to the relief of voluntary subscriptions.

*THE CHAIRMAN OF WAYS AND MEANS: The question of "due regard" is one which can be debated at a later stage. It is obviously inconvenient to debate it now, because the Amendment raises a totally different question.

*SIR J. WOODHOUSE said a grave suspicion was raised in their minds that unless this money was protected in the Bill by express statutory provisions it would go to relieve voluntary subscriptions. Those safeguards, therefore, ought to be introduced in the Bill. What was the ground on which the Ecclesiastical authorities had asked for this grant? The Archbishop of Canterbury said that the necessity for it had arisen on two grounds, (1) because of the competition of the Board Schools; and (2) because of the insufficient staffing and teaching in the Voluntary Schools. He complained that the School Board spent too much on buildings, and that they spent too much on salaries—an argument which came very badly from a former head master of one of their public schools in receipt of a very large salary. He also read a letter from a teacher of a very important Voluntary School, who complained of the School Board competition, and said:—

> "We are better off than most Voluntary Schools, for although we get nothing from voluntary subscriptions, we receive 15s. per head in school fees. Voluntary Schools will never compare favourably with School Boards until they are similarly staffed. I have not one trained certificated assistant; my rivals have nothing else. When my ex-pupil teachers gain their certificates their ambition is to get into a Board School, and my pupil teachers do the same."

That was the case placed by Dr. Temple before the Government as the reason why they should have this additional aid, and he now asked the Government to embody in this Bill that which would insure that the money should be applied for the purposes and on the grounds upon which it was asked by that deputation which waited upon the Lord President and Lord Salisbury. Upon the question of the comparative efficiency of Board Schools and Voluntary Schools, the Royal Commission came to this conclusion:—

> "There is no doubt that, if the results of Government inspectors are a fair test of the efficiency of schools, the Board Schools are much more efficient than the Voluntary Schools."

The statistics showed that that was true in a remarkable degree. Take, for instance, the proportions of certificated teachers. In Board Schools every head master was not only a certificated teacher, but 53 per cent. of the teachers and assistant teachers were certificated, against only 21 per cent. in Voluntary Schools. Then there was the question of discipline and organisation. The highest grant was awarded by the Department as a measure of the efficiency of the school as a whole, and 88 per cent. of that was obtained in Board Schools, and only 75 per cent. in Voluntary Schools. Again, if they took accuracy of knowledge and general intelligence, which was the basis on which the principal grant was awarded, the two systems yielded this result: 67 per cent. in Board Schools, and 40 per cent. in Voluntary Schools. Then as to the training and education of pupil teachers. The test of relative efficiency was the proportion of student teachers who obtained first-class certificates, and in that the proportion for Board Schools was 20 per cent. and in Voluntary Schools it was only 9 per cent. He was anxious that this money should be applied to more adequately remunerating the teachers, to increasing their number, and to increasing their efficiency, by getting more certificated teachers, and in that way to the improvement of the standard of education throughout the country, which should be the great object of that House in awarding money for educational purposes. That this question of the salary of teachers was a very important one was made clear by the memorial of the Voluntary teachers themselves. They said:—

> "The average salary of head teachers in Voluntary Schools is very much less than that of head teachers in Board Schools. In the case of masters it is 34 per cent., and in that of mistresses 58 per cent., while the salaries of certificated assistant teachers in the two classes of schools show even a greater disparity, the masters receiving 46 per cent. less and the mistresses 62 per cent. less than assistant teachers in Board Schools, whose duties and responsibilities are of precisely the same character."

With that remarkable statement before them could the Committee doubt the wisdom and the necessity of laying down in that Bill the direction that the money was applied to equalise that great disparity? The Royal Commission said:—

> "The most important subject of our inquiry, that which lies at the root of all educational progress, is the quality of the teaching and the character of the teacher. We owe a duty to him and to the children to secure that their work shall be done with no external hindrances, with the best appliances, and with well adapted premises. But after all the most important factor in the success of the school is the teacher."

He wanted this money applied to the removal of those hindrances, to obtaining the best appliances, and to securing those well adapted premises which the Royal Commission said were so essential for the success of their educational progress in this country. In putting forward this argument he was but stating in much more imperfect language what was stated by the Vice President himself in the only speech with which he had honoured them during the consideration of this Bill. He was quite sure if the Government accepted this Amendment it would be appreciated in the country irrespective of Party, because it would convince the country that the Government were serious in their desire that this money should be applied in a proper manner.

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY said the hon. Member had referred to a statement made by his right hon. Friend the Vice President that the Government would be willing to accept any Amendment which would have for its result the improvement of education in the Voluntary Schools. He entirely agreed with that. He also agreed that there was no difference as to the object they had in this particular matter. The only question between them was whether the Bill would be improved by the words proposed by the hon. Member. He presumed the hon. Member considered it an alternative proposal.

SIR J. WOODHOUSE said the words he proposed were the same as in the Bill of last year.

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY did not deny that the hon. Member's account of what efficiency consisted of was a very fair account, but he failed to see that the words in the Bill would not carry out all that the hon. Member desired to achieve. He did not think that it was necessary to enumerate what efficiency consisted of. The hon. Member in his Amendment did enumerate the elements of efficiency as they occurred to his mind, but he still had a fear, and he swept up the unknown by introducing the words, "and in otherwise increasing efficiency." The last words of his Amendment, therefore, included everything that he set out at length in the first lines of the Amendment. The Government believed that they attained the same end by the phrase in the Bill.

MR. SYDNEY BUXTON (Tower Hamlets, Poplar) said they were dealing simply with the best way in which the money could be applied. As regarded the obligation, there was no difference of opinion between them—it was simply a question as to the best way in which the idea could be expressed. His hon. Friend thought that specific words should be put in with a specific purpose. They were this year dealing with a larger sum than last year, and there was practically no control at all, and they now found the Government unwilling to accept words which they themselves proposed last year. What they wanted was to be clear on two points. They wanted to be quite certain that none of this money goes into the pockets of subscribers; and, secondly, they wanted to be assured that the money should really go to increasing the efficiency of Voluntary Schools. They knew quite well, as had already been pointed out over and over again, that the Bill as it stood gave such vague directions that there would be the greatest difficulty in seeing that this money was properly applied. They wanted the Department to take the question of subscriptions into account. They had a great suspicion, they had great doubts, they had fears, that in dealing with these schools the increased grant would, directly or indirectly, lead to the diminution of subscriptions. They were therefore especially interested at that moment, not in putting into the Bill vague and unmeaning words, which gave them no guarantee that this £620,000 would go to promote efficiency; they wanted to make sure that the money would be applied to the improvement in the teaching of these schools. Everyone who knew anything about elementary education, everyone who was in any way concerned with the voluntary system, knew quite well the weak spot and where the strain was greatest. That weak spot was with regard to the teaching. They knew that the teachers were underpaid and overworked. ["Hear, hear!"] The strain was not so much upon the managers, but upon the teachers. It was to that point that relief ought to go. If they wanted to assure that the money should go to the promoting of efficiency—and efficiency was really in question—why should they not state it specifically? He felt bound to say that he could not follow the right hon. Gentleman the Leader of the House in his argument that the words of the Bill were clearer than the Bill of last year. They wanted the teaching class improved, and they wanted the condition of the teachers improved. They were not opposing the amount of money to be given, or whether it was applied to certain schools or all round; they wanted the weak spot dealt with and the teaching improved. They knew very well that the strain was on the teachers, and the strain was greater than it was in Board Schools.

*MR. WALTER HAZELL (Leicester) observed that the Amendment would make more clear the object which the Government said they had in their mind. If any form of words could be adopted which would make it more sure that this grant would go towards the provision of more efficient education and further appliances, a higher paid and a larger staff, then, he thought, much good would be done. There was one point he should like to refer to. Most hon. Members were aware of the scope of the Fair Wages Resolution of the House. Were they not at the present time sanctioning an anomaly? Here is a body of men who were carrying on their work under the control of a Government Department, and with money which, in the case of Voluntary Schools, was mainly provided by Parliament, and in the case of Board Schools largely by Parliament, and merely by the accident of their being in Voluntary Schools instead of Board Schools, their salaries were much lower. It was most undesirable that public servants should be coming before Parliament with claims for higher salaries oftener than could be avoided. He would ask the House whether, in face of the Fair Wages Resolution, it was not stultifying itself by permitting a system to continue a day longer than was necessary, by which two groups of public servants, with the same qualifications, performing the same duties, and both equally efficient, should be paid on an arbitrarily different scale of emolument. Believing that this Amendment would help to raise the salaries in Voluntary Schools, he cordially supported it.

MR. REGINALD McKENNA (Monmouth, N.) hoped the right hon. Gentleman would reconsider his determination not to accept the Amendment, which really served a most admirable purpose. It indicated to the associations what was the meaning of this extra grant. It was not to be used in defraying the ordinary expenditure of the school, but in meeting the increased expenditure which had been incurred by improving the teaching staff. That was to say, the money was not to be spent merely upon maintaining the existing staff, apparatus, and requirements of the school, but exclusively for the purpose of improving the efficiency of the school. There was a further reason for the acceptance of the Amendment. If hon. Members would turn to Sub-section (4) of the clause they would find that the associations were to prepare schemes which were to be sanctioned by the Department before the money allotted to them would be distributed by the Education Department. The Committee of Council on Education had, through the Vice President, expressed their opinion as to what the schemes should be. The right hon. Gentleman stated on the Second Reading of the Bill, that

> "The scheme will not only have to indicate the amount of public money to be allotted to each of the constituent schools, but it will also have to prescribe the purposes for which the money so allotted shall be used by the schools."

That was to say, the scheme put forward by the association would have to embody such terms as those presented in the Amendment. Was it not the most reasonable thing in the world that the Committee should suggest, by introducing this Amendment, the terms of the scheme and the idea of Parliament as to what the basis of the action of the association should be? It ought to be made clear that it was for the very objects embodied in the Bill of the right hon. Gentleman of last year that this money was specially demanded, and for those objects alone. For these reasons he supported the Amendment.

Mr. ALFRED HUTTON (York, W.R., Morley) remarked that up to the present it had been illegal for the managers of schools to devote public moneys of this character to the payment of debts which had been incurred in the erection of permanent buildings, or in connection with the carrying on of the schools. According to the present Bill, however, it would be perfectly legitimate for an association to use money for the purpose of repairing or adding to existing buildings. This was an exceedingly important matter, and it seemed to him that the money granted by this Bill might be used in the same way as that in which, in some cases, the 10s. fee grant had been used, because the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Dartford (Sir William Hart Dyke), who had been responsible for the Education Department in that House, had admitted that the money received under the Fee Grant Act 1891, had been used for the particular purpose of paying off debts previously incurred. Diocesan associations existed at the present time, and he had no doubt the Diocesan Board would look for the money to be obtained from this Bill to enable them to pay debts they had already incurred in the maintenance and repair of existing buildings for which they had made themselves responsible. The Government ought to take some precautions to prevent such an allocation of public money. ["Hear, hear!"] He thought the Leader of the House had too much confidence in the ability of the associations to put the money to the right uses, but if this Amendment were accepted it would give an assurance not merely to the Committee but to the country at large that the money would be used for the purpose for which Parliament intended it. The noble Lord the Member for Rochester (Viscount Cranborne) had said that the chief strain at the present time was upon the teaching—the difficulty being to provide adequate salaries in order to attach efficient teachers to the Voluntary Schools. If that was the case, what objection could there be on the part of the noble Lord or of the Government to give, at any rate, some directions to the associations that they might allocate the money to such an object. He was convinced that if the Government would accept this or some similar Amendment, which would not absolutely limit the allocation of the money to the narrowest possible channel, but would give the association some indication of the purpose the House of Commons had in granting this money, they would be giving considerable satisfaction to the House and to the country. [*Opposition cheers.*] It was a serious matter that this huge sum of public money should be left so largely in the discretion of irresponsible bodies. There might have been some excuse for leaving the matter open if these bodies had been of a responsible character, but being of an irresponsible character there was a fear that they might not use the money as it ought to be used. The Government would render the cause of Education and even Voluntary Schools a great service if they would give some indication of how this money was to be spent for the benefit of education and of the schools they desired should be supported by this Bill. [*Opposition cheers.*]

*Mr. CHARLES HARRISON (Plymouth) pointed out that the words of the Amendment were identical with those used in the Bill of the Government of last year. Inefficiency arose undoubtedly and admittedly from an inefficient teaching staff. The Bill of 1896 specified that the first item of application of the money for curing the inefficiency should be by its application to improving the teaching staff as regards the qualification or salary. Those objects had priority over all others, and the Bill of 1896 provided, so far as the fund might not be required for that particular purpose, then it should be applied in the order set out in the present Amendment for remedying the deficiencies in the school by applying the balance generally in payment of the teaching staff, the provision of special teachers, whether on the permanent staff or not—an object which would not fall within the provisions of the clause as now drafted—the improved education of pupil teachers, and the improvement of the educational fittings and apparatus of the school, and it was only by the 5th Sub-section in the Bill of 1896 provided that the surplus which remained, if any, should alone be applied by the Education authority at their discretion. Until these objects had been fulfilled, no general discretion arose as to the application of the money. Its application embraced objects beyond the words mentioned in the present Bill, and as the grant in aid allotted to a particular school under the scheme of the Bill might not be in fact sufficient, it was essential that the order of application should be laid down by the statute. This was effected by adopting the terms of the Amendment, the language of which and the objects of which were more extensive and were not the same as those intrusted to the Department under the words in the present Bill. If this Amendment were accepted, the money could not be applied to any other purpose whatsoever. But under the words of the present Bill, which were "increasing their efficiency," no order of priority was given by which the money might be applied for any one or other of the numerous causes which made the particular inefficiency, and the object of the Amendment was to say that, having regard to the inefficiency, they should cure that inefficiency, first by applying the grant to the improvement of the teaching staff, and then to the other objects mentioned in the Amendment. For these reasons he strongly supported the Amendment.

MR. A. J. MUNDELLA (Sheffield, Brightside) said this was one of the most important Amendments which had been submitted to the Committee, and it was one which he should have thought would have been welcomed on the opposite side of the House. Throughout the country the supporters of the Bill had proclaimed that their sole object was to improve the efficiency of the Voluntary Schools, and everyone of them when he addressed his constituents would say that that was the object of the Bill.

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY: To relieve the intolerable strain.

MR. MUNDELLA: Had the right hon. Gentleman no ulterior object in mind when he spoke of the intolerable strain? About this time last year they had under discussion a Bill introduced by the Vice President of the Council, and which he declared had for its object the efficiency of all the schools. He specially pointed out that the grant of 4s. per head was earmarked for the purpose. How was it earmarked? In the very words of the Amendment. [*Cheers.*] The First Lord of the Treasury knew how important it was to specify in the Bill in what respect it was intended to improve the efficiency of the schools, and that the first condition of efficiency was that there should be efficient teachers. When the Government set out in a clear, lucid, and specific manner in the Bill of last year the requirements of the schools, why did they content themselves with the mere expression of a pious opinion this year? Why did the Government object to the words of the Amendment?

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY: Because they were surplusage.

MR. MUNDELLA: Were they surplusage last year? No one but the right hon. Gentleman would say so, and if he could spend a week in the Education Department he would not say they were surplusage. Efficiency was the *crux* of the whole question, and it depended on the efficiency and sufficiency of the teaching staff in elementary schools. On the Second Reading of the Bill of last year they were promised by the Vice President of the Council that "any Amendment which really goes to secure that this State aid grant shall be used for the purpose of promoting and improving the education of the country will be welcomed by the Government." They now welcomed such Amendments by a conspiracy of silence. [*Cheers and counter cheers.*] We had arrived at a period of the 19th century when, if anything was required in the British House of Commons, it was that it should spare no effort and no money to raise the character of the education of the country. Nothing was so vital to the public interest of this country or its future productiveness and prosperity as improved schools, and the very key to improvement was an improved teaching staff. The right hon. Gentleman had ridiculed the words of the Amendment as surplusage. That was treating the matter with levity. [*Cheers.*] It seemed that the House of Commons no longer existed for debate and deliberation, but merely to register the *fiat* of a Minister. They were not permitted to make any improvements in this Bill; so far from Amendments being welcomed they were rejected with almost silent contempt. ["Hear, hear!" *and cries of* "No."] It would be the duty of those who sat on that side of the House, and it would be his duty as one who supported Mr. Forster in carrying the Act of 1870 through the House, to let the world know, and to let his countrymen know—[*ironical cheers*]—that the compromise had been broken, and that that valuable Measure had been injured and all but destroyed by the action of the Government. They would also expose to the country what they were not allowed to discuss in that House.

[At the conclusion of the right hon. Gentleman's speech, there were Opposition cries of "Gorst."]

*MR. HOBHOUSE thought his right hon. Friend had been a little hard upon them on that side of the House. There was surely no question of breaking the compromise of the Act of 1870. Many of them had exactly the same object in view on that subject as the right hon. Gentleman had. He desired that this money should go to increase the efficiency of the schools. It was really a question of words—whether the words should be more general or more specific. If the exact words proposed by the hon. Member were here inserted, it would make this sub-section a very bad specimen of drafting. [Mr. MUNDELLA: "Government drafting."] He quite admitted there would be some advantage in specifying the particular objects, and if that could be done by the addition of a few words in a later sub-section he should have no objection to it, although he did not think that in the interests of education it was at all necessary. It was perfectly well known both to officers of the Education Department and to managers of Voluntary Schools and their representatives on the Boards of Association in what the efficiency of a school consisted. It consisted, in the first place, in the efficiency of the teachers, and they could not get good teachers without paying them a fair salary. The Inspectors of the Department would no doubt have the power when they went round to audit the accounts of seeing that the money had been actually applied to the proper purposes. The Government had not altered their opinion as to the objects to which this money was to be applied, but they could hardly be blamed, after their recent experience, for having chosen that form of words which would provoke the least discussion.

*MR. CARVELL WILLIAMS (Notts, Mansfield) said the Amendment was opposed on miserably inadequate grounds. He believed these words would strengthen the Education Department, which was constantly engaged in struggles with local authorities, in order to secure efficiency in the schools. Perhaps the hon. Member who had just sat down did not know the difficulties which the Inspectors sometimes had in presenting honest and honourable reports. The requirements of the Education Department in regard to buildings, fittings, and appliances were the constant subject of complaint by the managers of the schools. When this Bill was passed the Department would be entitled to be even more exacting in the future than it had been in the past. By the insertion of the words in the Amendment they could so strengthen the Education Department that it would have clear statutory authority for the requirements it would make, which would render the future course of the Department more easy. The hon. Member for Huddersfield had made out an unanswerable case in support of the contention that the Voluntary Schools as a general rule were inferior to the Board Schools. The candid friends of the Voluntary Schools admitted that. They say, "Let us put funds at the command of the managers, and they will show that their schools can be made as good as the Board Schools." The Amendment would take those gentlemen at their word, and it would give to the Education Department the right to require from the managers of the Voluntary Schools evidence that their teaching was efficient. He was sure no friend of education would regret the insertion of the Amendment.

He was also sure that many real friends of education would deeply regret that the Government had refused to accept it.

MR. YOXALL said the objection of the First Lord of the Treasury to the Amendment was that it was lengthy, verbose, and expressed its object in a roundabout way. The hon. Member for Somerset had said that if short form of words were proposed he must support it. He, therefore, asked the First Lord whether, as both sides were anxious that the money should be spent for the improvement of the teaching staffs, he would agree to insert after "increasing their efficiency," the words "particularly by improving the number, qualification, and remuneration of the teaching staffs." That form of words was short and unmistakeable, and met all the objections of the First Lord. Without the insertion of some such words they would have no security that the money would be spent to increase the efficiency of the Voluntary Schools. What was the condition at the present moment of the teaching staffs of the Voluntary Schools? In thousands of those schools throughout the country there was only one adult teacher and he had usually to teach twelve different subjects in six or seven different classes. He had often asked the teachers of such schools what they would do if they had an additional revenue of £40 a year, and the answer invariably was that they would get an additional teacher. There were some 12,000 teachers in the Voluntary Schools who had no academic qualification; no certificate of professional efficiency, except that they were 18 years of age, and the inspectors allowed them to teach. There were probably 20,000 teachers in the Voluntary Schools who were little more than children. In fact, the Voluntary Schools were largely worked by child labour—youths of 15 or 16 years of age, who taught all day and studied all night. There were 25,600 certificated teachers in the Voluntary Schools. Of those only 698 had salaries of £200 a year; 11,759 got less than £75; 2,006 got less than £50; 1,096 got less than £45; and 367 got less than £40. The houses of many of those teachers had only four rooms—

*THE CHAIRMAN OF WAYS AND MEANS: Order, order! I do not think that that comes within the scope of this Amendment.

MR. YOXALL said he would not press that point further. He would only urge in conclusion that if they wanted to make the teaching in the Voluntary Schools more efficient they would have to improve the condition of the teachers.

*MR. H. C. F. LUTTRELL (Devon, Tavistock) said that if the real object of the Bill was to improve education by the efficiency of the schools, rather than to bring the Voluntary Schools into competition with the Board Schools, he could not see why the Government should hesitate to accept the Amendment, which was proposed for the only purpose of improving the teaching staff and raising the character of the school. ["Hear, hear!"] The only objection they had heard from the other side against the Amendment came from the right hon. Gentleman the Leader of the House, who contended that it was a surplusage. Hon. Members who supported it, however, were of a contrary opinion. The Bill had many faults, but no one could accuse it of being too lengthy—then why this undue care about printers' ink? By contending that the Amendment was a surplus Amendment the Government practically admitted that their Bill was a surplice Bill, and if that were so its effect would be only to assist parsons, Bishops, members of the Church of England. [*Loud Ministerial cries of dissent.*] Well, he would not say members of the Church of England alone, but of religious denominations, and he urged that education should not be made in any way a matter of religious denomination. Unless the Amendment, or some other Amendment to the same effect, was passed, the operation of the Bill would be to assist the religious denominations through giving to the projected associations, which would be largely influenced by denominational opinions, the opportunity of framing what arrangements they pleased. If they wished to have the children of the country well taught, they must have good teachers. On the grounds he had stated he strongly supported the Amendment. ["Hear, hear!"]

MR. BARTLEY thought the Committee had been engaged for two hours in discussing a matter which involved merely a difference between "tweedle-dee and tweedle-dum." [*Cries of* "Oh, oh!" *and laughter.*] The words in the Bill were such as the Education Department thought best for the purpose of helping the necessitous schools, and at the same time of increasing their efficiency. The matter came within charge of the Department, and it must be acknowledged that hitherto they had acted impartially—["hear, hear!"]—and knew, at least as much as hon. Members opposite, what were the best means of promoting the efficiency of the schools. ["Hear, hear!"] He thought it would be much better if the Committee passed on to the consideration of some more substantial Amendment, and left a matter of comparative detail of this kind to the Education Department. ["Hear, hear!"]

SIR H. FOWLER said there was a great difference between the statements of the Government last year and this year as to what they regarded as essential for the improvement and efficiency of education in the schools. Last year, in justifying the grant of 4s. per head, they promised over and over again that the money was to be applied exclusively for the improvement of education. ["Hear, hear!"] That was said in the House; but what was said out of doors? In shoals of letters to certain papers grave dissatisfaction was expressed with the Government because no relief was offered to the schools. What those people wanted was not an increase of educational efficiency, but an increase of relief to the schools. [*Cheers.*] The Government had brought in a short Bill, as they said, and it was urged that the matter was only a question of drafting. It was not a question of drafting; it was a question of meaning. [*Cheers.*] The keynote of last year's Bill had been left out, and general words had been inserted in this Bill which might mean anything or nothing. Nobody had justified this alteration of the action of the Government. The hon. Member for Nottingham had suggested a much shorter form of words, which conveyed, though not so fully, the meaning of the provision of the Bill of last year, but the Government would have none of that. Let the Committee distinctly understand what they were going to vote upon. The Opposition were voting for this money to be spent in the improvement of the teaching staff, and in improving the efficiency of the schools. [*Cheers.*] Those who supported the Government would be voting against those objects. [*Cheers.*]

Mr. Bartley.

THE VICE PRESIDENT OF THE COUNCIL (Sir JOHN GORST, Cambridge University), who was received with Ministerial cheers and loud ironical cheers from the Opposition Benches, said that he had risen to put the right hon. Gentleman right on a matter of fact—[*laughter*]—and to save him from making an unintentional misrepresentation. In the Bill of last year, it was quite true, the purposes for which the special aid grant was to be spent were specifically set out. But last year the distribution of the specific aid grant was intrusted, not to the Education Department, but to a new education authority which was created by the Bill, and which had no previous educational experience. [*Opposition cheers and laughter.*] Such an authority would have stood much in need of Parliamentary guidance. [*Opposition cheers and laughter.*] But in the Bill of this year the distribution of the special aid grant was intrusted, not to a new education authority, but to a very old and experienced education authority—the Committee of Council. [*Opposition cheers and laughter.*] Therefore this year the Bill very rightly laid down in general terms that the grant was to be distributed by the Education Department in such a manner as the Department thought best for increasing the efficiency of the schools. [*Cheers and cries of* "No!"] He supposed that there was no authority in the country which was better fitted to judge of the due order in which the various methods of expenditure should be placed—to say in one particular case that the payment of the teachers should come first and that in another case the provision of apparatus should come first. He thought that the Committee and the Government might properly, in a matter of that kind, having given a direction that the money was to be spent in increasing the efficiency of the schools, leave the particular manner in which it was to be spent to the discretion of the Education Department. [*Cheers.*]

*MR. ROBERT CAMERON (Durham, Houghton-le-Spring) said that he was glad to find that on this Amendment, which was by far the most important on the Paper, both sides were in practical agreement on principles, though differing in details. The phrase "for increasing the efficiency of the schools" was a very general and vague phrase, which might cover much or little. He wished to see it converted into definite propositions. Only last week the Secretary of the Voluntary School Teachers' Association in his neighbourhood waited on him to urge that the main part of this money should be earmarked for the teachers' salaries and the providing of school apparatus. They feared that the money would be devoted to other purposes. He had had nine years' experience as Chairman of one of the largest School Boards in the country; and he had noted that when that Board advertised for teachers they received scores of applications from the masters of Voluntary Schools. He often asked them privately why they wished to make the change, and their answer was that under a School Board they were freer, had better pay, and better security for the future. The Bill should contain specific provisions for securing efficiency, and efficiency meant, as well as good management, well-trained and well-paid teachers, with an assured and independent position. Without those conditions the profession of the schoolmaster would never rank as it was worthy to rank. The country had spent millions on education, and had a right to see that value was given to it for this additional grant.

MR. ACLAND said the Vice President of the Council, whose intervention in the discussion in Committee for the first time they welcomed—[HON. MEMBERS: "No, the second time"]—he had previously only made a remark and not a speech—stated that the reason why the words of last year defining the object for which this grant should be given were not now needed was that the bodies who were to do the work under the Bill required less guidance than the authorities contemplated by the Measure of last year. Let him read one or two words of the Bill which came a little after those the right hon. Gentleman read, because they bore on the local authorities of this year:—

> "The share so allotted to each association shall be distributed as aforesaid by the Education Department after consulting the governing body of the association."

What were the instructions which the governing body of the association were to follow? What were they to do when they considered the recommendations which they were about to make to the Education Department as to the distribution of the grant? What was the guidance which the Bill gave them as to the particular direction in which this grant was to be given? They were to distribute the grant "as aforesaid." Why should not the words "as aforesaid" guide this new body, which required as much guidance as the authority under the Bill of last year—["hear, hear!"]—perhaps more—[*cheers*]—which would be as new to this kind of work as the County Councils; why should they not find, when they looked upwards in the Bill from the words "as aforesaid," the detailed words of last year's Bill, telling them what their duties really were? It seemed to him that if the Vice President's words carried force they had a much stronger application to the Amendment as it was laid before the Committee now than they could have had last year. ["Hear, hear!"]

MR. HAROLD RECKITT (Lincolnshire, Brigg) asked the Committee for that indulgence which was always extended to a Member when addressing it for the first time. He wished to intervene in the Debate, because the constituency he had the honour to represent was almost entirely served by Voluntary Schools. His experience was, that the people in agricultural districts suffered very materially from the fact that the salaries of the teachers in the Voluntary Schools were insufficient. From that cause alone Voluntary Schools in the agricultural districts were very often unable to gain that amount of Imperial aid, in the shape of grants, which they would otherwise obtain. ["Hear, hear!"] He was one of those who supported this Amendment, in order that the efficiency of teaching in our agricultural districts should be increased. In more than one Voluntary School with which he was personally connected the teachers suffered from the fact that they had to teach four and five standards in the same day in various classes and under various circumstances. They were put into competition with the town schools, where the staff was sufficient to give one teacher for each standard. The grants which were earned by each set of schools during the year were calculated upon the same basis of examination; and it was not surprising that, under those circumstances, it was much less in the agricultural districts than in the towns. Care should be taken that this additional aid grant should be devoted to increasing the salaries of the teachers, increasing the general efficiency, and improving the apparatus of country schools, and not used for making up a diminution of subscriptions. The First Lord of the Treasury had stated that it was the purpose of the Bill that more money should go to the towns than to the country. From his own experience, he should say that the standard of education in the country at the present time required more raising than it did in the towns. ["Hear, hear!"] Personally he thought that 5s. per head per child in the agricultural districts was absolutely insufficient to raise the standard of education to anything like that which it had attained in the towns at the present time. ["Hear, hear!"]

Mr. CHARLES MORLEY (Breconshire) said that, under the clause as it stood at present, money might be applied to the Voluntary Schools for two purposes; it might be applied for helping necessitous schools, and it might also be applied for increasing their efficiency. He wanted to know whether, under the clause, the money might be voted or used or applied for extending or increasing the existing buildings of a school, or for liquidating existing debts.

Mr. J. A. PEASE (Northumberland, Tyneside) asked the Vice President of the Council why, if he recommended the general terms of the Bill, he promised to the House only 10 days ago that any Amendment which really tended to the promotion and improvement of education would be welcomed by the Government? He, at any rate, considered that the use of those words committed the Government to accepting any Amendment which promoted efficiency. Those who were in favour of putting into practical effect the efficiency of education in our schools would vote for the Amendment, and those who were in favour of the relief of voluntary subscribers would vote with the Government.

Question put, "That the words 'and in such manner' stand part of the clause."

The Committee divided:—Ayes, 259; Noes, 119.—(Division List—No. 71.)

Mr. Harold Reckitt.

The announcement of the figures was received with opposition cheers.

*The CHAIRMAN of WAYS and MEANS: The next Amendment not out of order stands in the name of the hon. Member for Mid Glamorgan (Mr. Samuel Evans). I confess that I do not quite understand what the Amendment means. [*Laughter.*] If it means that the Education Department is to have no discretion as to the mode in allotting the amounts, but is to allot the 5s. grant all round, it is out of order. [*Laughter.*] But if it has any other meaning, then it may be in order, and perhaps the hon. Gentleman will explain it. [*Laughter.*]

Mr. SAMUEL EVANS (Glamorgan, Mid) moved in Sub-section (2) to leave out the words "and amounts." He said that he was proposing to leave out those words for the purpose of having some explanation from the right hon. Gentleman the Vice President of the Council as to what the words meant. [*Laughter.*] The meaning of the words as they stood appeared to be that the Department would have the ultimate decision as to what amounts were to be given to any individual school. In Sub-section (4) it was said that the grant should be distributed by the Department after consulting with the governing body or the association. If the association was to decide the proportion to be given to individual schools, he did not quite see the meaning of the words in the present sub-section, as he did not understand how the Department was to exercise a discretion in the matter if it had to obey the dictates of the association. On the other hand, if the Department were to have a discretion, he failed to see what the functions of the association were to be. If, however, the Committee had had from the Government any definition of what a necessitous school was he would probably not have moved the Amendment. It must be obvious to the Committee that it was necessary to have some kind of definition or explanation of that term.

*The CHAIRMAN of WAYS and MEANS said he failed to see the relevancy of the hon. Member's remarks.

Mr. SAMUEL EVANS contended that the words "and amounts" must be governed by the words "for the purpose," and the purpose expressed in the clause was that of helping necessitous schools. He would ask the Vice President or the First Lord of the Treasury to explain how it came to be necessary that the Department should have any discretion at all in fixing the amount to be given to necessitous schools.

MR. JOHN DILLON (Mayo, E.) called attention to what he considered a serious contradiction in the Bill. In this sub-section the Department was given, what seemed to him, a very proper discretion to distribute the grant in proportion to the necessities of the schools, and there was no limitation placed on that discretion. But in a later portion of the clause a very serious limitation was placed on the discretion of the Department, a limitation which prevented them from discriminating between association and association. He would like to know whether the Department would have an absolute discretion between school and school all over the country, or whether they would be compelled to give without any discretion, 5s. per head to all associations without reference to the question whether the schools in one association were more necessitous than the schools in another.

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY said he understood the question of the hon. Member who had just sat down, but he did not understand the Amendment. There would be no discretion in the Department as between association and association; that was to say, they would have to give 5s. per scholar to every association in respect of all the schools in the association. The hon. Member for Mid Glamorgan would, he thought, see that nothing was to be gained by omitting the words.

MR. SYDNEY BUXTON thought that the reply of the right hon. Gentleman was not very clear. It was obvious that gross inequality would be created between district and district as well as between denomination and denomination.

MR. SAMUEL EVANS again pressed for an explanation as to the meaning of the words, and contended that there would not be much danger if they were omitted from the clause.

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY: The meaning is that the Education Department is to settle the amount to be given to the schools.

MR. PAULTON asked whether the words "and amounts" related to the amount to be paid to the schools or the associations?

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY: The schools.

MR. REES DAVIES (Pembrokeshire) pressed for further explanation as to the meaning of the words.

Question put, "That the words 'and amounts' stand part of the Clause."

The Committee divided:—Ayes, 260; Noes, 100.—(Division List, No. 72.)

MR. LLOYD-GEORGE rose to move an Amendment, notice of which did not appear on the Paper—[*Ministerial cries of* "Oh, oh!"]—namely, in Sub-section (2) to omit the words "as the Department think best," in order to insert instead thereof the words "as provided by scheme to be formulated by the Department, and laid before Parliament." The words in the Bill to which he objected were perfectly inconsistent with the 3rd and 4th sub-sections. The 2nd sub-section provided that the grant

> "shall be distributed by the Education Department to such Voluntary Schools, and in such manner and amounts as the Department think best."

This gave absolute discretion to the Department as to the manner and amount in distribution, but the next sub-section limited the authority just given, and declared that as between association and association there should be absolutely no discretion at all. As a matter of order he submitted that either the 3rd sub-section was out of order, or these words were out of order. He did not, however, press that, but contended, as matter of argument, the words were inconsistent because so far from the Department having absolute power to distribute as it might think best, the 3rd sub-section provided that each association was to receive the full amount granted, on the basis of 5s. for every child attending the schools, thus taking away all the discretion of the Department as between one association and another. Then the 4th sub-section modified and limited the authority of the Department as between one school and another, for the scheme which would determine the amount each school was to receive was to be prepared not by the Department but by the association. If the phraseology of the 2nd sub-section meant anything it conferred an absolutely despotic authority on the Department in the distribution of the money. It was followed by the 3rd sub-section limiting that authority as between associations, and then the 4th sub-section further cut down the discretion of the Department as between schools. This was to make absolute nonsense of an Act of Parliament. The words he proposed to substitute for the unlimited power to be conferred on the Education Department, provided that the Department should formulate a scheme for the purpose of making the distribution, submit the regulations to the House of Commons, and lay them upon the Table of the House so that the House should have an opportunity of discussing them, if necessary modifying them, and, if not satisfied with them as a whole, of rejecting them. He said that this was the first time such powers had ever been attempted to be conferred on any Government Department. Under the Act of 1870 grants of public money were made to schools for educational purposes, and, although the schools had only to receive the grant on conditions which would have regard to the merit and efficiency of the schools alone, still the House of Commons was so jealous of any power being conferred upon a Government Department with regard to the expenditure of public money, that it insisted on the regulations governing the expenditure of that money being laid on the Table of the House for one month before they came into operation. He said that this precedent ought to be followed in the present case. By Section 97 of the Act of 1870, the conditions required to be fulfilled by an elementary school in order to obtain the annual Parliamentary grant were to be those contained in the Minute of the Education Department in force for the time being. First of all the Section went to the extent of laying down principles with regard to what should be contained in the Minute, and then it provided that no Minute should be deemed to be in force until it had lain for not less than a month on the Table of both Houses of Parliament. He asked the Government why they had departed from that precedent in this particular case? If ever there was a case when such a precedent should have been rigidly adhered to, it was the present. He said this was a dangerous power to confer upon any Government Department, and it was the first time in the history of Parliament that that course had been adopted. There was another point with regard to the Act of 1870. Section 97 dealt with necessitous schools, and there was a provision that money should be given to necessitous Board Schools. [*Cries of* "Oh!"] He knew hon. Members opposite did not care to hear much about necessitous Board Schools, and he was not at all surprised to hear them grunting. [*Ministerial cries of* "Withdraw!"]

*THE CHAIRMAN OF WAYS AND MEANS: That is not a Parliamentary expression, and I must call upon the hon. Gentleman to withdraw it.

MR. LLOYD-GEORGE asked to be allowed to withdraw the expression.

It being midnight, the Chairman left the Chair to make his report to the House.

Committee report Progress; to sit again upon Monday next.

MILITARY WORKS (MONEY) BILL.

Committee deferred till Monday next.

PUBLIC HEALTH (SCOTLAND) BILL.

Adjourned Debate on Second Reading [5th February] further adjourned till Monday next.

LAW OF EVIDENCE (CRIMINAL CASES) BILL.

Second Reading deferred till Monday next.

TRUSTS (SCOTLAND) BILL.

Committee deferred till Monday next.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ALDERSHOT AND FARNBOROUGH) BILL.

Second Reading deferred till Monday next.

BERRIEW SCHOOL BILL.

Second Reading deferred till Monday next.

MILITARY LANDS ACT (1892) AMENDMENT BILL.

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METROPOLITAN AND OTHER POLICE COURTS BILL.

Second Reading deferred till Thursday next.

SUPPLY.

Committee deferred till To-morrow.

WAYS AND MEANS.

Committee deferred till To-morrow.

REGISTRATION OF PARLIAMENTARY VOTERS BILL.

Second Reading deferred till Tuesday, 16th March.

STEAM ENGINES AND BOILERS (PERSONS IN CHARGE) BILL.

Adjourned Debate on Motion for Committal to Standing Committee on Trade, etc. [17th February] further adjourned till Monday, 15th March.

PLUMBERS' REGISTRATION BILL.

Second Reading deferred till Friday, 19th March.

RATING OF MACHINERY BILL.

Second Reading deferred till Wednesday, 21st April.

SUCCESSION (SCOTLAND) BILL.

Second Reading deferred till Thursday next.

MARRIAGE WITH A DECEASED WIFE'S SISTER BILL.

Second Reading deferred till Friday, 7th May.

RIVERS POLLUTION PREVENTION BILL.

Second Reading deferred till Wednesday next.

POOR LAW OFFICERS' SUPERANNUATION ACT (1896) AMENDMENT BILL.

Second Reading deferred till Monday next.

LICENCES (IRELAND) BILL.

Second Reading deferred till Tuesday next.

CEMETERIES RATING BILL.

Second Reading deferred till Wednesday next.

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Second Reading deferred till Wednesday, 17th March.

SHOPS (EARLY CLOSING) BILL.

Second Reading deferred till To-morrow.

SHOPS BILL.

Second Reading deferred till To-morrow.

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PRISON MADE GOODS (IMPORTATION) BILL.

Second Reading deferred till Wednesday, 31st March.

ARCHDEACONRY OF LONDON (ADDITIONAL ENDOWMENTS) BILL.

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LABOURERS' COTTAGES (IRELAND) BILL.

Second Reading deferred till Monday, 29th March.

SOLICITORS (IRELAND) BILL.

Second Reading deferred till Wednesday, 17th March.

APPOINTMENT OF HIGH SHERIFFS (IRELAND) BILL.

Second Reading deferred till Wednesday, 17th March.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT (1894) AMENDMENT BILL.

Second Reading deferred till Monday next.

ESTATES TAIL BILL.

Second Reading deferred till Friday, 12th March.

JURIES DETENTION BILL.

Mr. LLOYD MORGAN (Carmarthen, W.), in moving the Second Reading of this Bill, explained that its object was to prevent juries from being locked up all night in cases of felony.

Bill read a Second time, and committed for Monday next.

LICENSING EXEMPTION (HOUSES OF PARLIAMENT) BILL.

Second Reading deferred till To-morrow.

MOTIONS.

MERCHANT SHIPPING (UNDERMANNING).

The PRESIDENT of the BOARD of TRADE (Mr. C. T. Ritchie, Croydon) asked for leave to introduce a Bill to amend the Merchant Shipping Act 1894, with respect to the power of detention for undermanning.

Mr. T. LOUGH (Islington, N.) said the House ought to be given some explanation of the objects of those Bills.

Mr. RITCHIE: I do not think it is usual in cases of this kind to give an explanation. ["Hear, hear!"] Of course, on the Second Reading the Bills will be fully explained.

Leave given; Bill presented accordingly, amid cheers, and Read the First time; to be Read a Second time upon Wednesday next, and to be printed.—[Bill 149.]

FOREIGN PRISON MADE GOODS.

Bill to prohibit the importation of Foreign Prison Made Goods, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Ritchie and Mr. Secretary Chamberlain; presented, and Read the First time; to be Read a Second time upon Thursday next and to be printed.—[Bill 150.]

SOLICITORS (MAGISTRACY).

Bill to enable Solicitors of the High Court to act as County Justices, ordered to be brought in by Sir Albert Rollit, Sir Henry Fowler, Sir Robert Reid, Mr. Fry, Mr. McArthur, Mr. Warr, and Mr. Skewes-Cox; presented, and Read the First time; to be Read a Second time upon Wednesday next, and to be printed. —[Bill 151.]

GOVERNMENT CONTRACTS (FAIR WAGES RESOLUTION).

Ordered, that Mr. Jackson and Mr. Parker Smith be discharged from the Select Committee on Government Contracts (Fair Wages Resolution).

Ordered, that Mr. Aird and Sir William Arrol be added to the Committee.—(*Sir William Walrond.*)

MERCHANDISE MARKS ACTS.

Return ordered,

"setting forth all prosecutions which have been instituted by the Board of Trade under the Merchandise Marks Act since January 1888 to the end of 1896, showing the name of the prosecutor; name and calling of the defendant; the place of hearing; the nature of the goods and alleged bad marking; the section of the Acts under which action was taken; the decision of the Court; the fine (if any) inflicted, and, if carried to appeal, the result of the appeal."—(*Sir Albert Rollit.*)

House adjourned at a Quarter after Twelve o'clock.

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(AUTHORISED EDITION).

VOLUME XLVI. FOURTH SERIES.

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EXPLANATION OF ABBREVIATIONS.

Bills Read 1ª, 1°, 2ª, 2°, 3ª, 3°. Read the First, Second, or Third Time.
1R., 2R., 3R. Speech delivered on First, Second, or Third Reading.
Adj. Adjourned.
A. Answer.
c. Commons.
Com. Committee.
com. Committed.
Intro. Introduction.
l. Lords.
Obj. Objections.
Obs. Observations.
Pres. Presented.
Q. Question.
Rep. Reported.
R.P. Report Progress.
Reso. Resolutions.

The Subjects of Debate, as far as possible, are classified under General Headings, e.g. :—

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- COLONIES
- CUSTOMS, EXCISE, AND INLAND REVENUE
- EDUCATION DEPARTMENT
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  (For Debate see Title of Bill)
- *Officers*
  - *Examinations, Volunteer, Q.* Mr. J. H. Roberts; *A.* Mr. Brodrick *Mar* 4, 1575
  - *Grant to, Military Manœuvres, Q.* Sir A. K. Rollit; *A.* Mr. Brodrick *Feb* 19, 790
  - *Royal Marine Artillery, Q.* Sir J. Colomb; *A.* Mr. G. J. Goschen *Feb* 22, 868
  - *Warrant, Good Conduct Medal, Q.* Mr. C. Colston: *A.* Mr. Powell-Williams *Feb* 18, 721
- *Ordnance Store Department, Q.* Sir C. Dilke; *A.* Mr. Brodrick *Feb* 25, 1135
- *Pensions, Special Campaign, Q.* Sir J. Leng; *A.* Mr. Powell-Williams *Feb* 9, 5
- *Purfleet, Government Powder Magazine, Q.* Mr. E. H. Pickersgill; *A.* Mr. Brodrick *Feb* 16, 509
- *Queen's Reign, Colonial Troops, Q.* Mr. J. F. Hogan; *A.* Mr. Brodrick *Mar* 1, 1331
- *Recruiting Areas, Colonies, Q.* Captain Pirie; *A.* Mr. Brodrick *Mar* 4, 1579
- *Regimental Territorial Titles, Qs.* Mr. Massey-Mainwaring, Sir H. Vincent; *As.* Mr. Powell-Williams *Feb* 15, 403
- *Retired Pay, Q.* Mr. A. O'Connor; *A.* Mr. Powell-Williams *Feb* 11, 183
- *Rifle Corps, King's Royal, 8th Battalion, Q.* Mr. D. Sullivan; *A.* Mr. Brodrick *Mar* 1, 1328
- *Royal*
  - *Barracks, Dublin, Q.* General Russell; *A.* Mr. Powell-Williams *Feb* 11, 159
  - *Engineers, Discharge, Q.* Mr. J. F. Hogan: *A.* Mr. Powell-Williams *Feb* 15, 398
  - *Marine Artillery Officers, Q.* Sir J. Colomb; *A.* Mr. G. J. Goschen *Feb* 22, 868
- *Salisbury Plain*
  - *Protection of Ancient Monuments, Q.* Mr. C. Colston; *A.* Mr. A. J. Balfour *Feb* 25, 1144
  - *Tenant Farmers, Q.* Mr. E. A. Goulding; *A.* Mr. Powell-Williams *Mar* 4, 1586
- *School, Military, Duke of York's, Q.* Mr. E. Strachey; *A.* Mr. Brodrick *Feb* 12, 267
- *Scots Greys, Q.* Mr. Orr-Ewing; *A.* Mr. Brodrick *Feb* 16, 515
- *Scottish Rifles, 5th Volunteer Battalion, Qs.* Mr. J. Wilson (Falkirk); *As.* Mr. Brodrick *Mar* 4, 1595
- *Sierra Leone, Hospital Accommodation, Q.* Mr. C. Bill; *A.* Mr. Powell-Williams *Feb* 15, 399

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ARMY—cont.

- *Soldiers' Effects Fund, Q.* Mr. H. E. Kearley; *A.* Mr. Powell-Williams *Feb* 11, 179
- *Solent and Clyde, Artillery Firing, Q.* Mr. D. N. Nicol; *A.* Mr. Brodrick *Feb* 26, 1255
- *Special Campaign Pensions, Q.* Sir J. Leng; *A.* Mr. Powell-Williams *Feb* 9, 5
- *Troops*
  - *British, in India, Health of, Q.* Mr. R. Cameron; *A.* Lord G. Hamilton *Feb* 25, 1141. *Q.* Captain Pirie; *A.* Lord G. Hamilton *Mar* 1, 1340
  - *Colonial, Queen's Reign, Q.* Mr. J. F. Hogan; *A.* Mr. Brodrick *Mar* 1, 1331
  - *Conveyance of, Scotland and London, Q.* Mr. J. McKillop; *A.* Mr. Powell-Williams *Feb* 9, 18
  - *Imperial, Cost of (British South Africa Company), Qs.* Mr. T. Bayley, Mr. P. O'Brien; *As.* Mr. Powell-Williams, Sir M. Hicks Beach *Feb* 11, 174
- *Volunteers*
  - *Battalions, Aldershot, Q.* Sir H. Vincent; *A.* Mr. Brodrick *Mar* 4, 1574
  - *Cadet Corps, Q.* General Laurie; *A.* Mr. Brodrick *Feb* 26, 1252
  - *Drill Halls, Aberdeen, Q.* Captain Pirie; *A.* Mr. Hanbury *Feb* 23, 976
  - *Home Defence, and, Q.* Earl of Minto; *A.* Duke of Devonshire; [*Obs.* Earl of Kimberley;] *Feb* 11, 131
  - *Manchester, Lee-Metford Rifle, Q.* Sir W. Houldsworth; *A.* Mr. Brodrick *Feb* 25, 1135
  - *Officers, Examinations, Q.* Mr. J. H. Roberts; *A.* Mr. Brodrick *Mar* 4, 1575
  - *Rifle Ranges, Lee-Metford Rifle, Qs.* Earl Spencer; [*Obs.* Earl Stanhope;] *As.* Marquess of Lansdowne *Feb* 18, 667
  - *Scottish Rifles, 5th Battalion, Qs.* Mr. J. Wilson (Falkirk); *As.* Mr. Brodrick *Mar* 4, 1595
- *Warrant Officers, Good Conduct Medal, Q.* Mr. C. Colston; *A.* Mr. Powell-Williams *Feb* 18, 721

ARMY ESTIMATES 1897-98

£894,000 for Clothing Establishments and Services

In Com., Sir C. Dilke, 840; Mr. Brodrick, 841; (*Motion withdrawn*, 841) *Feb* 19

158,774 Land Forces (Number of)

In Com., Mr. Brodrick, 319, 327, 333, 334, 335, 336; Sir C. Dilke, 327, 335, 336; Sir J. Fergusson, 333; Mr. T. C. T. Warner, 334; Sir J. Colomb, 334, 335; Mr. W. J. Galloway, 337, 344, 345; Captain Jessel, 338; Colonel Welby, 339; Sir F. Fitz-Wygram, 342; Mr. Powell-Williams, 344, 345; Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman, 345; Mr. Arnold-Forster, 349; Mr. H. Labouchere, 351, (*Amendt.*) 355, 358, 359, 360; [Chairman, 355;] Mr. J. Dillon, 355; Mr. A. J. Balfour, 358, 359, 360, 361; Sir W. Lawson, 360; (*Division*, 361); Captain Pirie, 361; General McCalmont, 361; Mr. J. McLeod, 362; (*Agreed to*, 363) *Feb* 12. Report *Feb* 15, 495

ARMY ESTIMATES—cont.

£295,800 for Medical Establishment, Pay, etc
In Com., Vote Agreed to *Feb* 12, 364
Report: Dr. Farquharson, 495; Mr. A. F. Jeffreys, 496; Mr. Brodrick, 497, 498; Colonel Lockwood, 498; Captain Pirie, 498; Mr. H. V. Duncombe, 498; Mr. J. Burns, 498 *Feb* 15
Reso. Agreed to *Feb* 15, 498

£118,600 for Military Education, Establishments
In Com., Vote Agreed to *Feb* 19, 846. Report *Feb* 22, 963

£553,000 for Militia, Pay and Allowances
In Com., Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman, 364; Mr. A. J. Balfour, 364; R.P. 364 *Feb* 12
In Com., Mr. T. C. T. Warner, 792, 797, 800; Mr. T. Lough, 793; Sir E. T. Gourley, 793; Mr. C. Colston, 794; Colonel Wyndham Murray, 794; Sir J. Fergusson, 795; Colonel Blundell, 795; Mr. Brodrick, 796, 799, 801, 803; Captain Bethell, 796, 799; Dr. Tanner, 797, 802; Viscount Cranborne, 798, 802; Mr. Vesey Knox, 801; Major H. F. Bowles, 803. Vote Agreed to, 803 *Feb* 19. Report *Feb* 22, 960

£5,937,800 for Pay, Allowances, etc.
In Com., Vote Agreed to *Feb* 12, 364. Report *Feb* 15, 495

£2,553,400 for Provisions, Forage, and Other Supplies
In Com., Mr. J. H. Dalziel, 828, 839; Sir R. U. Penrose FitzGerald, 828; Mr. J. C. Flynn, 828, 830, 840; Mr. A. F. Jeffreys, 829; Mr. Powell-Williams, 830, 832, 833; Mr. J. Gilhooly, 832; Mr. J. Lowles, 832; Mr. D. Kilbride, 832, 833, 834; Mr. T. P. Whittaker, 835; General Goldsworthy, 836; Mr. W. Abraham (Cork), 836; Mr. Brodrick, 838; Dr. Farquharson, 840; (*Division*, 840); [Chairman, 840;] Dr. Tanner, 840. Vote Agreed to, 840. *Feb* 19
Report: Mr. J. C. Flynn, 961, 962; Mr. Powell-Williams, 962 *Feb* 22
Reso. Agreed to *Feb* 22, 962

£54,800 for Sundry Miscellaneous Effective Services
In Com., Mr. T. C. T. Warner, 846; Mr. Powell-Williams, 847; Dr. Tanner, 847; (*Division*, 847). Vote Agreed to, 847 *Feb* 19. Report *Feb* 22, 963

£639,000 for Transport and Remounts
In Com., Dr. Tanner, 823; [Chairman, 823, 825;] Colonel Murray, 823; Mr. T. Lough, 823, 826; Colonel Welby, 823; Mr. J. C. Flynn, 824, 825, 826, 827; Mr. Powell-Williams, 825, 826, 827; Mr. Vesey Knox, 826; Mr. J. Lowles, 827. Vote Agreed to, 828 *Feb* 19

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ARMY ESTIMATES—cont.

£639,000 for Transport and Remounts—cont.
Report: Mr. J. C. Flynn, 961; Mr. Powell-Williams, 961; Dr. Tanner, 961 *Feb* 22
Reso. Agreed to *Feb* 22, 961

£627,200 for Volunteer Corps, Capitation Grant, Pay, and Allowances
In Com., Sir C. Dilke, 812; Sir H. Vincent, 814; Mr. A. M. Brookfield, 817; Mr. Brodrick, 819; Mr. H. Samuel, 821; Mr. Tomlinson, 821; Mr. Vesey Knox, (*Amendt.*) 822; (*Division*, 823). Vote Agreed to, 823 *Feb* 19. Report *Feb* 22, 961

£2,069,200 for Warlike and Other Stores, Supply and Repair
In Com., Motion withdrawn *Feb* 19, 841

£1,016,400 for Works, Buildings, and Repairs
In Com., Major Wyndham-Quin, 841, 845; Mr. T. R. Buchanan, 842; Mr. T. C. T. Warner, 843; Colonel Welby, 843; Mr. P. J. Stanhope, 843; Sir J. Colomb, 844; Mr. Brodrick, 844, 846; Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman, 845, 846; Mr. Vesey Knox, 846; Dr. Tanner, 846. Vote Agreed to 846 *Feb* 19. Report *Feb* 22, 962

£76,000 for Yeomanry Cavalry, Pay and Allowances
In Com., Mr. R. T. Hermon-Hodge, 803; Mr. W. F. D. Smith, 804; Mr. Vesey Knox, (*Amendt.*) 804, 811; Dr. Tanner, 805, 810; Mr. Powell-Williams, 806, 811; Mr. H. Labouchere, 807; Sir F. Fitz-Wygram, 808; Lord A. Compton, 808; General Laurie, 808; Mr. T. P. Whittaker, 809; Colonel Welby, 809; Mr. Pryce Jones, 810; Mr. T. C. T. Warner, 810; (*Division*, 811); Sir W. Lawson, 812; (*Division*, 812). Vote Agreed to, 812 *Feb* 19. Report *Feb* 22, 960

ARNOLD-FORSTER, Mr. H. O., *Belfast, W.*
Army Estimates: 158,774 Land Forces (Number of) *Feb* 12, 349
Brigade of Guards *Feb* 12, 294
Crete, Declaration of Policy *Mar* 2, 1512

ARRAN, Earl of
Cahir, Speech at *Feb* 12, 261

ASCROFT, Mr. R., *Oldham*
Preferential Payments in Bankruptcy Act (1888) Amendment Bill, 2R. *Feb* 10, 74, 79

ASHBOURNE, LORD (Lord Chancellor of Ireland)
Cahir, Speech at *Feb* 12, 258

ASHER, Mr. ALEXANDER, *Elgin Burghs*
Trunk Telephone Lines, Scotland *Feb* 12, 272

ASHMEAD-BARTLETT, Sir ELLIS, *Sheffield, Ecclesall*
- British Uitlander Population, Transvaal *Feb* 25, 1142
- Crete *Feb* 9, 22, 23; *Feb* 15, 404, 405; *Feb* 16, 532; *Feb* 19, 786, 788; *Feb* 22, 887, 888; *Feb* 23, 984, 985; *Feb* 25, 1147; *Feb* 26, 1265, 1266; *Mar* 1, 1339, 1340; *Mar* 2, 1448, 1449; *Mar* 4, 1605, 1606
- Crete
  - Action of British Ships *Feb* 22, 915, 916
  - Declaration of Policy *Mar* 2, 1475, 1479
  - Mussulmans in *Feb* 18, 722
- Jameson Raid, President Kruger's Claim *Feb* 22, 875
- Judges, Transvaal *Mar* 4, 1610
- Transvaal *Mar* 2, 1444

ASQUITH, Right Hon. H. H., *Fife, E.*
- Voluntary Schools Bill, In Com. *Mar* 4, 1628, 1629

ATHERLEY-JONES, Mr. LLEWELLYN A., *Durham, N.W.*
- Agricultural Population *Mar* 2, 1429
- Judicature Acts *Feb* 23, 987, 989, 992, 1001, 1013
- Voluntary Schools Bill, 2R. *Feb* 15, 449, 451

ATKINSON, RIGHT HON. JOHN, (Attorney General for Ireland), *Londonderry, N.*
- Clonbain "Whiteboy" Case *Feb* 15, 411; *Feb* 16, 511
- County Surveyors (Ireland) Amendment Bill, 2R. *Feb* 12, 367
- Jurymen's Expenses, Ireland *Feb* 25, 1129
- Londonderry Corporation Stock *Feb* 22, 866
- Municipal
  - Franchise, Ireland *Feb* 9, 16
  - Voters Act, Aughnacloy *Mar* 4, 1599, 1600
- Parish Records, Ireland *Feb* 9, 11
- Town Courts *Mar* 2, 1442

AUSTIN, Mr. MICHAEL, *Limerick, W.*
- Land Courts, Ireland *Mar* 4, 1585
- Limerick
  - Canal and Shannon Service *Mar* 4, 1594
  - Night Watch *Mar* 4, 1593

Australasia
- *Cable, Canada to Australia, Q.* Mr. J. F. Hogan; *A.* Mr. J. Chamberlain *Feb* 22, 878
- *Mail Contracts*
  - *Australia, Qs.* Mr. J. F. Hogan; *As.* Mr. Hanbury *Feb* 15, 397; *Feb* 22, 867
  - *Indo-China and Australia, Qs.* Sir J. Leng; *As.* Mr. Hanbury *Feb* 11, 158; *Mar* 2, 1438
- *Slavery, New Hebrides, Qs.* Mr. S. Smith; *As.* Mr. J. Chamberlain *Mar* 2, 1433

BADEN-POWELL, Sir GEORGE S., *Liverpool, Kirkdale*
- Colonial Premiers, Visit to London *Feb* 23, 978
- Liberia, British Trade *Feb* 25, 1128
- Marine Insurance Policies, Stamp Duty *Feb* 25, 1135
- Solent, Artillery Firing *Feb* 25, 1129

BAGOT, Captain J. F., *Westmorland, Kendal*
- Brigade of Guards *Feb* 12, 266
- Carlisle Gaol, Death of Prisoner *Feb* 11, 166

BAILEY, Mr. JAMES, *Newington, Walworth*
- Murder on London and South Western Railway *Feb* 22, 879

BAIRD, Mr. J. G. A., *Glasgow, Central*
- North Atlantic Load-line *Mar* 1, 1329
- *S.S. Utopia,* Claim against Owners *Mar* 4, 1587

BAKER, Sir JOHN, *Portsmouth*
- Voluntary Schools Bill, 2R. *Feb* 15, 457, 461; In Com. *Mar* 1, 1370; *Mar* 3, 1556

BALCARRES, Earl of, *Lancashire, N., Chorley*
- Prison Officers *Feb* 26, 1253

BALFOUR, RIGHT HON. ARTHUR J. (First Lord of the Treasury), *Manchester, E.*
- Agricultural Holdings *Feb* 25, 1144
- Army Estimates
  - 158,774 Land Forces (Number of) *Feb* 12, 358, 359, 360, 361
  - £553,000 for Militia, Pay and Allowances *Feb* 12, 364
- Bequest to Nation by Lady Wallace *Mar* 1, 1346
- Board Schools
  - Financial Aid *Feb* 15, 411
  - Necessitous *Feb* 11, 187
- Brigade of Guards *Feb* 12, 311, 312
- British Trade and Foreign Competition *Feb* 9, 25
- Business of the House
  - Sitting of the House, Ash Wednesday *Mar* 2, 1533
  - Supply (Estimates)
    - Army *Feb* 15, 414, 415
    - Civil Service *Feb* 18, 728, 729
    - Civil Service (Supplementary) *Feb* 22, 886
    - Naval *Feb* 26, 1266
    - Scotch *Feb* 15, 414
- Cornish Mining Industry *Mar* 4, 1611
- County Surveyors (Ireland) Amendment Bill, 2R. *Feb* 12, 367

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BALFOUR, Right Hon. ARTHUR J.—*cont.*

- Crete *Feb* 15, 406, 407 ; *Feb* 16, 524 ; *Feb* 23, 984 ; *Feb* 25, 1147, 1150, 1151, 1152, 1153 ; *Mar* 1, 1348, 1349 ; *Mar* 4, 1607
- Crete
  - Action of British Ships *Feb* 22, 890, 896, 897, 898, 899, 901, 926
  - Declaration of Policy *Mar* 2, 1450, 1514, 1518, 1523
- Criminal Law Amendment (Ireland) Act, 1887 *Feb* 15, 413
- Elementary Schools, Rating *Feb* 9, 25, 26 ; *Feb* 12, 279, 280
- Employers' Liability Bill *Feb* 9, 25 ; *Mar* 4, 1613
- Established Church (England and Wales) *Feb* 9, 42, 43, 45
- Financial Relations, Great Britain and Ireland *Feb* 11, 184 ; *Feb* 12, 279 ; *Feb* 16, 517 ; *Feb* 18, 727 ; *Feb* 22, 884, 885, 886 ; *Feb* 23, 982
- Imperial Taxes, Ireland *Mar* 4, 1612
- India
  - Famine *Feb* 23, 980
  - Imported Woollen Goods *Feb* 9, 26
- Law of Evidence (Criminal Cases) Bill *Feb* 11, 187
- Military Manœuvres Bill *Feb* 15, 414
- Military Works Bill, 2R. *Feb* 18, 771
- Necessitous Board Schools *Feb* 11, 187
- Prosecution of Mr. Ivory *Feb* 11, 186
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- Rating Commission *Feb* 16, 517, 518
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- Sugar Refining Industry, United Kingdom *Feb* 11, 185
- Usury Laws *Feb* 15, 412
- Voluntary Schools
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- Voluntary Schools Bill *Feb* 11, 188, 195, 196, 200, 2R. 229, 230, 236, 240 ; *Feb* 15, 442, 478, 479 ; *Feb* 16, 575, 592, 593, 594 ; *Feb* 25, 1160, 1162, 1171, 1175, 1202, 1211, 1212, 1216, 1228, 1230, 1237 ; In Com. *Mar* 1, 1353, 1359, 1362, 1363, 1364, 1367, 1368, 1371, 1372, 1373, 1374, 1375, 1378, 1380, 1381, 1382, 1395, 1396, 1404, 1406, 1408, 1409 ; *Mar* 3, 1544, 1548, 1551, 1553, 1562, 1563 ; *Mar* 4, 1616, 1638, 1641, 1646, 1651, 1652, 1658, 1669, 1670
  - Answers to Questions *Feb* 23, 980, 981

BALFOUR, RIGHT HON. GERALD W. (Chief Secretary for Ireland), *Leeds, Central*

- Agricultural Rate, Ireland *Mar* 1, 1341
- American Passenger Traffic, Police at Queenstown *Feb* 22, 869
- Ballybot Licensing Sessions *Feb* 25, 1134
- Ballymena Land Commission Court *Feb* 11, 182
- Ballyshannon Union, Clerk's Salary *Feb* 22, 877
- Baltimore Fishery Pier *Feb* 22, 870
- Bankruptcy Court, Ireland *Feb* 25, 1127
- Bann Drainage *Feb* 23, 968
- Bantry Bay, Illegal Trawling *Feb* 12, 267
- Barrow Drainage *Mar* 1, 1327

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BALFOUR, Right Hon. GERALD W.—*cont.*

- Belfast Police
  - Acting Sergeants *Feb* 12, 273
  - Musgrave Street Barracks *Feb* 9, 13 ; *Feb* 19, 784
- Board of Guardians, Listowel *Feb* 18, 710, 711
- Cahir Estate, Ireland *Mar* 1, 1345
- Caretakers, Ireland *Mar* 1, 1323, 1324
- Castlebar Union *Feb* 18, 712
- Cattle, Ireland
  - Importation of *Mar* 2, 1431
  - Slaughter of *Feb* 11, 163
- Christian Brothers Schools *Feb* 19, 782, 783
- Clare
  - Assizes, Diminution of Crime *Mar* 4, 1608
  - Police Protection *Feb* 18, 720
- Clongorey Estate, Kildare *Mar* 1, 1344
- Consecration of Bishop of Killaloe *Feb* 9, 17, 18
- Convent and Monastery Schools, Ireland *Feb* 26, 1259
- County Court Judge, Down *Mar* 4, 1609
- Court of Bankruptcy, Ireland *Mar* 4, 1601
- Cullenagh Mountain, Tipperary *Feb* 26, 1260
- Distress
  - Belmullet Union *Feb* 22, 887
  - West of Ireland *Feb* 9, 16
- Donegal
  - Labourers Acts *Feb* 18, 713
  - Sickness among School Children *Mar* 4, 1599
- Drainage
  - Bann *Feb* 23, 968
  - Barrow *Mar* 1, 1327
  - Suck Scheme *Mar* 4, 1579
- Educational Endowments, Ireland *Feb* 25, 1130
- Education, Ireland *Feb* 11, 181 ; *Feb* 12, 277
- Election of Coroner, Tipperary *Feb* 18, 720
- Evictions
  - Farm, Westport *Feb* 25, 1131
  - Monaghan *Feb* 23, 977
  - Tenants, Ireland *Mar* 1, 1332, 1333 ; *Mar* 4, 1591
- Fermanagh
  - Land Sub-commission *Feb* 18, 719
  - Riot *Feb* 18, 717
- Fishery Piers (see Piers below)
- High Sheriff, Carrickfergus *Feb* 25, 1137
- Horse-breeding
  - Commission, Dublin *Feb* 22, 859, 860
  - Ireland *Feb* 25, 1128 ; *Mar* 1, 1337
- Illegal Trawling, Bantry Bay *Feb* 12, 267
- Importation of Cattle, Ireland *Mar* 2, 1431
- Industrial School Contracts, Ireland *Feb* 25, 1127
- Judicial Rents, Ireland *Mar* 1, 1333, 1334
- Kerry Bog Slide *Feb* 16, 506
- Kildare, Clongorey Estate *Mar* 1, 1344
- Labourers Acts, Donegal *Feb* 18, 713
- Land
  - Commission
    - Ballymena Court *Feb* 11, 182
    - Ireland *Feb* 23, 969 ; *Feb* 25, 1138 ; *Feb* 26, 1250, 1251
    - Kildare Applications *Feb* 11, 159
    - King's County *Feb* 11, 184
  - Courts, Ireland *Mar* 4, 1584, 1585
  - Sub-commission
    - Cavan *Feb* 19, 781
    - Fermanagh *Feb* 18, 719
- Licensing Sessions, Ballybot *Feb* 25, 1134
- Limerick Night Watch *Mar* 4, 1594

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BALFOUR, Right Hon. GERALD W.—*cont.*

- Listowel Board of Guardians *Feb* 18, 710, 711
- Loan Fund Societies, Ireland *Feb* 12, 277, 278; *Feb* 16, 508; *Feb* 22, 861, 862; *Feb* 23, 975; *Feb* 25, 1140
- Local Taxation, Ireland *Feb* 11, 182
- Magisterial Districts, Ireland *Feb* 18, 716
- Magistrates, Ireland *Feb* 25, 1130; *Mar* 1, 1322
- Maryborough Gaol: Prisoner Fitzharris *Feb* 22, 876; *Mar* 4, 1601
- Massereene Estate, Police Protection *Feb* 22, 871
- Monaghan
  - Eviction *Feb* 23, 977
  - Sanitary Arrangements, Clones *Feb* 12, 275
- Musgrave Street Police Barracks, Belfast *Feb* 9, 13; *Feb* 19, 784
- National
  - Education Board, Ireland *Feb* 11, 168
  - Schools, Ireland *Feb* 22, 879
  - School Teachers, Ireland
    - Character and Salaries *Feb* 12, 263, 264
    - Pension
      - Fund *Feb* 16, 510; *Mar* 1, 1335
      - Miss Ryan *Mar* 4, 1577
    - Residential Rates *Feb* 23, 967
- Newbliss
  - Court-house, Orange Lodge *Feb* 16, 510
  - Petty Sessions *Feb* 11, 175
- Pawnbrokers, Ireland *Feb* 9, 17
- Petty Sessions
  - Courts, Ireland *Feb* 25, 1129
  - Newbliss *Feb* 11, 175
- Piers, Fishery
  - Baltimore *Feb* 22, 870
  - Ireland *Feb* 26, 1263; *Mar* 4, 1574, 1575
  - Tramore *Mar* 1, 1325
- Police
  - Belfast
    - Acting Sergeants *Feb* 12, 273
    - Barracks, Musgrave Street *Feb* 9, 13; *Feb* 19, 784
  - Patrol, Skibbereen *Feb* 23, 969
  - Protection
    - Clare *Feb* 18, 720
    - Massereene Estate *Feb* 22, 871
  - Queenstown, American Passenger Traffic *Feb* 22, 869
  - Royal Irish Constabulary (see below)
- Poor Law Relief (Ireland) Bill *Feb* 18, 713; *Mar* 2, 1445
- Private
  - Bill Legislation *Feb* 11, 181
  - Lunatic Asylums, Ireland *Mar* 2, 1441
- Rabies, M'Govern's Treatment *Feb* 11, 157
- Riot, Fermanagh *Feb* 18, 717
- Royal Irish Constabulary Pensions *Mar* 4, 1576
- Sanitary Arrangements, Clones, Monaghan *Feb* 12, 275
- Schools
  - Christian Brothers *Feb* 19, 782, 783
  - Convent and Monastery, Ireland *Feb* 26, 1259
  - Endowment, Ireland *Feb* 18, 719
  - Industrial, Contracts, Ireland *Feb* 25, 1127
  - National, Ireland *Feb* 22, 879
- Sickness among School Children, Donegal *Mar* 4, 1599
- Slaughter of Cattle, Ireland *Feb* 11, 163; *Feb* 12, 269

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- Suck Drainage Scheme *Mar* 4, 1579
- Supply: £12,938 for Irish Land Commission, Salaries and Expenses (Supplementary) *Feb* 26, 1277, 1281, 1282
- Tipperary
  - Cullenagh Mountain *Feb* 26, 1260
  - Election of Coroner *Feb* 18, 720
- Tolls, Newport (Mayo) *Mar* 2, 1432
- Tramore Fishery Pier *Mar* 1, 1325
- Tramps, Ireland *Mar* 4, 1582
- Unions
  - Ballyshannon, Clerk's Salary *Feb* 22, 877
  - Belmullet, Distress in *Feb* 22, 887
  - Castlebar *Feb* 18, 712
- Vaccination Act, Ireland *Feb* 25, 1136

BARRY, Right Hon. A. H. SMITH (see SMITH-BARRY)

BARTLEY, Mr. G. C. T., *Islington, N.*

- Great Northern Railway Bill, 2R. *Feb* 25, 1114
- London County Buildings Bill, 2R. *Feb* 18, 689
- North British Railway, 2R. *Feb* 22, 853
- Supply: £30,151 for Trustee Savings Bank and Friendly Societies Deficiency (Supplementary) *Feb* 26, 1299, 1301
- Telephone System *Mar* 1, 1343
- Voluntary Schools Bill, 2R. *Feb* 25, 1194; In Com. *Mar* 1, 1366, 1403; *Mar* 4, 1622, 1662

BAYLEY, Mr. THOMAS, *Derbyshire, Chesterfield*

- British South Africa Company *Feb* 11, 174
- Crete *Feb* 23, 984; *Feb* 25, 1150
- Slavery in Zanzibar *Feb* 25, 1131
- Vaccination, Repeated Prosecutions *Feb* 16, 505

BEACH, RIGHT HON. SIR MICHAEL E. HICKS, BART. (Chancellor of the Exchequer), *Bristol, W.*

- British South Africa Company *Feb* 11, 174
- Cable Communication, Bermuda to Jamaica *Feb* 11, 170
- Education
  - Grant, Scotland *Feb* 11, 183
  - Votes *Feb* 15, 400
- Egyptian Government, Grant in Aid *Feb* 15, 410
- Half-sovereigns and Farthings *Feb* 22, 857
- Income Tax Forms *Mar* 4, 1573
- Land Tax *Feb* 11, 187; *Feb* 16, 504; *Mar* 2, 1433
- Marine Insurance Policies, Stamp Duty *Feb* 25, 1135
- Military Works Bill, In Com. *Feb* 22, 950, 951, 956
- Peasant Freeholders, Wales *Feb* 23, 1038
- Queen's Reign, Coinage *Mar* 2, 1436

[*cont.*

BEACH, Right Hon. Sir M. HICKS—*cont.*
  Supply
    £40 for the Mint, including Coinage (Supplementary) *Feb* 26, 1274
    £30,151 for Trustee Savings Bank and Friendly Societies Deficiency (Supplementary) *Feb* 26, 1300, 1301
  Trustees Savings Banks, Scotland *Feb* 25, 1123
  University
    Colleges, Government Grant *Feb* 22, 871
    Extension, Annual Grant *Mar* 4, 1581
  Voluntary Schools Bill *Feb* 9, 21; *Feb* 11, 178
  West Indian Sugar Commission *Feb* 11, 155

BELMORE, Earl of
  Irish Mails *Mar* 4, 1568

BETHELL, Captain G. R., *Yorkshire, E.R., Holderness*
  Army Estimates: £553,000 for Militia, Pay and Allowances *Feb* 19, 796, 799

BHOWNAGGREE, Mr. M. M., *Bethnal Green, N.E.*
  Imperial Museum, Calcutta *Mar* 4, 1582
  Indian Famine
    Mortality *Feb* 23, 979
    Silver Hoards *Feb* 9, 19

BIGWOOD, Mr. J., *Middlesex, Brentford*
  Rabies *Mar* 1, 1346

BILL, Mr. CHARLES, *Staffordshire, Leek*
  Highways Bill, Intro. *Feb* 9, 27
  Hospital Accommodation, Sierra Leone *Feb* 15, 399
  Parliamentary Publications, Members' Postage *Feb* 15, 398

BLUNDELL, Colonel H. B. H., *Lancashire, S.W., Ince*
  Army Estimates: £553,000 for Militia, Pay and Allowances *Feb* 19, 795
  Brigade of Guards *Feb* 12, 317

Borough Justices' Clerks Bill
c. Intro., Sir A. K. Rollit; Read 1° *Feb* 17, 663

BOSCAWEN, Mr. A. S. T. GRIFFITH- (see GRIFFITH-BOSCAWEN)

BOULNOIS, Mr. EDMUND, *Marylebone, E.*
  London County Buildings Bill, 2R. *Feb* 18, 675, 676, 698
  Richmond Park *Feb* 25, 1122

BOUSFIELD, Mr. W. R., *Hackney, N.*
  County Councils (Qualification of Women) Bill, Intro. *Feb* 17, 663
  Distress from Want of Employment Committee *Feb* 19, 779, 780
  Weights and Measures *Feb* 19, 779

BOWLES, Major HENRY F., *Middlesex, Enfield*
  Army Estimates: £553,000 for Militia, Pay and Allowances *Feb* 19, 803

BOWLES, Mr. T. GIBSON, *Lynn Regis*
  Agricultural Rates Act (1896) *Feb* 22, 883
  Alabama Claims *Feb* 26, 1253
  Armenia *Mar* 2, 1441, 1442
  Business of the House: Naval Estimates *Feb* 26, 1266
  Collisions at Sea, Fishing Boats *Mar* 1, 1331
  Crete *Feb* 15, 408; *Feb* 19, 787; *Feb* 23, 982, 983; *Mar* 2, 1446
  Crete
    Action of British Ships *Feb* 22, 904
    Declaration of Policy *Mar* 2, 1485, 1501, 1504, 1506, 1510
  Jameson Raid Indemnity *Feb* 18, 726
  London County Buildings Bill, 2R. *Feb* 18, 695
  Military Works Bill, 2R. *Feb* 18, 748
  Naval Instructors *Feb* 18, 705
  Navy Estimates
    £507,000 Additional Expenditure (1896-97) *Feb* 26, 1269
    £5,775 13s. for Naval Defence Act (1889) (Excess Expenditure) *Feb* 26, 1272
  Neutrals in Time of War *Feb* 25, 1124, 1125
  Rams, Warships *Feb* 18, 706
  Supply
    £6,800 for Inland Revenue (Supplementary) *Feb* 26, 1307
    £40 for the Mint, including Coinage (Supplementary) *Feb* 26, 1274
    £153,044 for Public Education, England and Wales (Supplementary) *Feb* 26, 1291
    £95,434 for Teachers' Pension Fund, Ireland *Feb* 26, 1303

BRIGG, Mr. JOHN, *York, W.R., Keighley*
  Burials Bill, 2R. *Feb* 24, 1068
  Military Works Bill, 2R. *Feb* 18, 772; In Com. *Feb* 22, 937
  Voluntary Schools Bill *Feb* 11, 200; *Feb* 25, 1136, 1226

British South Africa Company (see AFRICA)

British Troops in India (Health of)
  Major Rasch (*Notice of Motion*) *Mar* 1, 1352
  (For Questions see INDIA)

BROADHURST, Mr. HENRY, *Leicester*
  Preferential Payments in Bankruptcy Act (1888) Amendment Bill, 2R. *Feb* 10, 81
  Tillet (Mr. Ben), Imprisonment in Belgium *Mar* 4, 1592
  Voluntary Schools Bill, In Com. *Mar* 1, 1389
    Mar 4, 1623

BRODRICK, Right Hon. WILLIAM St. JOHN F. (Under Secretary of State for War), *Surrey, Guildford*
Army Estimates
  £894,000 for Clothing Establishments and Services *Feb* 19, 841
  158,774 Land Forces (Number of) *Feb* 12, 319, 327, 333, 334, 335, 336
  £295,800 for Medical Establishment, Pay; Report *Feb* 15, 497, 498
  £553,000 for Militia, Pay and Allowances *Feb* 19, 796, 799, 801, 803
  £2,553,400 for Provisions, Forage, and Other Supplies *Feb* 19, 838
  £627,200 for Volunteer Corps, Pay and Allowances *Feb* 19, 819
  £1,016,400 for Works, Buildings, and Repairs *Feb* 19, 844, 846
Artillery
  Horses *Feb* 12, 264
  Solent and Clyde, Firing *Feb* 26, 1255
Barry Island Fort *Feb* 9, 18
Brigade of Guards *Feb* 12, 265, 266, 291, 292, 294, 297, 303, 310
Chelsea Hospital *Mar* 4, 1589, 1590
Colchester Barracks *Mar* 4, 1590
Crimean Veteran: Brennan (John), late 41st Regiment *Feb* 26, 1259
Duke of York's Military School *Feb* 12, 267
Government Powder Magazine, Purfleet *Feb* 16, 509
Infantry Recruits, Chest Measurement *Mar* 2, 1430
King's Royal Rifle Corps, 8th Battalion *Mar* 1, 1328
Lee-Metford Rifle, Manchester Volunteers *Feb* 25, 1136
Military Manœuvres, Grant to Officers *Feb* 19, 791
Military Works Bill, 2R. *Feb* 18, 733, 751, 756, 760; *Feb* 22, 880, In Com. 933, 936, 942, 945, 946, 949, 955, 958, 959
Officers
  Grant to, Military Manœuvres *Feb* 19, 791
  Volunteers, Examinations *Mar* 4, 1575
Ordnance Store Department *Feb* 25, 1135
Queen's Reign, Colonial Troops *Mar* 1, 1331
Recruiting Areas, Colonies *Mar* 4, 1579
Scots Greys *Feb* 16, 516
Scottish Rifles (5th Vol. Batt.) *Mar* 4, 1596, 1597
Solent and Clyde, Artillery Firing *Feb* 26, 1255
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  Battalions, Aldershot *Mar* 4, 1574
  Cadet Corps *Feb* 26, 1252
  Manchester, Lee-Metford Rifle *Feb* 25, 1136
  Officers, Examinations *Mar* 4, 1575
  Scottish Rifles (5th Battalion) *Mar* 4, 1596, 1597

Brookfield, Mr. A. M., *Sussex, Rye*
Army Estimates: £627,200 for Volunteer Corps, Pay and Allowances *Feb* 19, 817
Military Manœuvres Bill *Feb* 15, 414

Brunner, Sir John T., Bart., *Cheshire, Northwich*
Voluntary Schools Bill, In Com. *Mar* 1, 1400

Bryce, Right Hon. James, *Aberdeen, S.*
Affairs in Northern Syria *Feb* 18, 724, 725
Armenia *Feb* 25, 1142
Crete *Feb* 22, 889; *Feb* 25, 1148; *Mar* 1, 1338
Crete, Declaration of Policy *Mar* 2, 1513, 1514
Dardanelles *Feb* 26, 1261
East London Water Bill *Feb* 26, 1248
Scottish Fishery Cruisers *Mar* 1, 1335
Steam Engines and Boilers (Persons in Charge) Bill, 2R. *Feb* 17, 638, 639, 652
Trade Dispute, Manchester *Feb* 12, 271

Buchanan, Mr. T. R., *Aberdeenshire, E.*
Army Estimates: £1,016,400 for Works, Buildings, and Repairs *Feb* 19, 842
Army Medical Service *Feb* 18, 725, 726
Barracks Act (1890) *Feb* 22, 881
Business of the House (Estimates)
  Civil Service *Feb* 18, 728
  Civil Service (Supplementary) *Feb* 11, 179
Military Works Bill *Feb* 22, 879; In Com. 950, 951
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Burdett-Coutts, Mr. W. L. A. B., *Westminster*
London County Buildings Bill, 2R. *Feb* 18, 697

Burials Bill
c. 2R., Mr. R. Cameron, 1045; Mr. J. C. Williams, 1050, 1057, 1058, 1078; Mr. Griffith-Boscawen, 1056, 1057, 1058, 1064; Mr. J. G. Talbot, 1060, 1064; Mr. R. W. Perks, 1062, 1064, 1065, 1079; Mr. Jesse Collings, 1063; Sir F. S. Powell, 1065; Mr. J. Brigg, 1069; Mr. J. W. Sidebotham, 1071; Mr. R. Purvis, 1073; Mr. W. Woodall, 1074, 1075; Viscount Cranborne, 1075, 1076, 1078, 1079, 1086; Mr. J. H. Lewis, 1079, 1096; Mr. D. Lloyd-George, 1080; Mr. Tomlinson, 1083; Sir H. Fowler, 1084, 1086, 1093; Sir Matthew White Ridley, 1090, 1093; Mr. Johnson-Ferguson, 1094; Mr. J. H. Roberts, 1097; (*Division*, 1098) *Feb* 24
2R. negatived *Feb* 24, 1101

Burns, Mr. John, *Battersea*
Army Estimates: £295,800 for Medical Establishment, Pay; Report *Feb* 15, 498
County Surveyors (Ireland) Amendment Bill, 2R. *Feb* 12, 367
London County Buildings Bill, 2R. *Feb* 18, 680, 681, 682
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Steam Engines and Boilers (Persons in Charge) Bills, 2R. *Feb* 17, 631, 637, 638, 650

Burt, Mr. Thomas, *Morpeth*
Steam Engines and Boilers (Persons in Charge) Bill, 2R. *Feb* 17, 650

Business of the House (see Parliament: Lords; Commons)

BUXTON, Mr. SYDNEY C., *Tower Hamlets, Poplar*
East London Water Bill, 2R. *Feb* 26, 1246
Supply
£14,980 for Colonial Services, including South Africa (Supplementary) *Feb* 26, 1299
£153,044 for Public Education, England and Wales (Supplementary) *Feb* 26, 1288
Voluntary Schools Bill, In Com. *Mar* 1, 1363, 1374, 1387, 1388, 1389, 1398, 1399; *Mar* 3, 1538, 1562; *Mar* 4, 1652, 1669

CALDWELL, Mr. JAMES, *Lanark, Mid*
Beam and Otter Trawling *Feb* 15, 390
Icelandic Fisheries *Feb* 15, 391
Post Office Savings Bank Accounts *Feb* 15, 390
School Board Elections, Scotland *Feb* 15, 409; *Feb* 16, 512
Stornoway Mail *Feb* 15, 391
Supply
£16,617 for Repayment to the Local Loans Fund *Feb* 26, 1306
£4,500 for Temporary Commissions (Supplementary) *Feb* 26, 1304
Trusts (Scotland) Bill, 2R. *Feb* 12, 366

CAMERON, Mr. ROBERT, *Durham, Houghton-le-Spring*
British Troops in India, Health *Feb* 25, 1141
Burials Bill, 2R. *Feb* 24, 1045
Voluntary Schools Bill, In Com. *Mar* 4, 1664

CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN, Right Hon. Sir H., *Stirling Burghs*
Army Estimates
158,774 Land Forces (Number of) *Feb* 12, 345
£553,000 for Militia, Pay and Allowances *Feb* 12, 364
£1,016,400 for Works, Buildings, and Repairs *Feb* 19, 845, 846
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Crete, Action of British Ships *Feb* 22, 925
Military Works Bill, 2R. *Feb* 18, 765
Standing Committees, Chairmen's Panel *Mar* 1, 1321
Supply: Scotch Estimates *Feb* 15, 413
Voluntary Schools Bill, 2R. *Feb* 16, 583, 593
Weighing Cattle, Scotland *Feb* 15, 389

CAMPBELL, Mr. JAMES A., *Glasgow and Aberdeen Universities*
Voluntary Schools Bill *Feb* 9, 21

CAREW, Mr. J. L., *Dublin, College Green*
Clongorey Estate, Kildare *Mar* 1, 1344
Dublin Corporation Bill, 2R. *Feb* 17, 613
Great Northern Railway Company, Ireland *Mar* 4, 1591
Irish Mails *Feb* 11, 159
Land Commission, King's County *Feb* 11, 184
Lightships, Ireland *Mar* 4, 1577, 1578
Maryborough Gaol: James Fitzharris *Feb* 22, 875, 876
Slavery in Zanzibar *Feb* 19, 780

CARLILE, Mr. W. W., *Bucks, N.*
Local Taxation Account *Feb* 18, 727

CARSON, Right Hon. EDWARD H., *Dublin University*
Appointments of High Sheriffs (Ireland) Bill *Feb* 26, 1267
Educational Endowments, Ireland *Feb* 25, 1130
Land Sub-commission, Ireland *Feb* 18, 719
Public Works Loans, Ireland *Feb* 26, 1257
Solicitors (Ireland) Bill, Intro. *Feb* 26, 1267
Supply: £12,938 for Irish Land Commission, Salaries and Expenses (Supplementary) *Feb* 26, 1277, 1280
Voluntary Schools Bill, In Com. *Mar* 3, 1552

CAVENDISH, Mr. V. C. W., *Derbyshire, W.*
Queen's Reign, Visit of Colonial Premiers *Mar* 4, 1602

CAYZER, Mr. C. W., *Barrow-in-Furness*
Steam Engines and Boilers (Persons in Charge) Bill, 2R. *Feb* 17, 651, 652

CHALONER, Captain R. G. W., *Wiltshire, Westbury*
East India, Officers of General List *Feb* 16, 501

CHAMBERLAIN, MR. J. AUSTEN (Civil Lord of the Admiralty) *Worcestershire, E.*
Greenwich Age Pension *Feb* 9, 10
Naval College, Dartmouth *Feb* 22, 875

CHAMBERLAIN, RIGHT HON. JOSEPH (Secretary of State for the Colonies), *Birmingham, W.*
British Uitlander Population, Transvaal *Feb* 25, 1142
Cable, Canada to Australia *Feb* 22, 879
Colonial Premiers, Visit to London *Feb* 23, 978; *Mar* 4, 1602
Gibraltar, Drainage Works *Mar* 2, 1435
Jameson Raid
Cape Inquiry *Feb* 26, 1264
Indemnity *Feb* 18, 726
President Kruger's Claim *Feb* 22, 875; *Mar* 4, 1586
Judges, Transvaal *Mar* 4, 1610
Pilot Service, Falkland Islands *Feb* 23, 968
Queen's Reign, Visit of Colonial Premiers *Feb* 23, 978; *Mar* 4, 1602
Reform Prisoners, Pretoria *Feb* 18, 727; *Feb* 26, 1262
Slavery, New Hebrides *Mar* 2, 1434
Supply: £14,980 for Colonial Services, including South Africa (Supplementary) *Feb* 26, 1298
Transvaal
British Uitlander Population *Feb* 25, 1142
Jameson Raid (see above)
Judges *Mar* 4, 1610
Recent Legislation *Mar* 2, 1444

CHANNING, Mr. F. A., *Northampton, E.*
British South Africa Committee *Feb* 19, 783
Business of the House (Estimates)
Civil Service *Feb* 18, 728
Civil Service (Supplementary) *Feb* 22, 886
Copyholders, Ground Game *Mar* 2, 1433
Crete *Feb* 23, 982, 983; *Feb* 25, 1144, 1146, 1148, 1150; *Feb* 26, 1264, 1265
Crete
Action of British Ships *Feb* 22, 917
Declaration of Policy *Mar* 2, 1500, 1501, 1504
Death of a Post Office Servant *Feb* 22, 873, 874
Employers' Liability Bill *Feb* 9, 25
Military Works Bill, In Com. *Feb* 22, 937, 954
Supply: £153,044 for Public Education, England and Wales (Supplementary) *Feb* 26, 1283, 1292; *Mar* 1, 1412
Sutton-in-Ashfield School Board *Mar* 1, 1328, 1329
Voluntary Schools Bill, 2R. *Feb* 15, 415, 426; *Feb* 25, 1154; In Com. *Mar* 1, 1371, 1383, 1399, 1405; *Mar* 3, 1550; *Mar* 4, 1614

CHAPLIN, RIGHT HON. HENRY (President of the Local Government Board), *Lincolnshire, Sleaford*
Adulteration of Food *Mar* 1, 1341
Brisley (Norfolk) Parish Council *Feb* 25, 1139
Burial Grounds *Mar* 4, 1602, 1603
Casual Wards, Metropolis *Mar* 1, 1322
Children's Metropolitan Asylums Board *Feb* 9, 11; *Feb* 18, 705; *Mar* 4, 1588, 1589
Local Taxation Account *Feb* 18, 727
Manchester, "Church Ley" *Feb* 18, 722
Rating Commission *Feb* 11, 179
Vaccination Prosecutions *Feb* 11, 173
West Ham, Electric Light *Mar* 4, 1598

CHARITY COMMISSION
Parliamentary Charity Commissioner—
Mr. J. GRANT LAWSON
Marshall's Charity, Norfolk, Q. Mr. T. L. Hare; *A.* Mr. Grant Lawson *Feb* 11, 182

Chelsea Water Purchase Bill
c. Read 1° *Feb* 10, 69

Christchurch Inclosure Allotments Bill
l. 2R., Lord Halsbury, 1309, 1314, 1318, 1319; Lord Hobhouse, (*Amendt.*) 1309, 1314, 1319; Lord Herschell, 1315, 1317; Earl of Morley; 1317; Lord Thring, 1318; (*Division*, 1320) *Mar* 1
Read 2ª *Mar* 1, 1320

Church Patronage Transfer Bill
c. Intro., Mr. Stanley Leighton; Read 1° *Feb* 19, 792

Church Patronage Transfer Bill. [H.L.]
l. Pres., Archbishop of York; Read 1ª *Mar* 1, 1321

City of London Sewers Bill
c. 2R., Mr. C. Harrison, 140; Mr. T. Lough, 142; Sir F. Lockwood, 144, 146; Mr. J. W. Lowther, 146; Mr. W. O. Clough, 147; Mr. Alban Gibbs, 148; Sir W. Harcourt, 149; Colonel Hughes, 151; (*Division*, 151) *Feb* 11
Read 2° *Feb* 11, 151

CIVIL SERVICE
Supply: Estimates
Scotch, Q. Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman; *A.* Mr. A. J. Balfour *Feb* 15, 413
Supplementary, Q. Mr. T. R. Buchanan; *A.* Mr. Hanbury *Feb* 11, 179. *Qs.* Mr. F. A. Channing, Mr. T. R. Buchanan, Sir C. Dilke; *As.* Mr. A. J. Balfour *Feb* 18, 728. *Qs.* Mr. F. A. Channing; *As.* Mr. A. J. Balfour *Feb* 22, 886
Temporary Employment, Q. Mr. H. Kimber; *A.* Mr. Hanbury *Feb* 22, 862

CLANCY, Mr. J. J., *Dublin County, N.*
Financial Relations, Great Britain and Ireland *Feb* 9, 4; *Feb* 16, 517; *Feb* 23, 981

CLARKE, Sir EDWARD G., *Plymouth*
Voluntary Schools Bill, 2R. *Feb* 25, 1204
West India and Cape Mails *Mar* 4, 1609

Clerical Incomes (Taxation)
Mr. J. Round (*Notice of Motion*) *Feb* 23, 965

CLIFDEN, Viscount
Crete *Feb* 15, 370
Irish Mails *Mar* 4, 1570

CLOUGH, Mr. W. O., *Portsmouth*
City of London Sewers Bill, 2R. *Feb* 11, 147
Voluntary Schools Bill, In Com. *Mar* 2, 1535

COGHILL, Mr. D. H., *Stoke-upon-Trent*
Voluntary Schools Bill *Feb* 11, 194

COHEN, Mr. B. L., *Islington, E.*
Children's Metropolitan Asylums Board *Feb* 9, 11; *Mar* 4, 1588, 1589
London County Buildings Bill, 2R. *Feb* 18, 692
London County Council (General Powers) Bill, 2R. *Feb* 11, 153

COLLINGS, RIGHT HON. JESSE (Under Secretary of State for the Home Department), *Birmingham, Bordesley*
Burials Bill, 2R. *Feb* 24, 1063
Metropolitan and Other Police Courts Bill, Intro. *Feb* 15, 415
Steam Engines and Boilers (Persons in Charge) Bill, 2R. *Feb* 17, 635, 636, 637, 638, 642, 646, 647, 653

Colomb, Sir John C. R., *Great Yarmouth*
- Army Estimates
  - 158,774 Land Forces (Number of) *Feb* 12, 334, 335
  - £1,016,400 for Works, Buildings, and Repairs *Feb* 19, 844
- Benin Expedition *Feb* 18, 723; *Feb* 22, 964
- Crete *Feb* 22, 888
- Military Works Bill, 2R. *Feb* 18, 755, 756, 761
- Royal Marine Artillery Officers *Feb* 22, 868

COLONIES

Secretary of State—Mr. J. Chamberlain
Under Secretary of State—Earl of Selborne

- *Australasia* (see that Title)
- *Bermuda to Jamaica, Cable Communication, Q.* General Laurie; *A.* Sir M. Hicks Beach *Feb* 11, 170
- *British*
  - *South Africa Company, Cost of Imperial Troops, Qs.* Mr. T. Bayley, Mr. P. O'Brien; *As.* Mr. Powell-Williams, Sir M. Hicks Beach *Feb* 11, 174
  - *Uitlander Population, Transvaal, Q.* Sir E. Ashmead-Bartlett; *A.* Mr. J. Chamberlain *Feb* 25, 1142
- *Cables*
  - *Canada to Australia, Q.* Mr. J. F. Hogan; *A.* Mr. J. Chamberlain *Feb* 22, 878
  - *Communication, Bermuda to Jamaica, Q.* General Laurie; *A.* Sir M. Hicks Beach *Feb* 11, 170
- *Chamberlain (Mr.) and President Kruger, Q.* Lord Loch; *A.* Earl of Selborne *Feb* 9, 1
- *Colonial Premiers, Visit to London, Qs.* Mr. J. F. Hogan, Sir G. Baden-Powell; *As.* Mr. J. Chamberlain *Feb* 23, 977. *Q.* Mr. V. Cavendish; *A.* Mr. J. Chamberlain *Mar* 4, 1602
- *Gibraltar Drainage Works, Q.* Mr. E. Robertson; *A.* Mr. J. Chamberlain *Mar* 2, 1435
- *Jameson Raid*
  - *Cape Inquiry, Q.* Mr. Bryn Roberts; *A.* Mr. J. Chamberlain *Feb* 26, 1264
  - *Indemnity, Qs.* Mr. James Roche, Mr. Gibson Bowles; *As.* Mr. J. Chamberlain *Feb* 18, 726
  - *President Kruger's Claim, Qs.* Sir E. Ashmead-Bartlett, Mr. James Roche; *As.* Mr. J. Chamberlain *Feb* 22, 875. *Q.* General Russell; *A.* Mr. J. Chamberlain *Mar* 4, 1585
- *Judges, Transvaal, Qs.* Sir E. Ashmead-Bartlett; *As.* Mr. J. Chamberlain *Mar* 4, 1610
- *Pilot Service, Falkland Islands, Q.* Mr. J. W. Sidebotham; *A.* Mr. J. Chamberlain *Feb* 23, 968
- *Queen's Reign*
  - *Colonial*
    - *Premiers, Visit of, Qs.* Mr. J. F. Hogan, Sir G. Baden-Powell; *As.* Mr. J. Chamberlain *Feb* 23, 977. *Q.* Mr. V. Cavendish; *A.* Mr. J. Chamberlain *Mar* 4, 1602
    - *Troops, Q.* Mr. J. F. Hogan; *A.* Mr. Brodrick *Mar* 1, 1331
- *Recruiting Areas, Colonies, Q.* Captain Pirie; *A.* Mr. Brodrick *Mar* 4, 1579

[*cont.*

COLONIES—cont.
- *Reform Prisoners, Pretoria, Qs.* Mr. J. M. Maclean; *As.* Mr. J. Chamberlain *Feb* 18, 727; *Feb* 26, 1262
- *Royal Niger Company, Qs.* Sir C. Dilke; *As.* Mr. Curzon *Feb* 19, 778
- *Slavery, New Hebrides, Qs.* Mr. S. Smith; *As.* Mr. J. Chamberlain *Mar* 2, 1433
- *Transvaal*
  - *British Uitlander Population, Q.* Sir E. Ashmead-Bartlett; *A.* Mr. J. Chamberlain *Feb* 25, 1142
  - *Jameson Raid* (see above)
  - *Judges, Qs.* Sir E. Ashmead-Bartlett; *As.* Mr. J. Chamberlain *Mar* 4, 1610
  - *Recent Legislation, Q.* Sir E. Ashmead-Bartlett; *A.* Mr. J. Chamberlain *Mar* 2, 1444
- *West Indian Sugar Commission, Q.* Sir C. Dilke; *A.* Sir M. Hicks Beach *Feb* 11, 155

Colston, Mr. C. E. H. A., *Gloucester, Thornbury*
- Army Estimates: £553,000 for Militia, Pay and Allowances *Feb* 19, 794
- Army Warrant Officers, Good Conduct Medal *Feb* 18, 721
- Salisbury Plain *Feb* 25, 1144

Colville, Mr. John, *Lanark, N.E.*
- Letters for Siberia *Feb* 25, 1137

Companies Bill

l. 2R., Earl of Dudley *Feb* 11, 125
Read 2^{a} and Referred to Com. *Feb* 11, 125

Compton, Lord Alwyne F., *Beds, Biggleswade*
- Army Estimates: £76,000 for Yeomanry Cavalry, Pay and Allowances *Feb* 19, 808

Condon, Mr. T. J., *Tipperary, E.*
- Cullenagh Mountain, Tipperary *Feb* 26, 1259
- Irish Mail Service *Feb* 15, 393

Congested Districts Board (Ireland) (Compulsory Purchase Powers) Bill

c. Intro., Dr. R. Ambrose; Read 1° *Feb* 9, 27

Contracts
- *Admiralty, Qs.* Sir H. Vincent; [Mr. Speaker;] *As.* Mr. Macartney *Mar* 1, 1324
- *Industrial Schools, Ireland, Q.* Mr. P. O'Brien; *A.* Mr. G. Balfour *Feb* 25, 1127
- *Mails*
  - *Australia, Qs.* Mr. J. F. Hogan; *As.* Mr. Hanbury *Feb* 15, 397; *Feb* 22, 867
  - *Indo-China and Australia, Qs.* Sir J. Leng; *As.* Mr. Hanbury *Feb* 11, 158; *Mar* 2, 1438

County Councils (Qualification of Women) Bill
c. Intro., Mr. W. R. Bousfield; Read 1° *Feb* 17, 663

County Courts (Right of Audience) Bill
l. Pres., Lord Macnaghten; Read 1ª *Feb* 18, 665

County Surveyors (Ireland) Amendment Bill
c. 2R., Mr. W. Johnston, 366, 367, 368; Mr. J. Atkinson, 367; Mr. A. J. Balfour, 367; Mr. J. Burns, 367; [Mr. Speaker, 368] *Feb* 12
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Courtney, Right Hon. L. H., *Cornwall, Bodmin*
Crete, Declaration of Policy *Mar* 2, 1481
Steam Engines and Boilers (Persons in Charge) Bill, 2R. *Feb* 17, 654, 656
Voluntary Schools Bill *Feb* 25, 1155, 1208, 1211, 1212

Coventry Electric Tramways Bill
c. 2R., Sir C. Dilke *Feb* 22, 854
Read 2° *Feb* 22, 854

Cranborne, Viscount, *Rochester*
Army Estimates: £553,000 for Militia, Pay and Allowances *Feb* 19, 798, 802
Burials Bill, 2R. *Feb* 24, 1075, 1076, 1078, 1079, 1086
Voluntary Schools Bill, 2R. *Feb* 11, 219, 220, 227; *Feb* 25, 1176, 1178; In Com. *Mar* 1, 1405, 1409; *Mar* 4, 1626, 1629

Crete
Action of British Ships
Mr. H. Labouchere, (*Motion for Adj. of House*) 890, 891, 892; Mr. A. J. Balfour, 890, 896, 897, 898, 899, 901, 926; [Mr. Speaker, 890, 892, 894, 895, 915, 916]; Mr. J. Dillon, 892, 895, 897, 898, 909; Sir W. Harcourt, 900, 901, 910, 911; Mr. Gibson Bowles, 904; Sir R. T. Reid, 906, 909, 911, 912; Mr. G. J. Goschen, 909, 910, 911; Mr. Vesey Knox, 913; Sir E. Ashmead-Bartlett, 915, 916; Mr. F. A. Channing, 917; Sir J. Lubbock, 918; Mr. P. J. Stanhope, 919, 920; Mr. Stuart-Wortley, 920; Mr. E. J. C. Morton, 921; Mr. C. J. Darling, 923; Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman, 925; Sir C. Dilke, 927; (*Division*, 928) *Feb* 22
Declaration of Policy
Sir W. Harcourt, (*Motion for Adj. of House*) 1450, 1453, 1470, 1471, 1506, 1523, 1532; [Mr. Speaker, 1450, 1479, 1501]; Mr. A. J. Balfour, 1450, 1514, 1518, 1523; Mr. Curzon, 1453, 1461, 1464, 1465, 1470, 1471, 1474, 1487, 1510; Mr. J. Dillon, 1464, 1465; Mr. T. P. O'Connor, 1472, 1474; Sir E. Ashmead-Bartlett, 1475, 1479; Mr. R. B. Haldane, 1479, 1484; Mr. L. Courtney, 1481;

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Crete—cont.
Declaration of Policy—cont.
Mr. H. Labouchere, 1484, 1485, 1487; Mr. Gibson Bowles, 1485, 1501, 1504, 1506, 1510; Mr. T. W. Legh, 1490; Mr. H. J. Gladstone, 1491; Mr. Vicary Gibbs, 1495; Mr. F. S. Stevenson, 1497; Mr. F. A. Channing, 1500, 1501, 1504; Mr. Arnold-Forster, 1512; Mr. J. Bryce, 1513, 1514; Colonel Saunderson, 1516; Mr. J. Morley, 1526; (*Motion withdrawn*, 1533) *Mar* 2
Ministerial Statements
Earl of Dunraven, 1105; Marquess of Salisbury, 1105; Earl of Kimberley, 1107 *Feb* 25
Mr. A. J. Balfour, 1150, 1151, 1152, 1153; Sir W. Harcourt, 1151, 1152; Mr. P. O'Brien, 1153 *Feb* 25
Earl of Kimberley, 1417, 1422, 1427; Marquess of Salisbury, 1422, 1423, 1427 *Mar* 2
Policy of H.M.'s Government
Mr. E. J. C. Morton, (*On Motion for Adj.*) 500; Mr. Hanbury, 500 *Feb* 15
Mr. T. P. O'Connor, (*Motion for Adj. of House*) 518, 519, 533; [Mr. Speaker, 518, 519, 531]; Mr. J. Dillon, 523; Mr. A. J. Balfour, 524; Sir W. Harcourt, 527; Mr. H. Labouchere, 530, 531; Mr. Curzon, 531; Sir E. Ashmead-Bartlett, 532; (*Motion withdrawn*, 533) *Feb* 16
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Crilly, Mr. Daniel, *Mayo, N.*
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Belmullet Union *Feb* 22, 886
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Cripps, Mr. C. A., *Gloucester, Stroud*
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Crombie, Mr. J. W., *Kincardineshire*
Collisions at Sea, Fishing Boats *Mar* 1, 1330
South Shoal, Orkney *Feb* 18, 714
Trunk Telephone Line *Feb* 25, 1126; *Mar* 4 1590

CROSS, Viscount (Lord Privy Seal)
Irish Land Commission *Feb* 18, 666

Crown Lands, etc. (see Woods, Forests, and Land Revenues of the Crown)

Curran, Mr. T. B., *Donegal, N.*
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CURZON, Right Hon. GEORGE N. (Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs), *Lancashire, S.W., Southport*
- Affairs in Northern Syria *Feb* 18, 724, 725
- Akassa Garrison *Feb* 18, 709
- *Alabama* Claims *Feb* 26, 1253
- Armenia *Feb* 25, 1142; *Mar* 2, 1441, 1442
- Armenian Refugees, Cyprus *Feb* 12, 264
- British Trade
  - Foreign Competition *Feb* 15, 388
  - Liberia *Feb* 25, 1128
- Christian Population at Halepa *Feb* 11, 176
- *Costa Rica Packet* Case *Mar* 4, 1598
- Crete *Feb* 9, 23, 24; *Feb* 11, 176; *Feb* 12, 274, 275; *Feb* 15, 404, 405, 406, 407, 408; *Feb* 16, 513, 514, 515, 531; *Feb* 18, 722; *Feb* 19, 787, 788, 789; *Feb* 22, 887, 888, 889; *Feb* 23, 982, 983, 984, 985, 986; *Feb* 25, 1144, 1145, 1146, 1147, 1148, 1149, 1150; *Feb* 26, 1264, 1265, 1266; *Mar* 1, 1338, 1339, 1340; *Mar* 2, 1446, 1447, 1448, 1449; *Mar* 4, 1604, 1605, 1606, 1607
- Crete, Declaration of Policy *Mar* 2, 1453, 1461, 1464, 1465, 1470, 1471, 1474, 1487, 1510
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- Cyprus, Armenian Refugees *Feb* 12, 264
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- Icelandic Fisheries *Feb* 9, 9; *Feb* 15, 392
- Korea *Mar* 1, 1326, 1327
- Liberia, British Trade *Feb* 25, 1128
- Lighthouses, Red Sea *Feb* 26, 1261
- Mission to King Menelik *Feb* 25, 1143
- Mussulmans in Crete *Feb* 18, 722, 723
- Naval Force of Powers at Constantinople *Feb* 18, 718
- Neutrals in Time of War *Feb* 25, 1124, 1125
- Ottoman Empire Reforms *Feb* 18, 725
- Outrage at Balliana *Feb* 15, 396
- Royal Niger Company *Feb* 19, 778, 779
- Samoa *Feb* 15, 398
- Slavery in Zanzibar *Feb* 19, 780; *Feb* 25, 1132
- *S.S. Utopia*, Claim against Owners *Mar* 4, 1587
- Stokes (Mr.), Execution of *Feb* 18, 718
- Sun Yat Sen's Detention *Feb* 15, 396
- Supply
  - £36,700 for British Protectorates in Uganda and Central and East Africa (Supplementary) *Feb* 26, 1297
  - £23,670 for Diplomatic and Consular Services (Supplementary) *Feb* 26, 1296, 1297
  - £1,200 for Slave Trade Services (Supplementary) *Feb* 26, 1299
- Tillett (Mr. Ben), Imprisonment in Belgium *Mar* 4, 1592
- Treatment of Prisoners at Barcelona *Feb* 22, 869
- Turkish Reforms *Feb* 12, 276
- Uganda Railway Committee *Feb* 15, 402

CUSTOMS, EXCISE, AND INLAND REVENUE
- *Cahir Estate, Ireland, Q.* Major Jameson; *A.* Mr. G. Balfour *Mar* 1, 1345
- *Imperial Taxes, Ireland, Qs.* Mr. T. Lough; *As.* Mr. A. J. Balfour *Mar* 4, 1612

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CUSTOMS, EXCISE, AND INLAND REVENUE—cont.
- *Income Tax, Farms, Q.* Mr. H. E. Kearley; *A.* Sir M. Hicks Beach *Mar* 4, 1573
- *Land Tax, Q.* Mr. Grant Lawson; *A.* Sir M. Hicks Beach *Feb* 11, 187. *Q.* Mr. J. H. Johnstone; *A.* Sir M. Hicks Beach *Feb* 16, 504. *Q.* Mr. G. H. Morrell; *A.* Sir M. Hicks Beach *Mar* 2, 1438
- *Land Tax Commissioners, Qs.* Sir C. Dilke, Mr. F. S. Stevenson; *As.* Mr. Hanbury *Feb* 15, 400
- *Local Taxation*
  - *Account, Q.* Mr. W. W. Carlile; *A.* Mr. H. Chaplin *Feb* 18, 727
  - *Ireland, Q.* Mr. J. Dillon; *A.* Mr. G. Balfour *Feb* 11, 182
- *Marine Insurance Policies, Stamp Duty, Q.* Sir G. Baden-Powell; *A.* Sir M. Hicks Beach *Feb* 25, 1135

Daly, Mr. James, *Monaghan, S.*
- Land Courts, Ireland *Mar* 4, 1585

Dalziel, Mr. J. H., *Kirkcaldy Burghs*
- Army Estimates: £2,553,400 for Provisions, Forage, and Other Supplies *Feb* 19, 828, 839
- Financial Relations, Great Britain and Ireland *Feb* 18, 727
- Kirkcaldy Post Office *Feb* 22, 880
- Navy Estimates *Feb* 19, 791; *Feb* 22, 880, 881
- Prison-made Goods *Feb* 18, 715
- Supply
  - £14,980 for Colonial Services, including South Africa (Supplementary) *Feb* 26, 1298
  - £10 for Post Office (Supplementary) *Feb* 26, 1307
  - £2,030 for Register House, Edinburgh (Supplementary) *Feb* 26, 1275
  - £1,200 for Slave Trade Services (Supplementary) *Feb* 26, 1299
  - £95,434 for Teachers' Pension Fund, Ireland *Feb* 26, 1302

Darling, Mr. C. J., *Deptford*
- Crete *Feb* 23, 985, 986; *Mar* 2, 1447
- Crete, Action of British Ships *Feb* 22, 923
- London County Buildings Bill, 2R. *Feb* 18, 692, 693

Davies, Mr. M. Vaughan, *Cardigan*
- Peasant Freeholders, Wales *Feb* 23, 1024

Davies, Mr. W. Rees, *Pembrokeshire*
- Freeholders, Wales
  - Peasant *Feb* 23, 1020, 1027
  - Small *Feb* 9, 4
- Voluntary Schools Bill, In Com. *Mar* 1, 1369, 1374; *Mar* 4, 1670

DAVITT, Mr. MICHAEL, *Mayo, S.*
- Dublin Corporation Bill, 2R. *Feb* 17, 617, 618
- Evicted Farm, Westport *Feb* 25, 1131
- Sale of Intoxicating Liquor on Sunday Bill, 2R. *Feb* 10, 98
- Treason-felony Prisoners *Feb* 25, 1138

DEVONSHIRE, DUKE OF (Lord President of the Council)
- Home Defence and the Volunteers *Feb* 11, 134

DILKE, Right Hon. Sir CHARLES W., Bart., *Gloucester, Forest of Dean*
- Agricultural Rates Act (1896) *Feb* 22, 883
- Akassa Garrison *Feb* 18, 708
- Anglo-French Postal Convention *Feb* 16, 505
- Army Estimates
  - £894,000 for Clothing Establishments and Services *Feb* 19, 840
  - 158,774 Land Forces (Number of) *Feb* 12, 327, 335, 336
  - £627,200 for Volunteer Corps, Pay and Allowances *Feb* 19, 812
- Artillery Horses *Feb* 12, 264
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    - Army *Feb* 15, 415
    - Civil Service *Feb* 18, 729
    - Navy *Mar* 2, 1449
  - Motions for the Adjournment of the House *Feb* 23, 986
- Coventry Electric Tramways Bill, 2R. *Feb* 22, 854
- Crete *Mar* 4, 1607
- Crete, Action of British Ships *Feb* 22, 927
- Great Eastern Railway (General Powers) Bill, 2R. *Feb* 22, 849, 851
- Great Northern Railway Bill, 2R. *Feb* 25, 1107
- Korea *Mar* 1, 1326
- Land Tax Commissioners *Feb* 15, 400
- Military Works Bill, In Com. *Feb* 22, 935
- Naval
  - Establishment, Pay *Mar* 2, 1430
  - Manœuvres, Report *Mar* 1, 1338
- North British Railway, 2R. *Feb* 22, 852
- Ordnance Store Department *Feb* 25, 1135
- Pauper Aliens *Feb* 9, 67, 68
- Preferential Payments in Bankruptcy Act (1888) Amendment Bill, 2R. *Feb* 10, 77
- Royal Niger Company *Feb* 19, 778, 779
- Supply
  - £36,700 for British Protectorates in Uganda and Central and East Africa (Supplementary) *Feb* 26, 1297
  - £23,670 for Diplomatic and Consular Services (Supplementary) *Feb* 26, 1295
  - £1,200 for Slave Trade Services (Supplementary) *Feb* 26, 1299
  - £4,500 for Temporary Commissions (Supplementary) *Feb* 26, 1304
- Truck Act
  - Fines at Belfast *Feb* 9, 7
  - Railway Companies *Feb* 15, 401
- West Indian Sugar Commission *Feb* 11, 155

DILLON, Mr. JOHN, *Mayo, E.*
- Army Estimates: 158,774 Land Forces (Number of) *Feb* 12, 355
- Caretakers, Ireland *Mar* 1, 1323, 1324
- Crete *Feb* 12, 275; *Feb* 15, 405, 407, 408; *Feb* 16, 523; *Feb* 19, 788, 789; *Feb* 22, 889; *Feb* 25, 1146, 1147, 1148, 1149; *Mar* 1, 1347, 1350
- Crete
  - Action of British Ships *Feb* 22, 892, 895, 897, 898, 909
  - Declaration of Policy *Mar* 2, 1464, 1465
  - Mussulmans in *Feb* 18, 723
- Education, Ireland *Feb* 11, 181
- Egyptian Government, Grant in Aid *Feb* 15, 410
- Evicted Tenants (Ireland) *Mar* 4, 1590
- Financial Relations, Great Britain and Ireland *Feb* 11, 184; *Feb* 22, 884, 885
- Land Commission, Ireland *Feb* 26, 1251
- Listowel Board of Guardians *Feb* 18, 710, 711
- Loan Fund Societies, Ireland *Feb* 12, 277, 278; *Feb* 22, 861; *Feb* 25, 1139
- Local Taxation, Ireland *Feb* 11, 182
- Massereene Estate, Police Protection *Feb* 22, 871
- Military Works Bill, 2R. *Feb* 18, 745, 747; In Com. *Feb* 22, 941, 942, 944
- Mission to King Menelik *Feb* 25, 1143
- National Education Board, Ireland *Feb* 11, 168
- Navy Estimates
  - £507,000 Additonal Expenditure (1896-97) *Feb* 26, 1269, 1270
  - £5,775. 13s. for Naval Defence Act (1889) (Excess Expenditure) *Feb* 26, 1272, 1273
- Supply: £12,938 for Irish Land Commission, Salaries and Expenses (Supplementary) *Feb* 26, 1276
- Voluntary Schools Bill, 2R. *Feb* 15, 485; *Feb* 23, 980; In Com. *Mar* 1, 1407, 1408; *Mar* 4, 1669

DIXON-HARTLAND, Sir F. D., Bart., *Middlesex, Uxbridge*
- Hampton Court Green *Mar* 1, 1336
- London County Buildings Bill, 2R. *Feb* 18, 681

DONELAN, Captain A. J. C., *Cork, E.*
- Army Horses *Mar* 4, 1597
- Chelsea Hospital *Mar* 4, 1589
- Crete *Mar* 4, 1605
- Cullenagh Mountain, Tipperary *Feb* 26, 1260
- Daunt's Rock Lightship *Feb* 18, 709
- Explosion, *H.M.S. Howe Mar* 2, 1444, 1445
- Horse-breeding Commission, Dublin *Feb* 22, 860
- Land Commission, Ireland *Feb* 23, 969
- Loan Fund Societies, Ireland *Feb* 22, 862; *Feb* 23, 975
- Mails
  - Irish *Feb* 22, 864, 865
  - Skibbereen and Schull *Mar* 2, 1445
- National Schools, Ireland *Feb* 22, 879
- Piers, Ireland *Mar* 4, 1574, 1575
- Rural Postmen, Ireland *Feb* 26, 1256

DOUGHTY, Mr. GEORGE, *Great Grimsby*
Icelandic Fisheries *Feb* 9, 9

DOUGLAS, Right Hon. A. AKERS- (see AKERS-DOUGLAS)

Dublin Corporation Bill
c. 2R., Mr. W. Johnston, (*Motion*) 70; Mr. T. Harrington, 70; [Mr. Speaker, 70] *Feb* 10
Mr. W. Johnston, (*Motion*) 151, 152; Mr. T. Harrington, 152; [Mr. Speaker, 152;] *Adj. Feb* 11
2R., Debate Resumed on Mr. W. Johnston's Motion: Mr. J. L. Carew, 613; [Mr. Speaker, 613, 622, 623, 624, 625]; Mr. W. Johnston, 613, 622; Mr. T. Harrington, 614, 618, 623, 624; Mr. M. Davitt, 617, 618; Mr. Sydney Gedge, 618, 620; Mr. H. C. Plunkett, 619, (*Instruction*) 623; Mr. H. V. Duncombe, 619, 620; Mr. J. Lowther, 620; Mr. W. Field, 622; Mr. J. C. Williams, 622, 623; (*Division*, 623); (*Instr. withdrawn*), 625 *Feb* 17

Dublin Port and Docks Board Bill
c. Read 2° and com. *Mar* 4, 1571

DUDLEY, EARL OF (Parliamentary Secretary to the Board of Trade)
Companies Bill, 2R. *Feb* 11, 125

DUNCOMBE, Hon. H. V., *Cumberland, Egremont*
Army Estimates: £295,800 for Medical Establishment, Pay; Report *Feb* 15, 498
Dublin Corporation Bill, 2R. *Feb* 17, 619, 620
Sale of Intoxicating Liquor on Sunday Bill, 2R. *Feb* 10, 96, 98, 99, 120
West Ham Electric Light *Mar* 4, 1597

DUNRAVEN, Earl of
Crete *Feb* 25, 1105

DYKE, Right Hon. Sir WILLIAM HART, Bart., *Kent, Dartford*
One-man Companies *Mar* 4, 1611
Voluntary Schools Bill, In Com. *Mar* 1, 1354, 1388; *Mar* 3, 1558, 1559

East India (Officers of General List)
Captain Chaloner, (*Notice of Motion*) *Feb* 16, 501
Mr. J. H. Johnstone, (*Notice of Motion*) *Mar* 2, 1429

East London Water (Purchase) Bill
c. Read 1° *Feb* 10, 69
2R., Mr. Sydney Buxton *Feb* 26, 1246
Read 2° *Feb* 26, 1246
Mr. J. M. Paulton, (*Instruction to Com.*) 1246; Colonel Lockwood, 1248; Mr. J. Bryce, 1248; (*Motion Agreed to*, 1249) *Feb* 26

EDUCATIONAL DEPARTMENT
Lord President—Duke of DEVONSHIRE
Vice President—Sir JOHN E. GORST

Board Schools, Financial Aid, Q. Mr. E. J. C. Morton; *A.* Mr. A. J. Balfour *Feb* 15, 410
Castleton Wesleyan School, Q. Mr. A. E. Hutton; *A.* Sir J. Gorst *Feb* 11, 164
Certificated Teacher's Dismissal, Gawber, near Barnsley, Q. Mr. J. H. Yoxall; *A.* Sir J. Gorst *Mar* 4, 1587
Children's Metropolitan Asylums Board, Qs. Mr. J. G. Talbot, Mr. B. L. Cohen; *As.* Mr. H. Chaplin *Feb* 9, 10. *Qs.* Mr. W. Hazell, Mr. J. G. Talbot; *As.* Mr. Ritchie, Mr. H. Chaplin *Feb* 18, 704
Convent and Monastery Schools, Ireland, Q. Mr. Vesey Knox; *A.* Mr. G. Balfour *Feb* 26, 1259
Duke of York's Military School, Q. Mr. E. Strachey; *A.* Mr. Brodrick *Feb* 12, 267
Education
  Bill, Q. Mr. J. G. Talbot; *A.* Mr. A. J. Balfour *Feb* 9, 26
  Code, Irish Certificated Teachers, Q. Mr. A. E. Hutton; *A.* Sir J. Gorst *Feb* 11, 164
  Fee Grant, Ireland, Qs. Mr. Vesey Knox; *As.* Mr. Hanbury *Feb* 22, 878
  Grant, Scotland, Q. Mr. T. Shaw; *A.* Sir M. Hicks Beach *Feb* 11, 183
  Ireland, Qs. Mr. W. Field, Mr. J. Dillon; *As.* Mr. G. Balfour *Feb* 11, 181. *Q.* Mr. W. Field; *A.* Mr. G. Balfour *Feb* 12, 276
  Votes, Qs. Mr. T. Lough; *As.* Sir M. Hicks Beach *Feb* 15, 399. *Q.* Sir J. Fergusson; *A.* Sir J. Gorst *Feb* 16, 511
Educational Endowments, Ireland, Qs. Colonel Saunderson, Mr. E. H. Carson; *As.* Mr. G. Balfour *Feb* 25, 1130
Elementary Schools
  Heywood, Q. Mr. J. C. Williams; *A.* Sir J. Gorst *Mar* 2, 1441
  Rating, Qs. Mr. T. Lough, Mr. J. G. Talbot; *As.* Mr. A. J. Balfour *Feb* 9, 25. *Qs.* Mr. Ellis Griffith, Mr. T. Lough; *As.* Mr. A. J. Balfour *Feb* 12, 279
Heywood Elementary Schools, Q. Mr. J. C. Williams; *A.* Sir J. Gorst *Mar* 2, 1441
Industrial School Contracts, Ireland, Q. Mr. P. O'Brien; *A.* Mr. G. Balfour *Feb* 25, 1127
National
  Education Board, Ireland, Q. Mr. J. Dillon; *A.* Mr. G. Balfour *Feb* 11, 168
  Schools
    Ireland, Q. Captain Donelan; *A.* Mr. G. Balfour *Feb* 22, 879
    Teachers
      Ireland, Qs. Mr. J. C. Flynn; *As.* Mr. G. Balfour *Feb* 12, 263. *Q.* Sir T. Lea; *A.* Mr. G. Balfour *Feb* 23, 967
      Pension Fund, Ireland, Q. Mr. D. Macaleese; *A.* Mr. G. Balfour *Feb* 16, 510. *Q.* Mr. Vesey Knox; *A.* Mr. Hanbury *Feb* 26, 1258. *Q.* Mr. J. C. Flynn; *A.* Mr. G. Balfour *Mar* 1, 1335. *Q.* Mr. P. O'Brien; *A.* Mr. G. Balfour *Mar* 4, 1576

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EDUCATION DEPARTMENT—cont.

- *Naval*
  - *College, Dartmouth, Q.* Sir J. S. B. Simeon; *A.* Mr. Austen Chamberlain *Feb* 22, 875
  - *Instructors, Q.* Mr. Gibson Bowles; *A.* Mr. G. J. Goschen *Feb* 18, 705
- *Necessitous Board Schools, Qs.* Mr. H. Labouchere; *As.* Mr. A. J. Balfour *Feb* 11, 186
- *St. Andrew's Schools, Willesden, Q.* Mr. J. H. Yoxall; *A.* Sir J. Gorst *Feb* 11, 177
- *St. James's School, Bradford (Yorkshire), Qs.* Mr. A. E. Hutton, Mr. E. Flower; *As.* Sir J. Gorst *Feb* 15, 394
- *Schools*
  - *Accommodation*
    - *Southport, Qs.* Mr. H. J. Wilson; *As.* Sir J. Gorst *Feb* 16, 507
    - *Wimbledon, Q.* Mr. J. C. Williams; *A.* Sir J. Gorst *Feb* 11, 167
  - *Board*
    - *Elections, Scotland, Qs.* Mr. J. Caldwell; *As.* Mr. Graham Murray *Feb* 15, 409; *Feb* 16, 512
    - *Financial Aid, Q.* Mr. E. J. C. Morton; *A.* Mr. A. J. Balfour *Feb* 15, 410
    - *Sutton-in-Ashfield, Qs.* Mr. F. A. Channing, Mr. H. J. Wilson; *As.* Sir J. Gorst *Mar* 1, 1328
  - *Castleton Wesleyan, Q.* Mr. A. E. Hutton; *A.* Sir J. Gorst *Feb* 11, 164
  - *Children, Donegal, Sickness among, Q.* Mr. D. Macaleese; *A.* Mr. G. Balfour *Mar* 4, 1598
  - *Christian Brothers, Qs.* Mr. Vesey Knox, Mr. W. Johnston; *As.* Mr. G. Balfour *Feb* 19, 782
  - *Convent and Monastery, Ireland, Q.* Mr. Vesey Knox; *A.* Mr. G. Balfour *Feb* 26, 1259
  - *Elementary, Heywood, Q.* Mr. J. C. Williams; *A.* Sir J. Gorst *Mar* 2, 1441
  - *Endowment, Ireland, Q.* Mr. W. Johnston; *A.* Mr. G. Balfour *Feb* 18, 718
  - *Industrial (Ireland), Contracts, Q.* Mr. P. O'Brien; *A.* Mr. G. Balfour *Feb* 25, 1127
  - *Military, Duke of York's, Q.* Mr. E. Strachey; *A.* Mr. Brodrick *Feb* 12, 267
  - *National Teachers, Ireland* (see *National* above)
  - *Necessitous Board, Qs.* Mr. H. Labouchere; *As.* Mr. A. J. Balfour *Feb* 11, 186
  - *Premises, Q.* Mr. A. E. Hutton; *A.* Sir J. Gorst *Feb* 11, 165
  - *St. Andrew's, Willesden, Q.* Mr. J. H. Yoxall; *A.* Sir J. Gorst *Feb* 11, 177
  - *St. James's, Bradford (Yorkshire), Qs.* Mr. A. E. Hutton, Mr. E. Flower; *As.* Sir J. Gorst *Feb* 15, 394
  - *Science and Art, of, Ireland, Q.* Mr. Vesey Knox; A. Mr. Hanbury *Feb* 22, 878
  - *Teachers' Superannuation, Q.* Mr. R. G. Verney; *A.* Mr. A. J. Balfour *Mar* 2, 1445
  - *Voluntary*
    - *Bill, Evening Continuation, Q.* Mr. H. Hobhouse; *A.* Sir J. Gorst *Mar* 4, 1583
    - *Bills, Q.* Mr. J. Brigg; *A.* Sir J. Gorst *Feb* 25, 1136
    - *Rates, Public Companies, Q.* Sir J. Fergusson; *A.* Sir R. Webster *Feb* 22, 881
    - *Rating, Q.* Mr. C. Harrison; *A.* Mr. A. J. Balfour *Feb* 15, 413
    - *Scotland, Qs.* Mr. Vesey Knox; *As.* Mr. A. J. Balfour *Feb* 16, 516

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- *Scottish Universities Grant, Q.* Mr. J. G. Weir; *A.* Mr. Graham Murray *Feb* 11, 153
- *Southport, School Accommodation, Qs.* Mr. H. J. Wilson; *As.* Sir J. Gorst *Feb* 16, 507
- *Sutton-in-Ashfield School Board, Qs.* Mr. F. A. Channing, Mr. H. J. Wilson; *As.* Sir J. Gorst *Mar* 1, 1328
- *Teachers*
  - *Irish Certificated, Education Code, Q.* Mr. A. E. Hutton; *A.* Sir J. Gorst *Feb* 11, 164
  - *National School, Ireland* (see above)
- *University*
  - *Colleges, Government Grant, Q.* Sir W. Houldsworth; *A.* Sir M. Hicks Beach *Feb* 22, 871. *Qs.* Sir J. Leng, Mr. J. C. Williams; *As.* Mr. Hanbury *Mar* 2, 1440
  - *Extension, Annual Grant, Q.* Sir J. R. Mowbray; *A.* Sir M. Hicks Beach *Mar* 4, 1581
- *Voluntary Schools Bill, Qs.* Mr. J. A. Campbell, Mr. J. W. Mellor; *As.* Sir M. Hicks Beach, Sir R. Webster *Feb* 9, 21. *Q.* Colonel Milward; *A.* Sir M. Hicks Beach *Feb* 11, 178. *Qs.* Major Rasch, Mr. J. Dillon; *As.* Mr. A. J. Balfour *Feb* 23, 980. *Q.* Mr. J. Rankin; *A.* Sir J. Gorst *Mar* 2, 1435
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- *Voluntary Schools*
  - *Bill, Evening Continuation Schools, Q.* Mr. H. Hobhouse; *A.* Sir J. Gorst *Mar* 4, 1583
  - *Bills, Q.* Mr. J. Brigg; *A.* Sir J. Gorst *Feb* 25, 1136
  - *Rates, Public Companies, Q.* Sir J. Fergusson; *A.* Sir R. Webster *Feb* 22, 881
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  - *Scotland, Qs.* Mr. Vesey Knox; *As.* Mr. A. J. Balfour *Feb* 16, 516
- *Wimbledon, School Accommodation, Q.* Mr. J. C. Williams; *A.* Sir J. Gorst *Feb* 11, 167

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- Midwives Registration Bill, Intro. *Feb* 9, 27; *Feb* 12, 368

ELLIS, Mr. JOHN EDWARD, *Nottingham, Rushcliffe*

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ELLIS, Mr. T. E., *Merionethshire*

- Peasant Freeholders, Wales *Feb* 23, 1031, 1032

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Evans, Mr. S. T., *Glamorgan, Mid*
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Farquharson, Dr. Robert, *Aberdeenshire, W.*
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Fenwick, Mr. Charles, *Northumberland, Wansbeck*
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Ferguson, Mr. J. E. Johnson- (see Johnson-Ferguson)

Fergusson, Right Hon. Sir James, Bart., *Manchester, N.E.*
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FINLAY, Sir R. B. (Solicitor General), *Inverness Burghs*
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Fison, Mr. F. W., *York, W.R., Doncaster*
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FitzGerald, Sir R. U. Penrose, Bart. *Cambridge*
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FitzWygram, General Sir F. W. J., Bart., *Hants, Fareham*
Army Estimates
  158,774 Land Forces (Number of) *Feb* 12, 342
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Flower, Mr. Ernest, *Bradford, W.*
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Flynn, Mr. J. C., *Cork County, N.*
Army Estimates
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Under Secretary of State—Mr. G. N. Curzon

Affairs in Northern Syria, *Qs.* Mr. J. Bryce; *As.* Mr. Curzon *Feb* 18, 724
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Alabama Claims, *Qs.* Mr. Gibson Bowles; *As.* Mr. Curzon *Feb* 26, 1253
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Armenian Refugees, Cyprus, *Q.* Mr. Bryn Roberts; *A.* Mr. Curzon *Feb* 12, 264
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  Foreign Competition, *Q.* Sir H. Vincent; *A.* Mr. Curzon *Feb* 15, 388
  Liberia, *Qs.* Sir G. Baden-Powell; *As.* Mr. Curzon *Feb* 25, 1128
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Crete, *Qs.* Sir E. Ashmead-Bartlett, Mr. J. Lowther, Mr. F. S. Stevenson; *As.* Mr. Curzon *Feb* 9, 22. *Q.* Mr. J. C. Flynn; *A.* Mr. Curzon *Feb* 11, 176. *Qs.* Mr. J. C. Flynn, Mr. F. S. Stevenson, Mr. J. Dillon; *As.* Mr. Curzon *Feb* 12, 274. *Qs.* Earl of Kimberley, Viscount Clifden; *As.* Marquess of Salisbury *Feb* 15, 369. *Qs.* Mr. F. S. Stevenson, Sir E. Ashmead-Bartlett, Mr. C. J. Monk, Mr. H. Labouchere, Mr. J. Dillon, Mr. J. O'Kelly, Sir W. Harcourt, Mr. T. P. O'Connor, Mr. Gibson Bowles; [Mr. Speaker;] *As.* Mr. Curzon, Mr. A. J. Balfour *Feb* 15, 404. *Qs.* Mr. J. O'Kelly, Sir W. Harcourt, Mr. J. Ellis, Mr. J. C. Flynn, Mr. T. P. O'Connor, Mr. Hedderwick; [Mr. Speaker;] *As.* Mr. Curzon *Feb* 16, 512. *Qs.* Sir E. Ashmead-Bartlett, Mr. J. Dillon; *As.* Mr. Curzon *Feb* 18, 722. *Qs.* Sir E. Ashmead-Bartlett, Mr. J. Lowther, Mr. T. W. Legh, Mr. Gibson Bowles, Mr. J. Dillon, Mr. J. Ellis; [Mr. Speaker;] *As.* Mr. Curzon *Feb* 19, 786. *Qs.* Sir E. Ashmead-Bartlett, Mr. F. S. Stevenson, Sir J. Colomb, Mr. J. Dillon, Mr. J. Bryce, Mr. H. Labouchere; [Mr. Speaker;] *As.* Mr. Curzon *Feb* 22, 887. *Qs.* Mr. Gibson Bowles, Mr. F. S. Stevenson, Mr. F. A. Channing, Sir W. Harcourt, Mr. T. Bayley, Sir E. Ashmead-Bartlett, Mr. C. J. Darling; [Mr. Speaker;] *As.* Mr. Curzon, Mr. A. J. Balfour *Feb* 23, 982. *Q.* Earl of Dunraven; *A.* Marquess of Salisbury; [*Obs.* Earl of Kimberley;] *Feb* 25, 1105. *Qs.* Mr. F. A. Channing, Mr. F. S. Stevenson, Sir H. Havelock-Allan, Mr. J. H. Roberts, Mr. H. J. Wilson, Mr. J. Dillon, Mr. D. F. Goddard, Sir E. Ashmead-Bartlett, Mr. H. Labouchere, Mr. J. Bryce, Mr. J. C. Flynn, Dr. Tanner, Mr. T. Bayley; [Mr. Speaker;] *As.* Mr. Curzon, Mr. A. J. Balfour *Feb* 25, 1144. *Qs.* Mr. F. A. Channing, Mr. J. C. Flynn, Sir E. Ashmead-Bartlett; *As.* Mr. Curzon *Feb* 26, 1264. *Qs.* Mr. J. Bryce, Mr. H. Labouchere, Sir E. Ashmead-Bartlett; *As.* Mr. Curzon *Mar* 1, 1338. *Qs.* Mr. Gibson Bowles, Sir E. T. Gourley, Mr. Bryn Roberts, Mr. C. J. Darling, Mr. H. Labouchere, Sir E. Ashmead-Bartlett; *As.* Mr. Curzon, Mr. G. J. Goschen *Mar* 2, 1446. *Qs.* Mr. J. C. Flynn, Captain Donelan, Mr. J. Lowther, Sir E. Ashmead-Bartlett, Sir W. Harcourt, Sir C. Dilke; [Mr. Speaker;] *As.* Mr. Curzon, Mr. A. J. Balfour *Mar* 4, 1604
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Cuba, *Qs.* Mr. P. O'Brien; [Mr. Speaker;] *As.* Mr. Curzon *Mar* 1, 1346
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Mission to King Menelik, *Qs.* Mr. J. Dillon, Mr. J. M. Maclean; *As.* Mr. Curzon *Feb* 25, 1143
Mussulmans in Crete, *Qs.* Sir E. Ashmead-Bartlett, Mr. J. Dillon; *As.* Mr. Curzon *Feb* 18, 722
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S.S. Utopia, Claim against Owners, *Q.* Mr. J. G. A. Baird; *A.* Mr. Curzon *Mar* 4, 1587
Stokes (Mr.), Execution of, *Q.* Mr. H. D. Greene; *A.* Mr. Curzon *Feb* 18, 717
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Tillet (Mr. Ben), Imprisonment in Belgium, *Q.* Mr. H. Broadhurst; *A.* Mr. Curzon *Mar* 4, 1592
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Turkish Reforms, *Q.* Mr. F. S. Stevenson; *A.* Mr. Curzon *Feb* 12, 276
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c. Intro., Mr. Ritchie; Read 1° *Mar* 4, 1676

FORWOOD, Right Hon. Sir A. B., Bart., *Lancashire, S.W., Ormskirk*
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FOSTER, Mr. H. S., *Suffolk, Lowestoft*
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FOSTER, Sir B. WALTER, *Derby, Ilkeston*
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GALLOWAY, Mr. W. J., *Manchester, S.W.*
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GIBBS, Hon. ALBAN G. H., *London, City*
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GIBBS, Hon. VICARY, *Herts, St. Albans*
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GILHOOLY, Mr. J., *Cork County, W.*
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GLADSTONE, Right Hon. HERBERT J., *Leeds, W.*
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GODDARD, Mr. D. F., *Ipswich*
Crete *Feb* 25, 1146
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GODSON, Mr. A. F., *Kidderminster*
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Gold and Silver Plate Licences Bill
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Goldsworthy, General W. T., *Hammersmith*
- Army Estimates: £2,553,400 for Provisions, Forage, and Other Supplies *Feb* 19, 836

Gordon, Mr. J. E., *Elgin and Nairn*
- Post Office Letter Weights *Feb* 18, 707

GORST, Right Hon. Sir JOHN E. (Vice President of the Council on Education), *Cambridge University*
- Castleton Wesleyan School *Feb* 11, 164
- Certificated Teacher's Dismissal, Gawber, near Barnsley *Mar* 4, 1588
- Education
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- St. Andrew's School, Willesden *Feb* 11, 177
- St. James's School, Bradford (Yorkshire) *Feb* 15, 395
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- Voluntary Schools Bill, Evening Continuation Classes *Mar* 4, 1583

GOSCHEN, Right Hon. GEORGE J. (First Lord of the Admiralty), *St. George's, Hanover Square*
- Anglo-French Postal Convention *Feb* 16, 505
- Benin Expedition *Feb* 18, 723; *Feb* 22, 964
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- Lee-Metford Rifle, Royal Naval Reserve *Feb* 11, 154
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- Navy Estimates: £507,000 Additional Expenditure (1896-97) *Feb* 26, 1270, 1271
- Ordnance Store Department *Feb* 9, 15
- Patriotic Fund *Feb* 16, 504
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- Royal Marine Artillery Officers *Feb* 22, 868

Goulding, Mr. E. A., *Wilts, Devizes*
- Salisbury Plain, Tenant Farmers *Mar* 4, 1586

Gourley, Sir Edward T., *Sunderland*
- Army Estimates: £553,000 for Militia, Pay and Allowances *Feb* 19, 793
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- Discharge of Seamen, Foreign Ports *Mar* 2, 1443
- North Eastern Railway Dispute *Mar* 1, 1344
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- *c.* Read 1° *Feb* 10, 69

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- Voluntary Schools Bill *Feb* 25, 1184; In Com. *Mar* 1, 1369, 1398, 1399; *Mar* 4, 1624

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- *c.* 2R., Sir C. Dilke, 849, 851; Mr. J. W. Lowther, 851, 852 *Feb* 22
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Great Northern Railway Bill
- *c.* 2R., Sir C. Dilke, 1107; Mr. J. E. Ellis, 1108; Mr. F. W. Fison, 1109, 1115; Mr. A. O'Connor, 1111, 1114; Mr. C. T. Murdoch, 1114; Mr. G. C. T. Bartley, 1114; Mr. D. Lloyd-George, 1115 *Feb* 25
- Read 2° *Feb* 25, 1115

Green, Mr. W. D., *Wednesbury*
- Voluntary Schools Bill, 2R. *Feb* 11, 210

Greene, Mr. H. D., *Shrewsbury*
- Stokes (Mr.), Execution of *Feb* 18, 717

Griffith-Boscawen, Mr. A. S. T., *Kent, Tunbridge*
- Burials Bill, 2R. *Feb* 24, 1056, 1057, 1058, 1064
- Locomotives on Highways Bill, Intro. *Feb* 9, 27
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Griffith, Mr. Ellis J., *Anglesey*
- Elementary Schools, Rating *Feb* 12, 279
- Peasant Freeholders, Wales *Feb* 23, 1035
- Voluntary Schools Bill, *Feb* 25, 1153; In Com. *Mar* 1, 1365, 1372, 1385; *Mar* 3, 1562; *Mar* 4, 1614

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- OnMotion, That Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair; Debate Resumed upon Colonel Lockwood's Amendment: Sir A. F. Acland-Hood, 280, 292, 294; Colonel Kenyon-Slaney, 286, 297; Mr. Brodrick, 291, 292, 294, 297, 303, 310; Mr. Arnold-Forster, 294; Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman, 303, 307, 310, 312, 317; Mr. A. J. Balfour, 311, 312; Sir J. Fergusson, 316, 317; Colonel Blundell, 317; Dr. Farquharson, 318; Mr. Powell-Williams, 318; (*Motion Agreed to,* 319) *Feb* 12

GULL, Sir W. CAMERON, Bart., *Devon, Barnstaple*
- Harbour Accommodation, Devon and Cornwall *Feb* 22, 856

HALDANE, Mr. R. B., *Haddington*
- Crete, Declaration of Policy *Mar* 2, 1479, 1484
- Trusts (Scotland) Bill, 2R. *Feb* 12, 365
- Voluntary Schools Bill, In Com. *Mar* 1, 1360

HALSBURY, LORD (Lord Chancellor)
- Christchurch Inclosure Allotments Bill, 2R. *Mar* 1, 1309, 1314, 1318, 1319
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- Land Transfer Bill, 2R. *Mar* 4, 1566

HAMILTON, RIGHT HON. LORD, GEORGE F. (Secretary of State for India), *Middlesex, Ealing*
- Agricultural Bank, India *Feb* 11, 156
- Army Medical Service *Feb* 18, 726
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  - Exchange Compensation, Deputy Postmaster *Feb* 11, 155
  - Peishwa's Estate *Feb* 11, 156
- British Troops in India, Health of *Feb* 25, 1141; *Mar* 1, 1340
- Calcutta, Imperial Museum *Mar* 4, 1583
- Exchange Compensation, Deputy Postmaster, Bombay *Feb* 11, 155
- Imperial Museum, Calcutta *Mar* 4, 1583
- India
  - Agricultural Bank *Feb* 11, 156
  - Cash Balances *Mar* 2, 1439
  - Council *Mar* 4, 1593
  - Enteric Fever *Mar* 4, 1586
  - Famine
    - Godavery Canal *Mar* 1, 1334
    - Mortality *Feb* 11, 177; *Feb* 18, 704; *Feb* 23, 979; *Mar* 4, 1592, 1593
    - Silver Hoards *Feb* 9, 20
  - Loan *Feb* 15, 409
  - Mints *Feb* 25, 1138
  - Staff Corps *Feb* 9, 6
  - Tea Industry *Feb* 19, 786
  - Troops, Health of British, in *Feb* 18, 703; *Feb* 25, 1141; *Mar* 1, 1340
- North German Lloyd Steamers *Feb* 15, 395, 396
- Peishwa's Estate, Bombay *Feb* 11, 156
- Wreck, Indian Troopship *Warren Hastings* *Mar* 1, 1323

HANBURY, RIGHT HON. ROBERT W. (Financial Secretary to the Treasury), *Preston*
- Agricultural Improvements, Ireland *Feb* 25, 1133
- American Mail Service *Mar* 1, 1331
- Australian Mail Contract *Feb* 15, 397; *Feb* 22, 867
- Bogus Telegrams, Ireland *Feb* 26, 1258
- Bridgetown Abbey, Cork *Feb* 15, 391
- Buckie, Connection with Trunk Telephone Lines *Mar* 1, 1347

[*cont.*

HANBURY, Right Hon. ROBERT W.—*cont.*
- Cavan Leitrim and Roscommon Light Railway *Feb* 9, 19
- Civil Service
  - Estimates, Supplementary *Feb* 11, 179
  - Temporary Employment *Feb* 22, 863
- Crete *Feb* 15, 500
- Death of a Post Office Servant *Feb* 22, 873
- Education Fee Grant, Ireland *Feb* 22, 878
- Friendly Societies Rules *Feb* 16, 510
- German-made Tins *Feb* 16, 503
- High Sheriffs *Feb* 12, 271
- Indian Mail Service *Feb* 23, 972
- Indo-China and Australian Mail Contracts *Feb* 11, 159; *Mar* 2, 1439
- Kirkcaldy Post Office *Feb* 22, 880
- Land
  - Commission *Feb* 26, 1251
  - Tax Commissioners *Feb* 15, 400
- Letters for Siberia *Feb* 25, 1137
- Letter-weights *Feb* 18, 707
- Limerick, Canal and Shannon Service *Mar* 4, 1594
- Mail Service
  - American *Mar* 1, 1331
  - Australian Contract *Feb* 15, 397; *Feb* 22, 867
  - Cork Delivery *Feb* 18, 711
  - India, China, and Australian Contracts *Feb* 11, 159; *Mar* 2, 1439
  - Indian *Feb* 23, 972
  - Irish *Feb* 11, 160, 161, 162; *Feb* 15, 393; *Feb* 19, 782; *Feb* 22, 864, 865, 866; *Feb* 23, 979; *Feb* 25, 1136; *Mar* 1, 1325
  - Skibbereen and Schull *Mar* 2, 1445
  - Stornoway *Feb* 9, 22; *Feb* 15, 391
  - West India and Cape *Mar* 4, 1609
- Manchester Post Office *Feb* 19, 786
- Money Orders
  - Commission *Mar* 1, 1326
  - Post Office *Feb* 23, 966, 967
  - Service, Benevolent Societies *Feb* 19, 785
- National Teachers' Fund, Ireland *Feb* 26, 1259
- Parcels Post, Inland *Feb* 22, 872
- Parliamentary
  - Debates *Feb* 11, 166
  - Publications, Members' Postage *Feb* 15, 399
- Pattern Post, Rubber Stamps *Feb* 11, 171; *Feb* 15, 390
- Postal Accommodation, Leitrim *Feb* 23, 970
- Post Office
  - Death of a Servant *Feb* 22, 873
  - Establishments *Feb* 9, 7; *Feb* 19, 791
  - Kirkcaldy *Feb* 22, 880
  - Letter Weights *Feb* 18, 707
  - Manchester *Feb* 19, 786
  - Money Orders *Feb* 23, 966, 967
  - Savings Bank Accounts *Feb* 15, 391
  - Sorters *Feb* 22, 881
- Public Works Loans, Ireland *Feb* 26, 1257
- Railway Traffic, England and Ireland *Mar* 1, 1343
- Registered Letter Envelopes *Feb* 11, 168, 169; *Feb* 16, 515
- Rural Postmen, Ireland *Feb* 26, 1256
- Schools of Science and Art, Ireland *Feb* 22, 878
- Service Money Orders, Benevolent Societies *Feb* 19, 785
- Skibbereen and Schull Mails *Mar* 2, 1445
- Statutes, Queen's Printers *Feb* 25, 1125
- Stornoway Mails *Feb* 9, 22; *Feb* 15, 391

[*cont.*

HANBURY, Right Hon. ROBERT W.—*cont.*
Supply
  £10 for County Courts (Supplementary) *Feb* 26, 1275
  £6,800 for Inland Revenue (Supplementary) *Feb* 26, 1307
  £10 for Post Office (Supplementary) *Feb* 26, 1307
  £20,110 for Public Education, Ireland (Supplementary) *Feb* 26, 1294, 1295
  £2,030 for Register House, Edinburgh (Supplementary) *Feb* 26, 1275
  £16,617 for Repayment to the Local Loans Fund *Feb* 26, 1305
  £25,000 for Stationery and Printing (Supplementary) *Feb* 26, 1274
  £95,434 for Teachers' Pension Fund, Ireland *Feb* 26, 1303
  £4,500 for Temporary Commissions (Supplementary) *Feb* 26, 1305
  £16,304 for Treasury Chest Fund *Feb* 26, 1299
Telegrams, Bogus *Feb* 26, 1258
Telegraph
  Extensions, Scotland *Feb* 15, 402, 403
  Facilities, Drinagh, Cork *Feb* 25, 1123
Telephone
  Buckie, Connection with Trunk Lines *Mar* 1, 1347
  System in England *Mar* 1, 1342, 1343
  Trunk Lines, Scotland *Feb* 12, 273 ; *Feb* 25, 1126 ; *Mar* 1, 1345 ; *Mar* 4, 1590
University College *Mar* 2, 1440
Voluntary Schools Bill, 2R. *Feb* 16, 546, 556
Volunteer Drill Halls, Aberdeen *Feb* 23, 976

HARCOURT, Right Hon. Sir WILLIAM VERNON, *Monmouthshire, W.*
Agricultural Rates Act (1896) *Feb* 22, 883
City of London Sewers Bill, 2R. *Feb* 11, 149
Crete *Feb* 15, 406, 407 ; *Feb* 16, 513, 527 ; *Feb* 23, 983 ; *Feb* 25, 1151, 1152 ; *Mar* 1, 1348, 1351 ; *Mar* 4, 1606, 1607
Crete
  Action of British Ships *Feb* 22, 900, 901, 910, 911
  Declaration of Policy *Mar* 2, 1450, 1453, 1470, 1471, 1506, 1523, 1532
London County Buildings Bill, 2R. *Feb* 18, 698, 699
Steam Engines and Boilers (Persons in Charge) Bill, 2R. *Feb* 17, 661
Voluntary Schools Bill *Feb* 11, 196 ; 2R. *Feb* 15, 446 ; *Feb* 16, 594 ; *Feb* 25, 1228

HARE, Mr. T. L., *Norfolk, S.W.*
Marshall's Charity, Norfolk *Feb* 11, 182

HARRINGTON, Mr. TIMOTHY, *Dublin, Harbour*
Dublin Corporation Bill, 2R. *Feb* 10, 70 ; *Feb* 11, 152 ; *Feb* 17, 614, 618, 623, 624

HARRIS, LORD (Lord-in-Waiting)
Local Government (Elections) Bill, 2R. *Feb* 9, 3
Retirement of Vestrymen and Auditors (London) Bill, 2R. *Mar* 4, 1566

HARRISON, Mr. CHARLES, *Plymouth*
City of London Sewers Bill, 2R. *Feb* 11, 140
London County Buildings Bill, 2R. *Feb* 18, 686
Military Works Bill, In Com. *Feb* 22, 945, 953, 959
Voluntary Schools Bill, In Com. *Mar* 3, 1548 ; *Mar* 4, 1656
Voluntary Schools Rating *Feb* 15, 413

HAVELOCK-ALLAN, General Sir H. M., Bart., *Durham, S.E.*
Crete *Feb* 25, 1145

HAZELL, Mr. WALTER, *Leicester*
Children's Metropolitan Asylums Board *Feb* 18, 704
Supply : £30,151 for Trustee Savings Bank and Friendly Societies Deficiency (Supplementary) *Feb* 26, 1300
Verminous Persons Bill, Intro. *Mar* 1, 1416
Voluntary Schools Bill, In Com. *Mar* 4, 1653

HEATON, Mr. J. HENNIKER, *Canterbury*
Lighthouses, Red Sea *Feb* 26, 1261
Maidstone Assizes *Feb* 18, 706
Oyster Culture *Feb* 25, 1132
Telephone System *Mar* 1, 1341, 1342

HEDDERWICK, Mr. T. C. H., *Wick Burghs*
Crete *Feb* 16, 514

HERMON-HODGE, Mr. R. T., *Oxfordshire, Henley*
Army Estimates : £76,000 for Yeomanry Cavalry, Pay and Allowances *Feb* 19, 803

HERSCHELL, Lord
Christchurch Inclosure Allotments Bill, 2R. *Mar* 1, 1315, 1317
Dismissal of Mr. John Bull *Feb* 15, 380
Land Transfer Bill, 2R. *Mar* 4, 1568
Local Government (Elections) Bill, 2R. *Feb* 9, 2 ; *Feb* 11, 125
Marine Insurance Bill, 2R. *Feb* 18, 665

HICKMAN, Sir A., *Wolverhampton, W.*
Steam Engines and Boilers (Persons in Charge) Bill, 2R. *Feb* 17, 628, 629, 639, 661

Highways Bill
c. Intro., Mr. C. Bill ; Read 1° *Feb* 9, 27

HOBHOUSE, Lord
Christchurch Inclosure Allotments Bill, 2R. *Mar* 1, 1309, 1314, 1319

HOBHOUSE, Mr. HENRY, *Somerset, E.*
Voluntary Schools Bill, In Com. *Mar* 4, 1637, 1659
Voluntary Schools Bill, Evening Continuation Schools *Mar* 4, 1583

Hogan, Mr. J. F., *Tipperary, Mid*
American Mail Service *Mar* 1, 1331
Australian Mail Contract *Feb* 15, 397; *Feb* 22, 867
Cable, Canada to Australia *Feb* 22, 878
Colonial Premiers, Visit to London *Feb* 23, 977
Costa Rica Packet Case *Mar* 4, 1598
Queen's Reign, Colonial Troops *Mar* 1, 1331
Royal Engineers, Discharge *Feb* 15, 398
Samoa *Feb* 15, 398

Holland, Hon. L. R., *Tower Hamlets, Bow and Bromley*
Money Orders, Commission *Mar* 1, 1326

HOME DEPARTMENT

Secretary of State—Sir M. W. Ridley
Under Secretary of State—Mr. Jesse Collings
Assizes
  Essex, Trial of William Walden, Q. Mr. P. A. M'Hugh; *A.* Sir Matthew White Ridley *Feb* 11, 180
  Lewes, Conviction for Fraud, Qs. Mr. E. H. Pickersgill; *As.* Sir Matthew White Ridley *Feb* 26, 1249
  Maidstone, Q. Mr. Henniker Heaton; *A.* Sir Matthew White Ridley *Feb* 18, 706
  Winchester, Trial for Bigamy, Q. Mr. E. H. Pickersgill; *A.* Sir Matthew White Ridley *Feb* 15, 388
Bishop of Peterborough, Confirmation of Election, Q. Mr. Bryn Roberts; *A.* Sir Matthew White Ridley *Feb* 26, 1255
Carbide of Calcium, Q. Mr. H. E. Kearley; *A.* Sir Matthew White Ridley *Feb* 18, 721
Carlisle Gaol, Death of Prisoner, Q. Captain Bagot; *A.* Sir Matthew White Ridley *Feb* 11, 166
Central Criminal Court, Regina v. *Greatorex-Smith, Qs.* Mr. E. H. Pickersgill; *As.* Sir Matthew White Ridley *Feb* 19, 777
Commutation of Sentence: James Bate, Q. Mr. E. H. Pickersgill; *A.* Sir Matthew White Ridley *Feb* 18, 707
Copyholders, Ground Game, Qs. Mr. F. A. Channing; *As.* Sir Matthew White Ridley *Mar* 2, 1433
Employment of a Deaf Mute, Belfast, Q. Colonel McCalmont; *A.* Sir Matthew White Ridley *Feb* 22, 858
Essex Assizes, Trial of William Walden, Q. Mr. P. A. M'Hugh; *A.* Sir Matthew White Ridley *Feb* 11, 180
Felon Convicts, Qs. Mr. E. H. Pickersgill; *As.* Sir Matthew White Ridley *Feb* 16, 508; *Feb* 18, 724
Fraudulent Enlistment: George Smith, Q. Mr. T. Lough; *A.* Sir Matthew White Ridley *Feb* 15, 392
Holloway Prison: Lady Scott, Q. Mr. E. H. Pickersgill; *A.* Sir Matthew White Ridley *Feb* 25, 1143
Jameson Raid, Prisoners at Holloway, Q. Mr. P. A. M'Hugh; A. Sir Matthew White Ridley *Feb* 9, 21
Lewes Assizes, Conviction for Fraud, Qs. Mr. E. H. Pickersgill; *As.* Sir Matthew White Ridley *Feb* 26, 1249

HOME DEPARTMENT—cont.
Maidstone Assizes, Q. Mr. Henniker Heaton; *A.* Sir Matthew White Ridley *Feb* 18, 706
Murder on London and South Western Railway, Q. Mr. J. Bailey; *A.* Sir Matthew White Ridley *Feb* 22, 879
National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children, Q. Mr. E. H. Pickersgill; *A.* Sir Matthew White Ridley *Mar* 2, 1440
Nelson's Enchantress, Stage Play, Qs. Admiral Field, Mr. H. S. Foster; [Mr. Speaker;] *As.* Sir Matthew White Ridley *Feb* 18, 714
Penal Servitude, Q. Mr. H. E. Kearley; *A.* Sir Matthew White Ridley *Mar* 2, 1431
Petroleum, Select Committee, Q. Mr. J. McKillop; *A.* Sir Matthew White Ridley *Feb* 19, 789
Police
  Clothing, Metropolitan, Q. Sir L. McIver; *A.* Sir Matthew White Ridley *Feb* 25, 1134
  Constable Murray: Conviction for Perjury, Q. Mr. E. H. Pickersgill; *A.* Sir Matthew White Ridley *Feb* 23, 976
Prisons
  Clerks, Parliamentary Elections, Q. Mr. S. Woods; *A.* Sir Matthew White Ridley *Mar* 4, 1600
  Holloway, Lady Scott in, Q. Mr. E. H. Pickersgill; *A.* Sir Matthew White Ridley *Feb* 25, 1143
  Officers, Q. Lord Balcarres; *A.* Sir Matthew White Ridley *Feb* 26, 1253
Prisoners
  Death of, Carlisle Gaol, Q. Captain Bagot; *A.* Sir Matthew White Ridley *Feb* 11, 166
  Discharged, Re-arrest of, Q. Mr. S. Smith; *A.* Sir Matthew White Ridley *Mar* 2, 1434
  Holloway: Jameson Raid, Q. Mr. P. A. M'Hugh; *A.* Sir Matthew White Ridley *Feb* 9, 21
  Treason-felony, Q. Mr. M. Davitt; *A.* Sir Matthew White Ridley *Feb* 25, 1138
Private Lunatic Asylums, Q. Mr. W. Field; *A.* Sir Matthew White Ridley *Feb* 15, 412
Re-arrest of Discharged Prisoners, Q. Mr. S. Smith; *A.* Sir Matthew White Ridley *Mar* 2, 1434
Servants' Homes and Agencies, Q. Mr. S. Woods; *A.* Sir Matthew White Ridley *Mar* 4, 1600
Street Organ Grinders, Qs. Mr. J. A. Jacoby, Mr. E. H. Pickersgill, Mr. R. Pierpoint; [Mr. Speaker;] *As.* Sir Matthew White Ridley *Feb* 9, 13
Treason-felony Prisoners, Q. Mr. M. Davitt; *A.* Sir Matthew White Ridley *Feb* 25, 1138
Truck Act
  Fines, Q. Mr. S. Woods; *A.* Sir Matthew White Ridley *Feb* 25, 1140
  Fines at Belfast, Q. Sir C. Dilke; *A.* Sir Matthew White Ridley *Feb* 9, 7
  Metropolitan District Railway Company, Q. Mr. T. Lough; *A.* Sir Matthew White Ridley *Mar* 4, 1595
  Railway Companies, Qs. Mr. R. W. Perks, Sir C. Dilke; *As.* Sir Matthew White Ridley *Feb* 15, 400. *Qs.* Mr. S. Woods, Mr. J. Wilson (Durham), Sir H. Vincent, Mr. J. Samuel, Mr. T. Lough; [Mr. Speaker;] *As.* Sir Matthew White Ridley *Feb* 23, 972

[*cont.*

HOME DEPARTMENT—cont.

Vaccinations, Repeated Prosecutions, Q. Mr. T. Bayley; *A.* Sir Matthew White Ridley *Feb* 16, 505
Water Trustees, Qs. Mr. D. Macaleese; *As.* Sir Matthew White Ridley *Feb* 12, 274; *Feb* 26, 1251
Welsh Land Commission Report, Q. Mr. J. H. Roberts; *A.* Sir Matthew White Ridley *Feb* 22, 856
Winchester Assizes, Trial for Bigamy, Q. Mr. E. H. Pickersgill; *A.* Sir Matthew White Ridley *Feb* 15, 388

HOPKINSON, Mr. A., *Wilts, Cricklade*
Estates Tail Bill, Intro. *Feb* 17, 663
Preferential Payments in Bankruptcy Act (1888) Amendment Bill, 2R. *Feb* 10, 82
Voluntary Schools Bill *Feb* 25, 1173

HOULDSWORTH, Sir W. H., Bart., *Manchester, N. W.*
Lee-Metford Rifle, Manchester Volunteers *Feb* 25, 1135
University Colleges, Government Grant *Feb* 22, 871

HOWARD, Mr. J., *Middlesex, Tottenham*
Railway Level Crossing, Tottenham *Feb* 22, 877

HOWELL, Mr. W. T., *Denbigh Boroughs*
Peasant Freeholders, Wales *Feb* 23, 1033

HUBBARD, Hon. E., *Lambeth, Brixton*
London County Buildings Bill, 2R. *Feb* 18, 696

HUGHES, Colonel EDWIN, *Woolwich*
City of London Sewers Bill, 2R. *Feb* 11, 151

HUMPHREYS-OWEN, Mr. A. C., *Montgomeryshire*
Supply: £153,044 for Public Education, England and Wales (Supplementary) *Mar* 1, 1412
Voluntary Schools Bill, In Com. *Mar* 1, 1369, 1373

HUTTON, Mr. A. E., *Yorkshire, W. R., Morley*
Castleton Wesleyan School *Feb* 11, 164
Education Code, Irish Certificated Teachers *Feb* 11, 164
St. James's School, Bradford (Yorkshire) *Feb* 15, 394
School Premises *Feb* 11, 165
Voluntary Schools Bill, In Com. *Mar* 4, 1655

Importation of Foreign Manufactured Goods
Sir H. Vincent, (*Notice of Motion*) *Feb* 16, 502

INDIA
Secretary of State—Lord G. HAMILTON
Under Secretary of State—Earl OF ONSLOW
Agricultural Bank, Q. Sir W. Wedderburn; *A.* Lord G. Hamilton *Feb* 11, 156

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INDIA—cont.
Army
  Health of, Qs. Major Rasch, General Russell; *As.* Lord G. Hamilton *Feb* 18, 703
  Medical Service, Qs. Mr. T. R. Buchanan; *As.* Mr. Powell-Williams, Lord G. Hamilton *Feb* 18, 725
Bombay
  Exchange Compensation, Deputy Postmaster, Q. Sir W. Wedderburn; *A.* Lord G. Hamilton *Feb* 11, 155
  Peishwa's Estate, Q. Sir W. Wedderburn; *A.* Lord G. Hamilton *Feb* 11, 156
Bubonic Fever, Inoculation, Q. Lord Reay; *A.* Earl of Onslow *Feb* 15, 383
Calcutta, Imperial Museum, Q. Mr. Bhownaggree; *A.* Lord G. Hamilton *Mar* 4, 1582
Cash Balances, Q. Mr. J. H. Roberts; *A.* Lord G. Hamilton *Mar* 2, 1439
Enteric Fever, Q. General Russell; *A.* Lord G. Hamilton *Mar* 4, 1586
Exchange Compensation, Deputy Postmaster, Bombay, Q. Sir W. Wedderburn; *A.* Lord G. Hamilton *Feb* 11, 155
Famine
  Godavery Canal, Q. Mr. R. J. Price; *A.* Lord G. Hamilton *Mar* 1, 1334
  Grant in Aid, Q. Mr. S. Smith; *A.* Mr. A. J. Balfour *Feb* 23, 980
  Mortality, Q. Sir W. Wedderburn; *A.* Lord G. Hamilton *Feb* 11, 177. *Qs.* Mr. R. Souttar, Sir J. Fergusson; *As.* Lord G. Hamilton *Feb* 18, 703. *Q.* Mr. Bhownaggree; *A.* Lord G. Hamilton *Feb* 23, 979. *Qs.* Sir W. Wedderburn, Mr. Swift MacNeill; [Mr. Speaker;] *As.* Lord G. Hamilton *Mar* 4, 1592
  Silver Hoards, Q. Mr. Bhownaggree; *A.* Lord G. Hamilton *Feb* 9, 19
Godavery Canal, Indian Famine, Q. Mr. R. J. Price; *A.* Lord G. Hamilton *Mar* 1, 1334
Health of
  Army in, Qs. Major Rasch, General Russell; *As.* Lord G. Hamilton *Feb* 18, 703
  British Troops in, Q. Mr. R. Cameron; *A.* Lord G. Hamilton *Feb* 25, 1141. *Q.* Captain Pirie; *A.* Lord G. Hamilton *Mar* 1, 1340
Imperial Museum, Calcutta, Q. Mr. Bhownaggree; *A.* Lord G. Hamilton *Mar* 4, 1582
Imported Woollen Goods from, Q. Mr. A. F. Godson; *A.* Mr. A. J. Balfour *Feb* 9, 26
Indian
  Council, Q. Sir W. Wedderburn; *A.* Lord G. Hamilton *Mar* 4, 1593
  Loan, Q. Mr. C. J. Monk; *A.* Lord G. Hamilton *Feb* 15, 409
  Mail Service, Q. Sir J. Leng; *A.* Mr. Hanbury *Feb* 23, 972
  Mints, Q. Sir H. Meysey-Thompson; *A.* Lord G. Hamilton *Feb* 25, 1138
  Staff Corps, Q. Sir H. S. King; *A.* Lord G. Hamilton *Feb* 9, 6
  Troopship Warren Hastings, Wreck of, Qs. Mr. P. M. Thornton; *As.* Lord G. Hamilton *Mar* 1, 1323
Mail Service
  Contracts (Indo-China and Australia), Qs. Sir J. Leng; *As.* Mr. Hanbury *Feb* 11, 158; *Mar* 2, 1438
  Indian, Q. Sir J. Leng; *A.* Mr. Hanbury *Feb* 23, 972

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INDIA—cont.

- *North German Lloyd Steamers*, *Qs.* Mr. J. M. Maclean; *As.* Lord G. Hamilton *Feb* 15, 395
- *Peishwa's Estate, Bombay Presidency*, *Q.* Sir W. Wedderburn; *A.* Lord G. Hamilton *Feb* 11, 156
- *Tea Industry*, *Q.* Sir H. S. King; *A.* Lord G. Hamilton *Feb* 19, 785
- *Warren Hastings, Indian Troopship, Wreck of*, *Qs.* Mr. P. M. Thornton; *As.* Lord G. Hamilton *Mar* 1, 1323

Industrial and Provident and Incorporated Building Societies (Purchase of Fee Simple) Bill

c. 2R., Mr. H. J. Wilson, (*Motion*) 1044; (*House Counted out*, 1044) *Feb* 23

IRELAND

Lord Lieutenant—Earl Cadogan
Chief Secretary—Mr. G. W. Balfour
Lord Chancellor—Lord Ashbourne
Attorney General—Mr. J. Atkinson
Solicitor General—Mr. W. Kenny

- *Agricultural*
  - *Improvements*, *Qs.* Mr. J. Gilhooly; *As.* Mr. Hanbury *Feb* 25, 1133
  - *Rate*, *Q.* Mr. D. Kilbride; *A.* Mr. G. Balfour *Mar* 1, 1341
- *American Passenger Traffic, Police at Queenstown*, *Q.* Mr. P. O'Brien; *A.* Mr. G. Balfour *Feb* 22, 869
- *Army Horses*, *Qs.* Mr. J. C. Flynn, Captain Donelan, Mr. P. O'Brien; *As.* Mr. Powell-Williams *Mar* 4, 1597
- *Ballybot, Licensing Sessions*, *Q.* Mr. P. O'Brien; *A.* Mr. G. Balfour *Feb* 25, 1134
- *Ballymena, Land Commission Court*, *Q.* Mr. J. Pinkerton; *A.* Mr. G. Balfour *Feb* 11, 182
- *Ballyshannon Union, Clerk's Salary*, *Q.* Mr. Vesey Knox; *A.* Mr. G. Balfour *Feb* 22, 877
- *Baltimore Fishery Pier*, *Q.* Mr. J. Gilhooly; *A.* Mr. G. Balfour *Feb* 22, 870
- *Bankruptcy Court*, *Qs.* Mr. P. O'Brien; *As.* Mr. G. Balfour *Feb* 25, 1126; *Mar* 4, 1601
- *Bann Drainage*, *Q.* Sir T. Lea; *A.* Mr. G. Balfour *Feb* 23, 968
- *Bantry Bay, Illegal Trawling*, *Q.* Mr. J. Gilhooly; *A.* Mr. G. Balfour *Feb* 12, 267
- *Barrow Drainage*, *Q.* Mr. D. Sullivan; *A.* Mr. G. Balfour *Mar* 1, 1327
- *Belfast*
  - *Employment of Deaf Mute*, *Q.* Colonel McCalmont; *A.* Sir Matthew White Ridley *Feb* 22, 858
  - *Fines at (Truck Act)*, *Q.* Sir C. Dilke; *A.* Sir Matthew White Ridley *Feb* 9, 7
  - *Police*
    - *Acting Sergeants*, *Q.* Mr. D. Macaleese; *A.* Mr. G. Balfour *Feb* 12, 273
    - *Musgrave Street Barracks*, *Q.* Mr. D. Macaleese; *A.* Mr. G. Balfour *Feb* 9, 13

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IRELAND—cont.

- *Belmullet Union, Distress*, *Q.* Mr. D. Crilly; *A.* Mr. G. Balfour *Feb* 22, 886
- *Board of Guardians, Listowel*, *Qs.* Mr. J. C. Flynn, Mr. J. Dillon; *As.* Mr. G. Balfour *Feb* 18, 709
- *Bog Slide, Kerry*, *Q.* Mr. James Roche; *A.* Mr. G. Balfour *Feb* 16, 505
- *Bogus Telegrams*, *Q.* Mr. Vesey Knox; *A.* Mr. Hanbury *Feb* 26, 1258
- *Bray Harbour, Fog Bell*, *Q.* Mr. W. Field; *A.* Mr. Ritchie *Feb* 9, 15
- *Bridgetown Abbey, Cork*, *Q.* Mr. W. Abraham (Cork); *A.* Mr. Hanbury *Feb* 15, 391
- *Cahir*
  - *Estate*, *Q.* Major Jameson; *A.* Mr. G. Balfour *Mar* 1, 1345
  - *Speech at (Mr. W. O'Brien)*, *Q.* Marquess of Londonderry; *A.* Lord Ashbourne; [*Obs.* Earl of Arran;] *Feb* 12, 253
- *Cairn at Finner, Donegal*, *Q.* Mr. P. O'Brien; *A.* Mr. Powell-Williams *Feb* 18, 712
- *Caretakers*, *Qs.* Mr. J. Dillon, Mr. D. Kilbride; *As.* Mr. G. Balfour *Mar* 1, 1323
- *Carrickfergus, High Sheriff*, *Q.* Mr. D. Kilbride; *A.* Mr. G. Balfour *Feb* 25, 1137
- *Castlebar Union*, *Q.* Dr. R. Ambrose: *A.* Mr. G. Balfour *Feb* 18, 712
- *Cattle*
  - *Importation of*, *Q.* Sir J. Leng; *A.* Mr. G. Balfour *Mar* 2, 1431
  - *Slaughter of*, *Qs.* Mr. J. C. Flynn; *As.* Mr. G. Balfour *Feb* 11, 162; *Feb* 12, 268
- *Cavan*
  - *Land Sub-commission*, *Q.* Mr. Vesey Knox; *A.* Mr. G. Balfour *Feb* 19, 781
  - *Leitrim and Roscommon Light Railway*, *Q.* Mr. P. A. M'Hugh; *A.* Mr. Hanbury *Feb* 9, 18
- *Christian Brothers Schools*, *Qs.* Mr. Vesey Knox, Mr. W. Johnston; *As.* Mr. G. Balfour *Feb* 19, 782
- *Clare*
  - *Assizes, Diminution of Crime*, *Q.* Mr. P. O'Brien; *A.* Mr. G. Balfour *Mar* 4, 1608
  - *Police Protection Duty*, *Q.* Mr. P. O'Brien; *A.* Mr. G. Balfour *Feb* 18, 720
- *Clonbain "Whiteboy" Case*, *Qs.* Mr. J. C. Flynn; *As.* Mr. J. Atkinson *Feb* 15, 411; *Feb* 16, 511
- *Clongorey Estate, Kildare*, *Q.* Mr. J. L. Carew; *A.* Mr. G. Balfour *Mar* 1, 1344
- *Consecration of Bishop of Killaloe*, *Qs.* Mr. W. Johnston, Mr. J. C. Flynn; [Mr. Speaker;] *As.* Mr. G. Balfour *Feb* 9, 17
- *Convent and Monastery Schools*, *Q.* Mr. Vesey Knox; *A.* Mr. G. Balfour *Feb* 26, 1259
- *Cork*
  - *Assizes, Clonbain "Whiteboy" Case*, *Qs.* Mr. J. C. Flynn; *As.* Mr. J. Atkinson *Feb* 15, 411; *Feb* 16, 511
  - *Bridgetown Abbey*, *Q.* Mr. W. Abraham (Cork); *A.* Mr. Hanbury *Feb* 15, 391
  - *Mail Delivery*, *Q.* Mr. J. Gilhooly; *A.* Mr. Hanbury *Feb* 18, 711
  - *Telegraph Facilities, Drinagh*, *Q.* Mr. J. Gilhooly; *A.* Mr. Hanbury *Feb* 25, 1123
- *County*
  - *Court Judge, Down*, *Q.* Mr. P. O'Brien; *A.* Mr. G. Balfour *Mar* 4, 1608
  - *Surveyors (Ireland) Amendment Bill* (see that title)

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IRELAND—cont.

- *Court of Bankruptcy*, *Qs.* Mr. P. O'Brien; *As.* Mr. G. Balfour *Feb* 25, 1126; *Mar* 4, 1601
- *Criminal Law Amendment (Ireland) Act 1887*, *Q.* Mr. J. O'Connor; *A.* Mr. A. J. Balfour *Feb* 15, 413
- *Cullenagh Mountain, Tipperary*, *Qs.* Mr. T. J. Condon, Captain Donelan; *As.* Mr. G. Balfour *Feb* 26, 1259
- *Daunt's Rock Lightship*, *Qs.* Mr. W. Field, Mr. J. C. Flynn; *As.* Mr. Ritchie *Feb* 9, 15. *Qs.* Captain Donelan; *As.* Mr. Ritchie *Feb* 18, 709
- *Derry Corporation Stock*, *Q.* Mr. Vesey Knox; *A.* Mr. J. Atkinson *Feb* 22, 866
- *Distress*
  - *Belmullet Union*, *Q.* Mr. D. Crilly; *A.* Mr. G. Balfour *Feb* 22, 886
  - *West of Ireland*, *Q.* Mr. D. Crilly; *A.* Mr. G. Balfour *Feb* 9, 16
- *Donegal*
  - *Cairn at Finner*, *Q.* Mr. P. O'Brien; *A.* Mr. Powell-Williams *Feb* 18, 712
  - *Labourers Acts*, *Q.* Mr. A. O'Connor; *A.* Mr. G. Balfour *Feb* 18, 713
  - *Sickness among School Children*, *Q.* Mr. D. Macaleese; *A.* Mr. G. Balfour *Mar* 4, 1598
- *Down, County Court Judge*, *Q.* Mr. P. O'Brien; *A.* Mr. G. Balfour *Mar* 4, 1608
- *Drainage*
  - *Bann*, *Q.* Sir T. Lea; *A.* Mr. G. Balfour *Feb* 23, 968
  - *Barrow*, *Q.* Mr. D. Sullivan; *A.* Mr. G. Balfour *Mar* 1, 1327
  - *Suck Scheme*, *Q.* Mr. J. O'Kelly; *A.* Mr. G. Balfour *Mar* 4, 1578
- *Dublin*
  - *Barracks, Royal*, *Q.* General Russell; *A.* Mr. Powell-Williams *Feb* 11, 159
  - *Horse-breeding Commission*, *Qs.* Colonel McCalmont, Mr. J. C. Flynn, Mr. P. O'Brien, Captain Donelan; [Mr. Speaker;] *As.* Mr. G. Balfour *Feb* 22, 859
- *Education*
  - *Amendment of Act*, *Qs.* Mr. W. Field, Mr. J. Dillon; *As.* Mr. G. Balfour *Feb* 11, 181. *Q.* Mr. W. Field; *A.* Mr. G. Balfour *Feb* 12, 276
  - *Code, Irish Certificated Teachers*, *Q.* Mr. A. E. Hutton; *A.* Sir J. Gorst *Feb* 11, 164
  - *Fee Grant*, *Qs.* Mr. Vesey Knox; *As.* Mr. Hanbury *Feb* 22, 878
- *Educational Endowments*, *Qs.* Colonel Saunderson, Mr. E. H. Carson; *As.* Mr. G. Balfour *Feb* 25, 1130
- *Election of Coroner, Tipperary*, *Q.* Mr. P. O'Brien; *A.* Mr. G. Balfour *Feb* 18, 720
- *Employment of Deaf Mute, Belfast*, *Q.* Colonel McCalmont; *A.* Sir Matthew White Ridley *Feb* 22, 858
- *Evictions*
  - *Farm, Westport*, *Qs.* Colonel Saunderson, Mr. M. Davitt; *As.* Mr. G. Balfour *Feb* 25, 1131
  - *Monaghan*, *Q.* Mr. D. Macaleese; *A.* Mr. G. Balfour *Feb* 23, 977
  - *Tenants*, *Qs.* Mr. W. Abraham (Cork); *As.* Mr. G. Balfour *Mar* 1, 1332. *Q.* Mr. J. Dillon; *A.* Mr. G. Balfour *Mar* 4, 1590

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IRELAND—cont.

- *Fermanagh*
  - *Land Sub-commission*, *Q.* Mr. E. H. Carson; *A.* Mr. G. Balfour *Feb* 18, 719
  - *Riot*, *Q.* Mr. D. Macaleese; *A.* Mr. G. Balfour *Feb* 18, 716
- *Financial Relations between Great Britain and Ireland* (see that Title)
- *Fishery Piers* (see *Piers* below)
- *Giant's Causeway and Portrush Tramway*, *Qs.* Mr. J. Pinkerton, Mr. T. Lough; *As.* Mr. Ritchie *Feb* 9, 12
- *Great Northern Railway Company of Ireland*, *Q.* Mr. J. L. Carew; *A.* Mr. Ritchie *Mar* 4, 1591
- *Harbour, Bray, Fog Bell*, *Q.* Mr. W. Field; *A.* Mr. Ritchie *Feb* 9, 15
- *High Sheriff, Carrickfergus*, *Q.* Mr. D. Kilbride; *A.* Mr. G. Balfour *Feb* 25, 1137
- *Horse-breeding*
  - *Commission, Dublin*, *Qs.* Colonel McCalmont, Mr. J. C. Flynn, Mr. P. O'Brien, Captain Donelan; [Mr. Speaker;] *As.* Mr. G. Balfour *Feb* 22, 859
  - *Congested Districts Board*, *Qs.* Colonel McCalmont; *As.* Mr. G. Balfour *Feb* 25, 1128; *Mar* 1, 1336
- *Illegal Trawling, Bantry Bay*, *Q.* Mr. J. Gilhooly; *A.* Mr. G. Balfour *Feb* 12, 267
- *Imperial Taxes, Ireland*, *Qs.* Mr. T. Lough; *As.* Mr. A. J. Balfour *Mar* 4, 1612
- *Importation of Cattle*, *Q.* Sir J. Leng; *A.* Mr. G. Balfour *Mar* 2, 1431
- *Industrial School Contracts*, *Q.* Mr. P. O'Brien; *A.* Mr. G. Balfour *Feb* 25, 1127
- *Irish*
  - *Land Commission*, *Qs.* Lord Monteagle; *As.* Viscount Cross *Feb* 18, 665.
  - *Lights Commissioners*, *Q.* Mr. J. C. Flynn; *A.* Mr. Ritchie *Feb* 11, 158
- *Judicial Rents*, *Qs.* Sir T. Lea, Mr. J. Morley; *As.* Mr. G. Balfour *Mar* 1, 1333
- *Jurymen's Expenses*, *Q.* Mr. D. Macaleese; *A.* Mr. J. Atkinson *Feb* 25, 1129
- *Kerry Bog Slide*, *Q.* Mr. James Roche; *A.* Mr. G. Balfour *Feb* 16, 505
- *Kildare*
  - *Clongorey Estate*, *Q.* Mr. J. L. Carew; *A.* Mr. G. Balfour *Mar* 1, 1344
  - *Land Commission Applications*, *Q.* Mr. C. J. Engledow; *A.* Mr. G. Balfour *Feb* 11, 159
- *King's County, Land Commission*, *Q.* Mr. J. L. Carew; *A.* Mr. G. Balfour *Feb* 11, 184
- *Labourers Acts, Donegal*, *Q.* Mr. A. O'Connor; *A.* Mr. G. Balfour *Feb* 18, 713
- *Land*
  - *Commission*
    - *Ballymena, Court*, *Q.* Mr. J. Pinkerton; *A.* Mr. G. Balfour *Feb* 11, 182
    - *General*, *Qs.* Mr. D. Macaleese, Mr. D. Sullivan, Mr. C. J. Engledow, Mr. J. Dillon; *As.* Mr. G. Balfour, Mr. Hanbury *Feb* 26, 1250
    - *Kildare, Applications*, *Q.* Mr. C. J. Engledow; *A.* Mr. G. Balfour *Feb* 11, 159
    - *King's County*, *Q.* Mr. J. L. Carew; *A.* Mr. G. Balfour *Feb* 11, 184
    - *Returns*, *Qs.* Sir T. Lea, Captain Donelan; *As.* Mr. G. Balfour *Feb* 23, 969. *Q.* Mr. D. Kilbride; *A.* Mr. G. Balfour *Feb* 25, 1138

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IRELAND—cont.

- *Land*—cont.
  - *Courts*, *Qs.* Mr. D. Macaleese, Mr. J. Daly, Mr. M. Austin; *As.* Mr. G. Balfour *Mar* 4, 1584
  - *Sub-commission*
    - *Cavan*, *Q.* Mr. Vesey Knox; *A.* Mr. G. Balfour *Feb* 19, 781
    - *Fermanagh*, *Q.* Mr. E. H. Carson; *A.* Mr. G. Balfour *Feb* 18, 719
- *Leitrim*, *Postal Accommodation*, *Q.* Mr. P. A. M'Hugh; *A.* Mr. Hanbury *Feb* 23, 970
- *Licensing Sessions*, *Ballybot*, *Q.* Mr. P. O'Brien; *A.* Mr. G. Balfour *Feb* 25, 1134
- *Light-house Keepers*, *Qs.* Major Jameson; *As.* Mr. Ritchie *Feb* 26, 1263
- *Light Railways* (see Title RAILWAYS)
- *Lightships*
  - *Daunt's Rock*, *Qs.* Mr. W. Field, Mr. J. C. Flynn; *As.* Mr. Ritchie *Feb* 9, 15. *Qs.* Captain Donelan; *As.* Mr. Ritchie *Feb* 18, 709
  - *Repairs, Supervision of*, *Qs.* Mr. J. L. Carew, Mr. P. O'Brien; *As.* Mr. Ritchie *Mar* 4, 1577
- *Limerick*
  - *Canal and Shannon Service*, *Q.* Mr. M. Austin; *A.* Mr. Hanbury *Mar* 4, 1594
  - *Night Watch*, *Q.* Mr. M. Austin; *A.* Mr. G. Balfour *Mar* 4, 1593
- *Listowel Board of Guardians*, *Qs.* Mr. J. C. Flynn, Mr. J. Dillon; *As.* Mr. G. Balfour *Feb* 18, 709
- *Loan Fund Societies*, *Qs.* Mr. J. Dillon; *As.* Mr. G. Balfour *Feb* 12, 277. *Q.* Mr. Swift MacNeill; *A.* Mr. G. Balfour *Feb* 16, 507. *Qs.* Mr. A. O'Connor, Mr. Swift MacNeill, Mr. J. Dillon, Captain Donelan; *As.* Mr. G. Balfour *Feb* 22, 860. *Q.* Captain Donelan; *A.* Mr. G. Balfour *Feb* 23, 975. *Q.* Mr. J. Dillon; *A.* Mr. G. Balfour *Feb* 25, 1139
- *Local Taxation*, *Q.* Mr. J. Dillon; *A.* Mr. G. Balfour *Feb* 11, 182
- *Magisterial Districts*, *Q.* Mr. D. Macaleese; *A.* Mr. G. Balfour *Feb* 18, 716
- *Magistrates*, *Qs.* Mr. D. Macaleese; *As.* Mr. G. Balfour *Feb* 25, 1130; *Mar* 1, 1322
- *Mails*
  - *Acceleration of*, *Qs.* Mr. James Roche, Captain Donelan, Mr. T. B. Curran; [Mr. Speaker;] *As.* Mr. Hanbury *Feb* 22, 864
  - *Delivery*, *Cork*, *Q.* Mr. J. Gilhooly; *A.* Mr. Hanbury *Feb* 18, 711
  - *Irish Service*, *Qs.* Mr. J. L. Carew, Mr. P. O'Brien, Mr. Swift MacNeill; *As.* Mr. Hanbury *Feb* 11, 159. *Qs.* Mr. T. J. Condon, Mr. T. P. O'Connor; *As.* Mr. Hanbury *Feb* 15, 393. *Q.* Mr. Vesey Knox; *A.* Mr. Hanbury *Feb* 19, 781. *Q.* Mr. B. C. Molloy; *A.* Mr. Hanbury *Feb* 23, 978. *Q.* Mr. P. O'Brien; *A.* Mr. Hanbury *Feb* 25, 1136. *Q.* Mr. W. Johnston; *A.* Mr. Hanbury *Mar* 1, 1325. *Qs.* Earl of Belmore, Viscount Clifden; *As.* Duke of Norfolk *Mar* 4, 1568
  - *Skibbereen and Schull*, *Q.* Captain Donelan; *A.* Mr. Hanbury *Mar* 2, 1445
- *Maryborough Gaol: Prisoner Fitzharris*, *Qs.* Mr. J. L. Carew, Mr. W. Johnston, Mr. P. O'Brien; *As.* Mr. G. Balfour *Feb* 22, 875. *Q.* Mr. P. O'Brien; *A.* Mr. G. Balfour *Mar* 4, 1601

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IRELAND—cont.

- *Massereene Estate*, *Police Protection*, *Q.* Mr. J. Dillon; *A.* Mr. G. Balfour *Feb* 22, 871
- *Mayo*, *Tolls*, *Newport*, *Q.* Dr. R. Ambrose; *A.* Mr. G. Balfour *Mar* 2, 1432
- *Monaghan*
  - *Eviction*, *Q.* Mr. D. Macaleese; *A.* Mr. G. Balfour *Feb* 23, 977
  - *Sanitary Arrangements*, *Clones*, *Q.* Mr. D. Macaleese; *A.* Mr. G Balfour *Feb* 12, 275
- *Municipal*
  - *Franchise*, *Q.* Mr. W. Johnston; *A.* Mr. J. Atkinson *Feb* 9, 16
  - *Voters Act*, *Aughnacloy*, *Qs.* Mr. D. Macaleese; *As.* Mr. J. Atkinson *Mar* 4, 1599
- *Musgrave Street Police Barracks*, *Belfast*, *Q.* Mr. D. Macaleese; *A.* Mr. G. Balfour *Feb* 9, 13. *Q.* Mr. G. W. Wolff; *A.* Mr. G. Balfour *Feb* 19, 784
- *National*
  - *Education Board*, *Q.* Mr. J. Dillon; *A.* Mr. G. Balfour *Feb* 11, 168
  - *Schools*, *Q.* Captain Donelan; *A.* Mr. G. Balfour *Feb* 22, 879
  - *School Teachers*
    - *Character and Salaries*, *Qs.* Mr. J. C. Flynn; *As.* Mr. G. Balfour *Feb* 12, 263.
    - *Pension*
      - *Fund*, *Q.* Mr. D. Macaleese; *A.* Mr. G. Balfour *Feb* 16, 510. *Q.* Mr. Vesey Knox; *A.* Mr. Hanbury *Feb* 26, 1258. *Q.* Mr. J. C. Flynn; *A.* Mr. G. Balfour *Mar* 1, 1335
      - *Miss Ryan*, *Q.* Mr. P. O. Brien; *A.* Mr. G. Balfour *Mar* 4, 1576
    - *Residential Rates*, *Q.* Sir T. Lea; *A.* Mr. G. Balfour *Feb* 23, 967
- *Newbliss*
  - *Court-house*, *Orange Lodge*, *Q.* Mr. D. Macaleese; *A.* Mr. G. Balfour *Feb* 16, 510
  - *Petty Sessions*, *Q.* Mr. D. Macaleese; *A.* Mr. G. Balfour *Feb* 11, 175
- *Parish Records*, *Q.* Mr. J. C. Flynn; *A.* Mr. J. Atkinson *Feb* 9, 11
- *Pawnbrokers*, *Q.* Mr. D. Crilly; *A.* Mr. G. Balfour *Feb* 9, 17
- *Petty Sessions*
  - *Courts*, *Q.* Mr. D. Macaleese; *A.* Mr. G. Balfour *Feb* 25, 1129
  - *Newbliss*, *Q.* Mr. D. Macaleese; *A.* Mr. G. Balfour *Feb* 11, 175
- *Piers (Fishery)*
  - *Baltimore*, *Q.* Mr. J. Gilhooly; *A.* Mr. G. Balfour *Feb* 22, 870
  - *Ireland*, *Qs.* Major Jameson; *As.* Mr. G. Balfour *Feb* 26, 1263. *Qs.* Captain Donelan; *As.* Mr. G. Balfour *Mar* 4, 1574
  - *Tramore*, *Q.* Mr. P. J. Power; *A.* Mr. G. Balfour *Mar* 1, 1325
- *Police*
  - *Belfast*
    - *Acting Sergeants*, *Q.* Mr. D. Macaleese; *A.* Mr. G. Balfour *Feb* 12, 273
    - *Barracks*, *Musgrave Street*, *Q.* Mr. D. Macaleese; *A.* Mr. G. Balfour *Feb* 9, 13. *Q.* Mr. G. W. Wolff; *A.* Mr. G. Balfour *Feb* 19, 784
  - *Patrol*, *Skibbereen*, *Q.* Mr. J. Gilhooly; *A.* Mr. G. Balfour *Feb* 23, 968

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IRELAND—cont.
Police—cont.
Protection
Clare, *Q.* Mr. P. O'Brien; *A.* Mr. G. Balfour *Feb* 18, 720
Massereene Estate, *Q.* Mr. J. Dillon; *A.* Mr. G. Balfour *Feb* 22, 871
Queenstown, at, American Passenger Traffic, *Q.* Mr. P. O'Brien; *A.* Mr. G. Balfour *Feb* 22, 869
Royal Irish Constabulary (see below)
Poor Law Relief (Ireland) Bill, *Q.* Mr. P. O'Brien; *A.* Mr. G. Balfour *Feb* 18, 713. *Q.* Mr. J. O'Connor; *A.* Mr. G. Balfour *Mar* 2, 1445
Postal Accommodation, Leitrim, *Q.* Mr. P. A. M'Hugh; *A.* Mr. Hanbury *Feb* 23, 970
Private
Bill Legislation, *Q.* Mr. W. Field; *A.* Mr. G. Balfour *Feb* 11, 181
Lunatic Asylums, *Q.* Mr. W. Field; *A.* Mr. G. Balfour *Mar* 2, 1440
Public Works Loan, *Qs.* Mr. Vesey Knox, Mr. E. H. Carson, Mr. J. C. Flynn; *As.* Mr. Hanbury *Feb* 26, 1256
Rabies, Mr. M'Govern's Treatment, *Q.* Mr. J. C. Flynn; *A.* Mr. G. Balfour *Feb* 11, 157
Railway Traffic, England and Ireland, *Q.* Mr. P. O'Brien; *A.* Mr. Hanbury *Mar* 1, 1343
Riot, Fermanagh, *Q.* Mr. D. Macaleese; *A.* Mr. G. Balfour *Feb* 18, 716
Royal Irish Constabulary, Pensions, *Q.* Mr. P. O'Brien; *A.* Mr. G. Balfour *Mar* 4, 1576
Rural Postmen, *Q.* Captain Donelan; *A.* Mr. Hanbury *Feb* 26, 1256
Sanitary Arrangements, Clones, Monaghan, *Q.* Mr. D. Macaleese; *A.* Mr. G. Balfour *Feb* 12, 275
Schools
Christian Brothers, *Qs.* Mr. Vesey Knox, Mr. W. Johnston; *As.* Mr. G. Balfour *Feb* 19, 782
Convent and Monastery, *Qs.* Mr. Vesey Knox; *A.* Mr. G. Balfour *Feb* 26, 1259
Endowment, *Q.* Mr. W. Johnston; *A.* Mr. G. Balfour *Feb* 18, 718
Industrial Contracts, *Q.* Mr. P. O'Brien; *A.* Mr. G. Balfour *Feb* 25, 1127
National, *Q.* Captain Donelan; *A.* Mr. G. Balfour *Feb* 22, 879
Science and Art, *Q.* Mr. Vesey Knox; *A.* Mr. Hanbury *Feb* 22, 878
Sickness among School Children, Donegal, *Q.* Mr. D. Macaleese; *A.* Mr. G. Balfour *Mar* 4, 1598
Slaughter of Cattle, *Qs.* Mr. J. C. Flynn; *As.* Mr. G. Balfour *Feb* 11, 162; *Feb* 12, 268
Suck Drainage Scheme, *Q.* Mr. J. O'Kelly; *A.* Mr. G. Balfour *Mar* 4, 1578
Teachers
Irish Certificated, Education Code, *Q.* Mr. A. E. Hutton; *A.* Sir J. Gorst *Feb* 11, 164
National School (see under *National* above)
Telegraph Facilities, Drinagh (Cork), *Q.* Mr. J. Gilhooly; *A.* Mr. Hanbury *Feb* 25, 1123
Tipperary
Cullenagh Mountain, *Qs.* Mr. T. J. Condon, Captain Donelan; *As.* Mr. G. Balfour *Feb* 26, 1259
Election of Coroner, *Q.* Mr. P. O'Brien; *A.* Mr. G. Balfour *Feb* 18, 720

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IRELAND—cont.
Tolls, Newport (Mayo), *Q.* Dr. R. Ambrose; *A.* Mr. G. Balfour *Mar* 2, 1432
Town Courts, *Q.* Mr. D. Macaleese; *A.* Mr. J. Atkinson *Mar* 2, 1442
Tramore Fishery Pier, *Q.* Mr. P. J. Power; *A.* Mr. G. Balfour *Mar* 1, 1325
Tramps, *Q.* Mr. W. Johnston; *A.* Mr. G. Balfour *Mar* 4, 1582
Treason-felony Prisoners, *Q.* Mr. M. Davitt; *A.* Sir Matthew White Ridley *Feb* 25, 1138
Truck Act, Fines at Belfast, *Q.* Sir C. Dilke; *A.* Sir Matthew White Ridley *Feb* 9, 7
Unions
Ballyshannon, Clerk's Salary, *Q.* Mr. Vesey Knox; *A.* Mr. G. Balfour *Feb* 22, 877
Belmullet, Distress, *Q.* Mr. D. Crilly; *A.* Mr. G. Balfour *Feb* 22, 886
Castlebar, *Q.* Dr. R. Ambrose; *A.* Mr. G. Balfour *Feb* 18, 712
Vaccination Act, Ireland, *Q.* Mr. J. C. Flynn; *A.* Mr. G. Balfour *Feb* 25, 1136
Westport, Evicted Farm, *Qs.* Colonel Saunderson, Mr. M. Davitt; *As.* Mr. G. Balfour *Feb* 25, 1131

Isaacson, Mr. F. Wootton, *Tower Hamlets, Stepney*
Mall Cyclists *Mar* 1, 1337

Jacoby, Mr. J. A., *Derbyshire, Mid*
Street Organ Grinders *Feb* 9, 13

Jameson, Major J. Eustace, *Clare, W.*
Cahir Estate, Ireland *Mar* 1, 1345
Fishing Piers, Ireland *Feb* 26, 1263
Lighthouse Keepers, Ireland *Feb* 26, 1263, 1264
Supply: £12,938 for Irish Land Commission, Salaries and Expenses (Supplementary) *Feb* 26, 1282

Jebb, Mr. R. C., *Cambridge University*
Voluntary Schools Bill, 2R. *Feb* 16, 576

Jeffreys, Mr. A. F., *Hants, Basingstoke*
Army Estimates
£295,800 for Medical Establishment, Pay; Report *Feb* 15, 496
£2,553,400 for Provisions, Forage, and Other Supplies *Feb* 19, 829

Jessel, Captain H. M., *St. Pancras, S.*
Army Estimates: 158,774 Land Forces (Number of) *Feb* 12, 338

Johnson-Ferguson, Mr. J. E., *Leicester, Loughborough*
Burials Bill, 2R. *Feb* 24, 1094

Johnston, Mr. William, *Belfast, S.*
Bandsmen Assaulted, Scotland *Mar* 4, 1580, 1581
Christian Brothers Schools *Feb* 19, 783
Consecration of Bishop of Killaloe *Feb* 9, 17, 18

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JOHNSTON, Mr. W.—*cont.*
County Surveyors (Ireland) Amendment Bill, 2R. *Feb* 12, 366, 367, 368
Dublin Corporation Bill, 2R. *Feb* 10, 70; *Feb* 11, 151; 152, *Feb* 17, 613, 622
Irish Mails *Mar* 1, 1325
Maryborough Gaol: James Fitzharris *Feb* 22, 876
Municipal Franchise, Ireland *Feb* 9, 16
School Endowment, Ireland *Feb* 18, 718
Tramps, Ireland *Mar* 4, 1582

JOHNSTONE, Mr. J. H., *Sussex, Horsham*
East India, Officers of General List *Mar* 2, 1429
Land Tax *Feb* 16, 504

JOICEY, Sir JAMES, Bart., *Durham, Chester-le-Street*
Voluntary Schools Bill, In Com. *Mar* 4, 1636

JONES, Major E. PRYCE- (see PRYCE-JONES)

JONES, Mr. D. BRYNMOR, *Swansea, District*
Administration of Crown Lands, Wales *Feb* 16, 502
Voluntary Schools Bill *Feb* 25, 1201, 1202; In Com. *Mar* 3, 1548

JONES, Mr. L. A. ATHERLEY (see ATHERLEY-JONES)

Judicature Acts
Mr. Atherley Jones, (*Motion*) 987, 989, 992, 1001, 1013; Sir R. Webster, 989, 999, 1001, 1012; Sir F. Lockwood, 992, 1007; Mr. A. F. Warr, 996; Mr. W. F. Lawrence, 1009; Sir H. Fowler, 1011, 1013; Mr. C. J. Monk, 1013; (*Motion withdrawn*, 1013) *Feb* 23

Juries Detention Bill
c. Intro., Mr. Lloyd Morgan; Read 1° *Feb* 23, 987
2R., Mr. Lloyd Morgan *Mar* 4, 1675
Read 2° *Mar* 4, 1675

Justices of the Peace Bill
c. Intro., Mr. H. C. F. Luttrell; Read 1° *Feb* 12, 280

KEARLEY, Mr. H. E., *Devonport*
Carbide of Calcium *Feb* 18, 721
Greenwich Age Pension *Feb* 9, 10
Income Tax Forms *Mar* 4, 1573
Military Works Bill, 2R. *Feb* 18, 736; In Com. *Feb* 22, 935, 954, 955
Naval
Establishment Pay *Mar* 2, 1437
Shipwrights *Feb* 11, 165; *Mar* 2, 1437
Patriotic Fund *Feb* 16, 504
Penal Servitude *Mar* 2, 1431
Railway Companies and Complainant Traders *Feb* 9, 8
Soldiers' Effects Fund *Feb* 11, 179

KEMP, Mr. GEORGE, *Lancashire, S.E., Heywood*
Preferential Payments in Bankruptcy Act (1888) Amendment Bill, 2R. *Feb* 10, 70

Kent Water (Purchase) Bill
c. Read 1° *Feb* 10, 69

KENYON-SLANEY, Colonel W., *Shropshire, Newport*
Brigade of Guards *Feb* 12, 286, 297

KILBRIDE, Mr. DENIS, *Galway, N.*
Adulteration of Food *Mar* 1, 1340
Agricultural Rate, Ireland *Mar* 1, 1341
Army Estimates: £2,553,400 for Provisions, Forage, and Other Supplies *Feb* 19, 832, 833, 834
Caretakers, Ireland *Mar* 1, 1324
High Sheriff, Carrickfergus *Feb* 25, 1137
Land Commission, Ireland *Feb* 25, 1138
Supply: £12,938 for Irish Land Commission Salaries and Expenses (Supplementary) *Feb* 26, 1276

KIMBER, Mr. HENRY, *Wandsworth*
Civil Service, Temporary Employment *Feb* 22, 862

KIMBERLEY, Earl of
Crete *Feb* 15, 369; *Feb* 25, 1107; *Mar* 2, 1417, 1422, 1427
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Home Defence and the Volunteers *Feb* 11, 139
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KINLOCH, Sir JOHN G. S., Bart., *Perthshire, E.*
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KNOX, Mr. E. F. VESEY, *Londonderry*
Army Estimates
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Knox, Mr. E. F. Vesey—*cont.*
- Irish Mails *Feb* 19, 781
- Land Sub-commission, Cavan *Feb* 19, 781
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  - £507,000 Additional Expenditure (1896-97) *Feb* 26, 1268, 1271
  - £5,775 13s. for Naval Defence Act (1889) (Excess Expenditure) *Feb* 26, 1272, 1273
- Public Works Loans, Ireland *Feb* 26, 1256, 1257
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  - Christian Brothers *Feb* 19, 782, 783
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- Supply
  - £20,110 for Public Education, Ireland (Supplementary) *Feb* 26, 1294, 1295
  - £25,000 for Stationery and Printing (Supplementary) *Feb* 26, 1274

Labouchere, Mr. Henry, *Northampton*
- Army Estimates
  - 158,774 Land Forces (Number of) *Feb* 12, 351, 355, 358, 359, 360
  - £76,000 for Yeomanry Cavalry, Pay and Allowances *Feb* 19, 807
- Cordite Experiments, Woolwich Arsenal *Feb* 11, 172, 173
- Crete *Feb* 15, 405, 406; *Feb* 16, 530, 531; *Feb* 22, 890; *Feb* 25, 1147; *Mar* 1, 1338; *Mar* 2, 1448
- Crete
  - Action of British Ships *Feb* 22, 890, 891, 892
  - Declaration of Policy *Mar* 2, 1484, 1485, 1487
- Military Works Bill, In Com. *Feb* 22, 947
- Necessitous Board Schools *Feb* 11, 186, 187
- Supply
  - £36,700 for British Protectorates in Uganda and Central and East Africa (Supplementary) *Feb* 26, 1297
  - £23,670 for Diplomatic and Consular Services (Supplementary) *Feb* 26, 1296

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- Mr. E. Robertson (*Notice of Motion*) *Mar* 2, 1429

LABOUR QUESTIONS, ETC.
- *Distress from Want of Employment Committee*, *Qs.* Mr. W. R. Bousfield; *As.* Mr. T. W. Russell *Feb* 19, 779
- *Employers' Liability Bill*, *Qs.* Mr. F. A. Channing; *As.* Mr. A. J. Balfour *Feb* 9, 25. *Q.* Mr. S. Woods; *A.* Mr. A. J. Balfour *Mar* 4, 1613
- *Employment of Deaf Mute, Belfast*, *Q.* Colonel McCalmont; *A.* Sir Matthew White Ridley *Feb* 22, 858
- *Labourers Acts, Donegal*, *Q.* Mr. A. O'Connor; *A.* Mr. G. Balfour *Feb* 18, 713
- *Manchester, Trade Dispute*, *Qs.* Mr. G. W. Wolff, Mr. C. E. Schwann, Mr. J. Lowther, Mr. J. Bryce; *As.* Mr. Ritchie *Feb* 12, 269

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LABOUR QUESTIONS, ETC.—cont.
- *Naval*
  - *Establishments, Pay*, *Qs.* Mr. H. E. Kearley, Sir C. Dilke; *As.* Mr. Macartney *Mar* 2, 1430
  - *Shipwrights*, *Q.* Mr. H. E. Kearley; *A.* Mr. G. J. Goschen *Feb* 11, 165. *Qs.* Captain Pirie, Mr. H. E. Kearley; [Mr. Speaker;] *As.* Mr. Macartney *Mar* 2, 1437
- *Servants' Homes and Agencies*, *Q.* Mr. S. Woods; *A.* Sir Matthew White Ridley *Mar* 4, 1600
- *Trade Dispute, Manchester*, *Qs.* Mr. G. W. Wolff, Mr. C. E. Schwann, Mr. J. Lowther, Mr. J. Bryce; *As.* Mr. Ritchie *Feb* 12, 269
- *Truck Act*
  - *Fines*, *Q.* Mr. S. Woods; *A.* Sir Matthew White Ridley *Feb* 25, 1140
  - *Fines at Belfast*, *Q.* Sir C. Dilke; *A.* Sir Matthew White Ridley *Feb* 9, 7
  - *Metropolitan District Railway Company*, *Q.* Mr. T. Lough; *A.* Sir Matthew White Ridley *Mar* 4, 1595
  - *Railway Companies*, *Qs.* Mr. R. W. Perks, Sir C. Dilke; *As.* Sir Matthew White Ridley *Feb* 15, 400. *Qs.* Mr. S. Woods, Mr. J. Wilson (Durham), Sir H. Vincent, Mr. J. Samuel, Mr. T. Lough; [Mr. Speaker;] *As.* Sir Matthew White Ridley *Feb* 23, 972

Lambert, Mr. George, *Devon, South Molton*
- Agricultural Holdings *Feb* 25, 1144
- Land Tenure Bill, Intro. *Feb* 24, 1104
- Voluntary Schools Bill *Feb* 25, 1153, 1174, 1175; In Com. *Mar* 1, 1357, 1359

Lambeth Water (Purchase) Bill
- *c.* Read 1° *Feb* 10, 69

Land Tenure Bill
- *c.* Intro., Mr. G. Lambert; Read 1° *Feb* 24, 1104

Land Tenure (Great Britain)
- Mr. J. W. Logan, (*Notice of Motion*) *Feb* 9, 4

Land Transfer Bill
- *l.* Pres., Lord Halsbury; Read 1ª *Feb* 19, 777. 2R., Lord Halsbury, 1566; Lord Thring, 1567; Lord Herschell, 1568; Earl of Kimberley, 1568 *Mar* 4
- Read 2ª and com. to Com. of Whole House *Mar* 4, 1568

LANSDOWNE, Marquess of (Secretary of State for War)
- Lee-Metford Rifle, Volunteer Rifle Ranges *Feb* 18, 668, 669

LAURIE, General J. W., *Pembrokeshire and Haverfordwest*
- Army Estimates: £76,000 for Yeomanry Cavalry, Pay and Allowances *Feb* 19, 808
- Brigade of Guards *Feb* 12, 265
- Cable Communication, Bermuda to Jamaica *Feb* 11, 170
- Greenwich Age Pension *Feb* 9, 9
- Peasant Freeholders, Wales *Feb* 23, 1030
- Volunteer Cadet Corps *Feb* 26, 1252

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- *American Passenger Traffic, Police at Queenstown, Q.* Mr. P. O'Brien; *A.* Mr. G. Balfour *Feb* 22, 869
- *Assizes*
  - *Clare, Diminution of Crime, Q.* Mr. P. O'Brien; *A.* Mr. G. Balfour *Mar* 4, 1608
  - *Cork, Clonbain "Whiteboy" Case, Qs.* Mr. J. C. Flynn; *As.* Mr. J. Atkinson *Feb* 15, 411; *Feb* 16, 511
  - *Essex, Trial of William Walden, Q.* Mr. P. A. M'Hugh; *A.* Sir Matthew White Ridley *Feb* 11, 180
  - *Lewes, Conviction for Fraud, Qs.* Mr. E. H. Pickersgill; *As.* Sir Matthew White Ridley *Feb* 26, 1249
  - *Maidstone, Q.* Mr. Henniker Heaton; *A.* Sir Matthew White Ridley *Feb* 18, 706
  - *Winchester, Trial for Bigamy, Q.* Mr. E. H. Pickersgill; *A.* Sir Matthew White Ridley *Feb* 15, 388
- *Bankruptcy Court, Ireland, Qs.* Mr. P. O'Brien; *As.* Mr. G. Balfour *Feb* 25, 1126; *Mar* 4, 1601
- *Belfast Police*
  - *Acting Sergeants, Q.* Mr. D. Macaleese; *A.* Mr. G. Balfour *Feb* 12, 273
  - *Barracks, Musgrave Street, Q.* Mr. D. Macaleese; *A.* Mr. G. Balfour *Feb* 9, 13. *Q.* Mr. G. W. Wolff; *A.* Mr. G. Balfour *Feb* 19, 784
- *Carlisle Gaol, Death of Prisoner, Q.* Captain Bagot; *A.* Sir Matthew White Ridley *Feb* 11, 166
- *Central Criminal Court, Regina* v. *Greatorex-Smith, Qs.* Mr. E. H. Pickersgill; *As.* Sir Matthew White Ridley *Feb* 19, 777
- *Clonbain, "Whiteboy" Case, Q.* Mr. J. C. Flynn; *A.* Mr. J. Atkinson *Feb* 15, 411; *Feb* 16, 511
- *Commutation of Sentence: James Bate, Q.* Mr. E. H. Pickersgill: *A.* Sir Matthew White Ridley *Feb* 18, 707
- *Conviction for*
  - *Drunkenness, Scotland, Q.* Mr. J. Wilson (Govan); *A.* Mr. Graham Murray *Feb* 12, 267
  - *Perjury, Police Constable Murray, Q.* Mr. E. H. Pickersgill; *A.* Sir Matthew White Ridley *Feb* 23, 976
- *Coroner, Election of, Tipperary, Q.* Mr. P. O'Brien; *A.* Mr. G. Balfour *Feb* 18, 720
- *County Court Judge, Down, Q.* Mr. P. O'Brien, *A.* Mr. G. Balfour *Mar* 4, 1608
- *Court of Bankruptcy, Ireland, Qs.* Mr. P. O'Brien; *As.* Mr. G. Balfour *Feb* 25, 1126; *Mar* 4, 1601

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- *Criminal Law Amendment (Ireland) Act 1887, Q.* Mr. J. O'Connor; *A.* Mr. A. J. Balfour *Feb* 15, 413
- *Egloskerry Parish, Cornwall, Q.* Mr. T. Owen; *A.* Sir R. Webster *Feb* 23, 981
- *Essex Assizes, Trial of William Walden, Q.* Mr. P. A. M'Hugh; *A.* Sir Matthew White Ridley *Feb* 11, 180
- *Evictions*
  - *Farm, Westport, Qs.* Colonel Saunderson, Mr. M. Davitt; *As.* Mr. G. Balfour *Feb* 25, 1131
  - *Monaghan, Q.* Mr. D. Macaleese; *A.* Mr. G. Balfour *Feb* 23, 977
  - *Tenants, Qs.* Mr. W. Abraham (Cork); *As.* Mr. G. Balfour *Mar* 1, 1332. *Q.* Mr. J. Dillon; *A.* Mr. G. Balfour *Mar* 4, 1590
- *Felon Convicts, Qs.* Mr. E. H. Pickersgill; *As.* Sir Matthew White Ridley *Feb* 16, 508; *Feb* 18, 724
- *Fraudulent Enlistment: George Smith, Q.* Mr. T. Lough; *A.* Sir Matthew White Ridley *Feb* 15, 392
- *High Sheriffs*
  - *Carrickfergus, Q.* Mr. D. Kilbride; *A.* Mr. G. Balfour *Feb* 25, 1137
  - *Relief of Expenditure, Q.* Mr. Bryn Roberts; *A.* Mr. Hanbury *Feb* 12, 271
- *Holloway Prison: Lady Scott, Q.* Mr. E. H. Pickersgill; *A.* Sir Matthew White Ridley *Feb* 25, 1143
- *Jameson Raid, Prisoners at Holloway, Q.* Mr. P. A. M'Hugh; *A.* Sir Matthew White Ridley *Feb* 9, 21
- *Judicature Acts* (see that Title)
- *Judicial Rents, Ireland, Qs.* Sir T. Lea, Mr. J. Morley; *As.* Mr. G. Balfour *Mar* 1, 1333
- *Jurymen's Expenses, Ireland, Q.* Mr. D. Macaleese; *A.* Mr. J. Atkinson *Feb* 25, 1129
- *Land*
  - *Commission, Ireland*
    - *Court, Ballymena, Q.* Mr. J. Pinkerton; *A.* Mr. G. Balfour *Feb* 11, 182
    - *General, Qs.* Mr. D. Macaleese, Mr. D. Sullivan, Mr. C. J. Engledow, Mr. J. Dillon; *As.* Mr. G. Balfour, Mr. Hanbury *Feb* 26, 1250
    - *Kildare Applications, Q.* Mr. Engledow; *A.* Mr. G. Balfour *Feb* 11, 159
    - *King's County, Q.* Mr. J. L. Carew; *A.* Mr. G. Balfour *Feb* 11, 184
    - *Returns, Qs.* Sir T. Lea, Captain Donelan; *As.* Mr. G. Balfour *Feb* 23, 969. *Q.* Mr. D. Kilbride; *A.* Mr. G. Balfour *Feb* 25, 1138
  - *Courts, Ireland, Qs.* Mr. D. Macaleese, Mr. J. Daly, Mr. M. Austin; *As.* Mr. G. Balfour *Mar* 4, 1584
  - *Sub-commission*
    - *Cavan, Q.* Mr. Vesey Knox; *A.* Mr. G. Balfour *Feb* 19, 781
    - *Fermanagh, Q.* Mr. E. H. Carson; *A.* Mr. G. Balfour *Feb* 18, 719
- *Law of Evidence (Criminal Cases) Bill, Q.* Mr. Lloyd Morgan; *A.* Mr. A. J. Balfour *Feb* 11, 187
- *Licensing Sessions, Ballybot, Q.* Mr. P. O'Brien; *A.* Mr. G. Balfour, *Feb* 25, 1134
- *Limerick Night Watch, Q.* Mr. M. Austin; *A.* Mr. G. Balfour *Mar* 4, 1593

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Magisterial District, Ireland, Q. Mr. D. Macaleese; *A.* Mr. G. Balfour *Feb* 18, 716
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Maidstone Assizes, Q. Mr. Henniker Heaton; *A.* Sir Matthew White Ridley *Feb* 18, 706
Maryborough Gaol: Prisoner Fitzharris, Qs. Mr. J. L. Carew, Mr. W. Johnston, Mr. P. O'Brien; *As.* Mr. G. Balfour *Feb* 22, 875. *Q.* Mr. P. O'Brien; *A.* Mr. G. Balfour *Mar* 4, 1601
Monifieth Police Court, Conviction for Sleeping out, Q. Captain Sinclair; *A.* Mr. Graham Murray *Feb* 16, 512
Municipal
  Franchise, Ireland, Q. Mr. W. Johnston; *A.* Mr. J. Atkinson *Feb* 9, 16
  Voters Act, Aughnacloy, Qs. Mr. D. Macaleese; *As.* Mr. J. Atkinson *Mar* 4, 1599
One-man Companies, Qs. Mr. J. H. Lewis, Sir W. Hart Dyke; *As.* Sir R. Webster *Mar* 4, 1610
Penal Servitude, Q. Mr. H. E. Kearley; *A.* Sir Matthew White Ridley *Mar* 2, 1431
Perth and Dundee Prisons, Qs. Mr. Orr-Ewing; *As.* Mr. Graham Murray *Feb* 23, 974
Petty Sessions
  Courts, Ireland, Q. Mr. D. Macaleese; *A.* Mr. G. Balfour *Feb* 25, 1129
  Newbliss, Q. Mr. D. Macaleese; *A.* Mr. G. Balfour *Feb* 11, 175
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    Acting Sergeants, Q. Mr. D. Macaleese; *A.* Mr. G. Balfour *Feb* 12, 273
    Musgrave Street Barracks, Q. Mr. D. Macaleese; *A.* Mr. G. Balfour *Feb* 9, 13. *Q.* Mr. G. W. Wolff; *A.* Mr. G. Balfour *Feb* 19, 784
  Clothing, Metropolitan, Q. Sir L. McIver; *A.* Sir Matthew White Ridley *Feb* 25, 1134
  Constable Murray: Conviction for Perjury, Q. Mr. E. H. Pickersgill; *A.* Sir Matthew White Ridley *Feb* 23, 976
  Court, Monifeith, Conviction for Sleeping out, Q. Captain Sinclair; *A.* Mr. Graham Murray *Feb* 16, 512
  Patrol, Skibbereen, Q. Mr. J. Gilhooly; *A.* Mr. G. Balfour *Feb* 23, 968
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    Clare, Q. Mr. P. O'Brien; *A.* Mr. G. Balfour *Feb* 18, 720
    Massereene Estate, Q. Mr. J. Dillon; *A.* Mr. G. Balfour *Feb* 22, 871
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  Queenstown, at, American Passenger Traffic, Q. Mr. P. O'Brien; *A.* Mr. G. Balfour *Feb* 22, 869
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  Barcelona, Treatment of, Q. Mr. P. O'Brien; *A.* Mr. Curzon *Feb* 22, 868
  Death of, Carlisle Gaol, Q. Captain Bagot; *A.* Sir Matthew White Ridley *Feb* 11, 166
  Discharged, Re-arrest of, Q. Mr. S. Smith; *A.* Sir Matthew White Ridley *Mar* 2, 1434

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  Jameson Raid, Holloway, Q. Mr. P. A. M'Hugh; *A.* Sir Matthew White Ridley *Feb* 9, 21
  Reform, Pretoria, Qs. Mr. J. M. Maclean; *As.* Mr. J. Chamberlain *Feb* 18, 727; *Feb* 26, 1262
  Treason-felony, Q. Mr. M. Davitt; *A.* Sir Matthew White Ridley *Feb* 25, 1138
Prison-made Goods, Q. Mr. J. H. Dalziel; *A.* Mr. Ritchie *Feb* 18, 715
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  Clerks, Parliamentary Elections, Q. Mr. S. Woods; *A.* Sir Matthew White Ridley *Mar* 4, 1600
  Holloway: Lady Scott, Q. Mr. E. H. Pickersgill; *A.* Sir Matthew White Ridley *Feb* 25, 1143
  Maryborough: Prisoner Fitzharris, Qs. Mr. J. L. Carew, Mr. W. Johnston, Mr. P. O'Brien; *As.* Mr. G. Balfour *Feb* 22, 875. *Q.* Mr. P. O'Brien; *A.* Mr. G. Balfour *Mar* 4, 1601
  Officers, Q. Lord Balcarres; *A.* Sir Matthew White Ridley *Feb* 26, 1253
  Perth and Dundee, Qs. Mr. Orr-Ewing; *As.* Mr. Graham Murray *Feb* 23, 974
  Visiting Committees, Q. Mr. E. H. Pickersgill; *A.* Mr. Graham Murray *Feb* 25, 1123
Prosecution of Mr. Ivory, Q. Mr. P. O'Brien; *A.* Mr. A. J. Balfour *Feb* 11, 185
Royal Irish Constabulary, Pensions, Q. Mr. P. O'Brien; *A.* Mr. G. Balfour *Mar* 4, 1576
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  Fines, Q. Mr. S. Woods; *A.* Sir Matthew White Ridley *Feb* 25, 1140
  Fines at Belfast, Q. Sir C. Dilke; *A.* Sir Matthew White Ridley *Feb* 9, 7
  Metropolitan District Railway Company, Q. Mr. T. Lough; *A.* Sir Matthew White Ridley *Mar* 4, 1595
  Railway Companies, Qs. Mr. R. W. Perks, Sir C. Dilke; *As.* Sir Matthew White Ridley *Feb* 15, 400. *Qs.* Mr. S. Woods, Mr. J. Wilson (Durham), Sir H. Vincent, Mr. J. Samuel, Mr. T. Lough; [Mr. Speaker;] *As.* Sir Matthew White Ridley *Feb* 23, 972
Vaccination, Repeated Prosecutions, Q. Mr. T. Bayley; *A.* Sir Matthew White Ridley *Feb* 16, 505
Venezuelan Arbitration (Sir Richard Henn Collins), Q. Mr. E. H. Pickersgill; *A.* Sir R. Webster *Feb* 9, 24
Winchester Assizes, Trial for Bigamy, Q. Mr. E. H. Pickersgill; *A.* Sir Matthew White Ridley *Feb* 15, 388

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Lawrence, Mr. W. F., *Liverpool, Abercromby*
- Foreign Vessels in British Ports *Feb* 23, 970
- Judicature Acts *Feb* 23, 1009
- Queen's Reign, Coinage *Mar* 2, 1436
- Voluntary Schools Bill, 2R. *Feb* 15, 461

LAWSON, Mr. J. GRANT (Parliamentary Charity Commissioner), *Yorkshire, N.R., Thirsk and Malton*
- Marshall's Charity, Norfolk *Feb* 11, 182

Lawson, Sir Wilfrid, Bart., *Cumberland, Cockermouth*
- Army Estimates
  - 158,774 Land Forces (Number of) *Feb* 12, 360
  - £76,000 for Yeomanry Cavalry, Pay and Allowances *Feb* 19, 812
- Licensing Exemption (Houses of Parliament) Bill, 1R. *Feb* 17, 664; 2R. *Feb* 19, 848
- Military Works Bill, 2R. *Feb* 18, 763

Lea, Sir Thomas, Bart., *Londonderry, S.*
- Bann Drainage *Feb* 23, 968
- Judicial Rents, Ireland *Mar* 1, 1333
- Land Commission, Ireland *Feb* 23, 969
- National School Teachers, Ireland *Feb* 23, 967

Legh, Right Hon. T. Wodehouse, *Lancashire, S.W., Newton*
- Crete *Feb* 19, 787
- Crete, Declaration of Policy *Mar* 2, 1490

Leighton, Mr. Stanley, *Shropshire, Oswestry*
- Church Patronage Transfer Bill, Intro. *Feb* 19, 792
- Peasant Freeholders, Wales *Feb* 23, 1037

Leng, Sir John, *Dundee*
- Army Special Campaign Pensions *Feb* 9, 5
- Importation of Cattle, Ireland *Mar* 2, 1431
- Indian Mail Service *Feb* 23, 972
- Mail Contract: India, China, and Australia *Feb* 11, 158; *Mar* 2, 1438
- Patent Office *Feb* 9, 6
- Pleuro-Pneumonia, Essex *Feb* 22, 872
- Trustees Savings Banks, Scotland *Feb* 25, 1122
- University Colleges *Mar* 2, 1440

Leuty, Mr. T. R., *Leeds, E.*
- Voluntary Schools Bill, In Com. *Mar* 3, 1548

Lewis, Mr. J. Herbert, *Flint Boroughs*
- Burials Bill, 2R. *Feb* 24, 1079, 1096
- One-man Companies *Mar* 4, 1610
- Sitting of the House, Ash Wednesday *Mar* 2, 1533
- Supply: £153,044 for Public Education, England and Wales (Supplementary) *Feb* 26, 1287; *Mar* 1, 1413
- Voluntary Schools Bill *Feb* 25, 1224; In Com. *Mar* 1, 1353, 1354, 1384, 1405; *Mar* 3, 1538

Licensing Exemption (Houses of Parliament) Bill
- *c.* Intro., Lord Stanley, Sir W. Lawson, 664; Sir R. Webster, 664 *Feb* 17
- Read 1° *Feb* 17, 664
- 2R., Lord Stanley, 848; Sir W. Lawson, 848; Sir R. Webster, 848; Mr. P. A. M'Hugh, 848; [Mr. Speaker, 848] *Feb* 19

Lloyd-George, Mr. David, *Carnarvon Boroughs*
- Archdeaconry of London (Additional Endowments) Bill, 2R. *Feb* 24, 1101
- Burials Bill, 2R. *Feb* 24, 1080
- Great Northern Railway Bill, 2R. *Feb* 25, 1115
- North British Railway Bill, 2R. *Feb* 22, 854
- Supply
  - £10 for County Courts (Supplementary) *Feb* 26, 1275
  - £153,044 for Public Education, England and Wales (Supplementary) *Feb* 26, 1289
- Voluntary Schools Bill *Feb* 11, 197; 2R. *Feb* 15, 465; *Feb* 25, 1154, 1156, 1162; In Com. *Mar* 1, 1362, 1392, 1400, 1401, 1405; *Mar* 2, 1535; *Mar* 3, 1545; *Mar* 4, 1643, 1644, 1670, 1672

LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD

President—Mr. H. Chaplin
Secretary—Mr. T. W. Russell

- *Adulteration of Food*, *Q.* Mr. D. Kilbride; *A.* Mr. H. Chaplin *Mar* 1, 1340
- *Agricultural Rates Act (1896) Amending Order*, *Qs.* Mr. E. H. Pickersgill; [Mr. Speaker;] *As.* Mr. T. W. Russell *Feb* 19, 789
- *Brisley (Norfolk) Parish Council*, *Q.* Mr. F. W. Wilson; *A.* Mr. H. Chaplin *Feb* 25, 1139
- *Burial Grounds*, *Qs.* Mr. H. C. Stephens, Mr. F. W. Wilson; *As.* Mr. H. Chaplin *Mar* 4, 1602
- *Casual Wards, Metropolis*, *Q.* Mr. E. H. Pickersgill; *A.* Mr. H. Chaplin *Mar* 1, 1321
- *Children's Metropolitan Asylums Board*, *Qs.* Mr. J. G. Talbot, Mr. B. L. Cohen; *As.* Mr. H. Chaplin *Feb* 9, 10. *Qs.* Mr. W. Hazell, Mr. J. G. Talbot; *As.* Mr. Ritchie, Mr. H. Chaplin *Feb* 18, 704. *Qs.* Mr. B. L. Cohen, Mr. T. Lough; *As.* Mr. H. Chaplin *Mar* 4, 1588
- *Distress from Want of Employment Committee*, *Qs.* Mr. W. R. Bousfield; *As.* Mr. T. W. Russell *Feb* 19, 779
- *Infectious Diseases, Metropolis*, *Q.* Dr. Farquharson; *A.* Mr. T. W. Russell *Feb* 22, 858
- *Local Government (Elections) Bill* (see that Title)
- *Local Taxation Account*, *Q.* Mr. W. W. Carlile; *A.* Mr. H. Chaplin *Feb* 18, 727
- *Manchester, "Church Ley,"* *Q.* Mr. J. C. Williams; *A.* Mr. H. Chaplin *Feb* 18, 722
- *Parish Council, Brisleu (Norfolk)*, *Q.* Mr. F. W. Wilson; *A.* Mr. H. Chaplin *Feb* 25, 1139
- *Rating Commission*, *Q.* Mr. T. R. Buchanan; *A.* Mr. H. Chaplin *Feb* 11, 178. *Qs.* Mr. G. Whiteley; *As.* Mr. A. J. Balfour *Feb* 16, 517
- *Vaccination Prosecutions*, *Q.* Mr. J. W. Logan; *A.* Mr. H. Chaplin *Feb* 11, 173

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West Ham Electric Light, Q. Mr. H. V. Duncombe; *A.* Mr. H. Chaplin *Mar* 4, 1597

Local Government (County Council Clerks) Bill
c. Intro., Mr. H. C. F. Luttrell; Read 1° *Feb* 12, 280

Local Government Elections Bill
l. 2R., Lord Herschell, 2; Lord Harris, 3 *Feb* 9
Read 2ª and com. *Feb* 9, 3
In Com., Rep. without Amendt. *Feb* 11, 125
Lord Herschell, (*Motion*) 125: Standing Com. negatived, 125 *Feb* 11
Read 3ª and Passed *Feb* 12, 262
Royal Assent *Feb* 16, 501

Local Government (Ireland) Provisional Orders (No. 1) Bill
c. Instruction to Com.: Mr. P. O'Brien, (*Motion*) 1571; [Mr. Speaker, 1571, 1572;] Mr. J. Lowther, 1572; (*Instruction ruled out of Order*) *Mar* 4

LOCH, Lord
Chamberlain (Mr.) and President Kruger *Feb* 9, 1

LOCKWOOD, Colonel A. R. M., *Essex, Epping*
Army Estimates: £295,800 for Medical Establishment, Pay; Report *Feb* 15, 498
Brigade of Guards *Feb* 12, 266
East London Water Bill *Feb* 26, 1248

LOCKWOOD, Sir FRANK, *York City*
City of London Sewers Bill, 2R. *Feb* 11, 144, 146
Judicature Acts *Feb* 23, 992, 1007
Voluntary Schools Bill, 2R. *Feb* 15, 474, 475, 478, 479; *Feb* 16, 552; In Com. *Mar* 1, 1366, 1370, 1378; *Mar* 3, 1557, 1560

Locomotives on Highways Bill
c. Intro., Mr. Griffith-Boscawen; Read 1° *Feb* 9, 27

LODER, Mr. GERALD W. E., *Brighton*
Chain Pier, Brighton *Feb* 18, 715
Post Office Establishments *Feb* 19, 791

LOGAN, Mr. J. W., *Leicester, Harborough*
Land Tenure, Great Britain *Feb* 9, 4
Sale of Intoxicating Liquor on Sunday Bill, 2R. *Feb* 10, 117
Vaccination, Prosecutions *Feb* 11, 173
Voluntary Schools Bill, 2R. *Feb* 16, 605, 606; *Feb* 25, 1188; In Com. *Mar* 3, 1551

London (Borough Road, Southwark) Provisional Order Bill
c. Read 2° and com. *Feb* 9, 3

London (Churchway, St. Pancras) Provisional Order Bill
c. Read 2° and com. *Feb* 9, 3

London (Clare Market, Strand) Provisional Order Bill
c. Read 2° and com. *Feb* 16, 501

London County Buildings Bill
c. 2R., Mr. C. A. Whitmore, 671, 672, 673, 676; Sir J. Blundell Maple, 672, 691; Mr. E. Boulnois, 675, 676, 698; Mr. C. E. Tritton, 678; Mr. J. Burns, 680, 681, 682; Sir F. Dixon-Hartland, 681; Mr. W. F. D. Smith, 684; Sir J. Lubbock, 685; Mr. C. Harrison, 686; Mr. C. T. Murdoch, 687; Mr. G. C. T. Bartley, 689; Mr. J. W. Lowther, 690, 693; Mr. B. L. Cohen, 692; Mr. C. J. Darling, 692, 693; Mr. C. E. Schwann, 694, 695; Mr. Gibson Bowles, 695; Admiral Field, 696; Mr. E. Hubbard, 696; Mr. Burdett-Coutts, 697; Sir W. Harcourt, 698, 699; (*Division*, 700) *Feb* 18
2R. negatived *Feb* 18, 703

London County Council (General Powers) Bill
c. 2R., Dr. Farquharson, 152; Mr. J. G. Weir, 152; Mr. B. L. Cohen, 153 *Feb* 11
Read 2° and com. *Feb* 11, 153

LONDONDERRY, Marquess of
Cahir, Speech at *Feb* 12, 253

London Water (Purchase) Bill
c. Read 1° *Feb* 10, 69

LONG, RIGHT HON. WALTER H. (President of the Board of Agriculture), *Liverpool, West Derby*
Agricultural Statistics *Feb* 16, 503
Cattle
  Sale of, Stirling *Feb* 12, 272
  Weighing, Scotland *Feb* 15, 389
Muzzling Dogs *Mar* 2, 1443; *Mar* 4, 1603, 1604
Peasant Freeholders, Wales *Feb* 23, 1025, 1027, 1029, 1032
Pleuro-Pneumonia, Essex *Feb* 22, 872
Rabies *Mar* 1, 1346
Sale of Cattle, Stirling *Feb* 12, 272
Weighing Cattle, Scotland *Feb* 15, 389

Lough, Mr. Thomas, *Islington, W.*

- Army Estimates
  - £553,000 for Militia, Pay and Allowances *Feb* 19, 793
  - £639,000 for Transport and Remounts *Feb* 19, 823, 826
- Children's Metropolitan Asylums Board *Mar* 4, 1589
- City of London Sewers Bill, 2R. *Feb* 11, 142
- Education Votes *Feb* 15, 399, 400
- Elementary Schools, Rating *Feb* 9, 25; *Feb* 12, 280
- Fraudulent Enlistment: George Smith *Feb* 15, 392
- Giant's Causeway and Portrush Tramway *Feb* 9, 13
- Imperial Taxes, Ireland *Mar* 4, 1612
- Merchant Shipping, Undermanning *Mar* 4, 1676
- Midland and Great Northern Railways Joint Committee Bill *Feb* 25, 1119
- Military Lands Act (1892) Amendment Bill, 2R. *Feb* 11, 251
- Military Works Bill, 2R. *Feb* 18, 729, 733, 734; In Com. *Feb* 22, 932, 938, 944, 948, 957, 959
- Pauper Aliens *Feb* 9, 67, 68
- Supply
  - £14,980 for Colonial Services, including South Africa (Supplementary) *Feb* 26, 1298
  - £16,304 for Treasury Chest Fund *Feb* 26, 1299
  - £30,151 for Trustee Savings Bank and Friendly Societies Deficiency (Supplementary) *Feb* 26, 1300, 1302
- Taxation, London, Grants in Aid *Feb* 23, 965
- Truck Act
  - Metropolitan District Railway Company *Mar* 4, 1595
  - Railway Companies *Feb* 23, 974
- Voluntary School Bill *Feb* 11, 192; 2R. *Feb* 15, 489; In Com. *Mar* 1, 1368, 1391, 1404

Lowles, Mr. J., *Shoreditch, Haggerston*

- Army Estimates
  - £2,553,400 for Provisions, Forage, and Other Supplies *Feb* 19, 832
  - £639,000 for Transport and Remounts *Feb* 19, 827
- Established Church (England and Wales) *Feb* 9, 60
- Pauper Aliens *Feb* 9, 63, 67, 68

LOWTHER, Mr. J. W. (Chairman of Committees of Ways and Means and Deputy Speaker), *Cumberland, Penrith*

- Great Eastern Railway (General Powers) Bill, 2R. *Feb* 22, 851, 852
- London County Buildings Bill, 2R. *Feb* 18, 690, 693
- Midland and Great Northern Railways Joint Committee Bill *Feb* 25, 1119
- North British Railway Bill, 2R. *Feb* 22, 853

[*cont.*

Lowther, Mr. J. W.—*cont.*

(Rulings as Chairman of Committees)

Army Estimates: 158,774 for Land Forces (Number of)

The Chairman said: "The hon. Member is trenching upon political subjects. He must confine himself to the military portion." *Feb* 12, 355

Army Estimates: £639,000 for Transport and Remounts

The Chairman said, it would be obviously undesirable to raise the same question in two Votes. The natural place to raise the question would be on the next Vote *Feb* 19, 825

Military Works Bill

The Chairman said: "That point does not arise on the Amendment, which is to limit the expenditure of the money within seven years. If this Amendment be carried the whole of the money will have to be spent in seven years." *Feb* 22, 947

The Chairman said, the argument of the hon. Member was that every year this proposal was to be discussed on the Estimates, but that was not met by the Amendment *Feb* 22, 947

The Chairman said: "If I correctly understand the proposal of the hon. Gentleman it is that an estimate should be laid before the House of Commons in order that the House of Commons should decide upon it. Such a proposal would be clearly out of order, because that would be contrary to what the House has already decided. If the hon. Member merely proposes that an estimate of the expenditure should be laid on the Table of the House, for the information of hon. Members, that, of course, would be in order." *Feb* 22, 955

Supply: £6,800 for Inland Revenue (Supplementary)

The Chairman said: "That item refers to the fees paid to counsel and solicitors. The question whether the prosecutions were properly instituted does not arise on that." *Feb* 26, 1306

The Chairman said, any question relating to prosecutions which had taken place might be dealt with under that item; but a Question as to the future policy of the Department as to prosecutions could not *Feb* 26, 1306

The Chairman said: "The heads of the Department apply for extra money to meet the expenses of prosecutions that have taken place. The general policy of the Inland Revenue could not be discussed on that." *Feb* 26, 1306

Voluntary Schools Bill

The Chairman said: "That is not the proposal before the Committee. The proposal is to postpone the first clause to the end of the Bill." *Mar* 1, 1354

[*cont.*

Lowther, Mr. J. W.—*cont.*

(Rulings as Chairman of Committees)—cont.

Voluntary Schools Bill—cont.

The Chairman said: "Anyone who introduces a Bill is entitled to draft it as he thinks best. There is no precedent for an Amendment to postpone parts of a clause. That would be a most inconvenient course. Indeed, there is no machinery for working a Bill in that way." *Mar* 1, 1354

The Chairman said, he thought it rather an unusual thing to argue the point, but as he unfortunately did not receive, prior to coming into the Chair, the communication to which the hon. Member had referred, he thought it right he should state his case. It seemed to him it was perfectly clear. There was a Standing Order which said that the precise duration of every temporary law should be expressed in a distinct clause at the end of the Bill. He could not get over that. The hon. Member proposed to make this a temporary law, and he proposed to state the precise duration of it by his Amendment. That being so, it was perfectly clear, according to the Order of the House, which he had no authority to set aside even if he wished to do so, that the clause must come in at the end of the Bill. The hon. Member had referred to precedents. He could not answer for those in which he was not concerned, but the hon. Member quoted the precedent of last Session. His attention was not called to the wording of the Standing Order when that Amendment was moved, and he could only say it must have slipped into the Bill, as the lawyers said, *per incuriam.* He was not then so familiar with the Standing Orders as he had since become, and probably if the proposal were made again from any quarter of the House, it would not be admitted. He felt obliged to rule the Amendment out of Order *Mar* 1, 1356

The Chairman said: "Certainly not. It would probably be in order as a new clause at the end of the Bill. The Amendments in the names of the hon. Member for Carnarvon (Mr. Lloyd-George)—to leave out the words 'For aiding,' and to insert the words 'in order to establish a fund out of which the Education Department may aid necessitous'—and the hon. Member for West Denbighshire (Mr. Herbert Roberts)—to leave out the words 'For aiding,' and to insert the words 'To necessitous'—appear to be precisely the same as that standing in the name of the hon. Member for the South Molton Division (Mr. Lambert). The two hon. Members first mentioned have very ingeniously attempted to raise the question before the proper time, I therefore propose to call upon the hon. Member for South Molton. The Amendment of the hon. Member for Bethnal Green ought properly to be raised on line 12, sub-section 2. The Amendment immediately following, to leave out 'aiding' and insert 'supplementing voluntary subscriptions contributed towards,' and the Amendment of the hon. Member below the Gangway, ought to come in on line 13." *Mar* 1, 1357

The Chairman said: "I do not like to give an opinion on an abstract question. It is for the Committee to judge whether the Bill deals only with existing schools or with schools that may be opened in the future. This is not a question of order." *Mar* 1, 1379

The Chairman said: "The right hon. Gentleman cannot go into the question of whether free education is in full force or not. The only purpose I had in admitting this Amendment was that I thought the hon. Member wished to limit the grant." *Mar* 1, 1398

The Chairman said: "I listened to the hon. Member to gather his reasons for introducing the subject of free education. Having heard them, I am clearly of opinion that it cannot be further gone into." *Mar* 1, 1398

The Chairman said, the hon. Gentleman was in order in dealing with the question of the limitation of the amount, but not in going into the general question of free education *Mar* 1, 1399

The Chairman ruled, that the word "annually" must remain as applying to the Parliamentary Aid Grant. Such grants could not be made quarterly. There was nothing to prevent the proposal of a proviso that payments out of the grant should be made quarterly *Mar* 1, 1405

The Chairman said, he did not see their relevancy. The sole point before the Committee was whether average attendance or voluntary subscriptions should be the basis of the aggregate amount of the Aid Grant *Mar* 3, 1543

The Chairman said, he understood the hon. Member was using these instances as an argument to show that the total amount would be reduced *Mar* 3, 1544

The Chairman said, the right hon. Gentleman should have called attention to the matter after the Division referred to. At present there was no course open to him; but on the occasion the only thing to do under the circumstances was to take measures to avoid passing the Tellers *Mar* 3, 1552

The Chairman said: "I am sorry to interrupt the hon. Member, but the question of the Board Schools is not before us. The question is whether the grant shall be 5s. or 4s. per head." *Mar* 3, 1555

The Chairman said: "It is only right that I should say, in accepting this Motion, that I have satisfied myself that if it

[*cont.*

LOWTHER, Mr. J. W.—*cont.*
(Rulings as Chairman of Committees)—cont.
Voluntary Schools Bill—cont.
should be carried it would not cut out a single Amendment of any substance. Nearly three pages of the Amendments that follow are out of order. I think it is only due to the Committee that I should give my reason for accepting the Motion. These Amendments are for the most part excluded by the ruling of Mr. Speaker on the Notices of Motion for Instructions on going into Committee. Some of the Amendments are in the wrong place, and the two or three that remain are really not Amendments of substance. I therefore accept the Motion." *Mar* 3, 1563
The Chairman said, the Standing Order provided that the Closure might be moved on the interruption of business, and the interruption of business was when he announced the numbers of the last Division *Mar* 3, 1563
The Chairman said: "I must decline to give an opinion in answer to the hon. Member's question as to all the clauses, but certainly the right hon. Gentleman would be in order if he moved that the question be put that the whole clause stand part of the Bill. If it be in order to move the whole clause clearly it is in order to move a portion of the clause." *Mar* 3, 1564
The Chairman said: "The hon. Member's Amendment is out of order, because it is in the wrong place. It ought to come at the end of the sub-section or as a new clause." *Mar* 4, 1614
The Chairman said: "I do not exactly see how the question of voluntary subscriptions arises on the Amendment of the hon. Member." *Mar* 4, 1649
The Chairman said: "The question of due regard is one which can be debated at a later stage. It is obviously inconvenient to debate it now, because the Amendment raises a totally different question." *Mar* 4, 1649
The Chairman said: "The next Amendment not out of order stands in the name of the hon. Member for Mid Glamorgan (Mr. Samuel Evans). I confess that I do not quite understand what the Amendment means. If it means that the Education Department is to have no discretion as to the mode in allotting the amounts, but is to allot the 5s. grant all round, it is out of order. But if it has any other meaning, then it may be in order, and perhaps the hon. Gentleman will explain it." *Mar* 4, 1668
Miscellaneous Rulings
Feb 11, 146; *Feb* 19, 823, 825, 840; *Feb* 22, 937, 938, 942, 957; *Feb* 26, 1272, 1299, 1306; *Mar* 1, 1354, 1355, 1370, 1395, 1401, 1403, 1404, 1405; *Mar* 3, 1546, 1551, 1559; *Mar* 4 1614, 1661, 1668, 1672

LOWTHER, Right Hon. JAMES, *Kent, Isle of Thanet*
Crete *Feb* 9, 23; *Feb* 19, 787; *Mar* 1, 1349, 1350, 1351, 1352; *Mar* 4, 1605
Dublin Corporation Bill, 2R. *Feb* 17, 620
Local Government (Ireland) Provisional Orders (No. 1) Bill *Mar* 4, 1572
Supply: £12,938 for Irish Land Commission, Salaries and Expenses (Supplementary) *Feb* 26, 1278, 1281
Trade Dispute, Manchester *Feb* 12, 271
Voluntary Schools Bill *Feb* 11, 189; In Com. *Mar* 3, 1552

LUBBOCK, Right Hon. Sir JOHN, Bart., *London University*
Crete, Action of British Ships *Feb* 22, 918
London County Buildings Bill, 2R. *Feb* 18, 685
Queen's Reign, National Holiday *Feb* 11, 186
Shops, Hours of Labour *Feb* 23, 965

Lunacy
Private Lunatic Asylums, Q. Mr. W. Field; *A.* Sir Matthew White Ridley *Feb* 15, 412. *Q.* Mr. W. Field; *A.* Mr. G. Balfour *Mar* 2, 1440

LUTTRELL, Mr. H. C. F., *Devonshire, Tavistock*
Justices of the Peace Bill, Intro. *Feb* 12, 280
Local Government (County Council Clerks) Bill, Intro. *Feb* 12, 280
Ordnance Store Department *Feb* 9, 14
Voluntary Schools Bill, In Com. *Mar* 4, 1662

LYTTELTON, Hon. ALFRED, *Warwick and Leamington*
Voluntary Schools Bill, 2R. *Feb* 15, 453, 456

MACALEESE, Mr. D., *Monaghan, N.*
Belfast Police *Feb* 12, 273
Eviction, Monaghan *Feb* 23, 977
Jurymen's Expenses, Ireland *Feb* 25, 1129
Land
Commission, Ireland *Feb* 26, 1250
Courts, Ireland *Mar* 4, 1584
Magisterial Districts, Ireland *Feb* 18, 716
Magistrates, Ireland *Feb* 25, 1130; *Mar* 1, 1322
Municipal Voters Act, Aughnacloy *Mar* 4, 1599, 1600
Musgrave Street Police Barracks, Belfast *Feb* 9, 13
National Teachers' Pension Fund, Ireland, *Feb* 16, 510
Newbliss
Court House, Orange Lodge *Feb* 16, 510
Petty Sessions *Feb* 11, 175
Petty Sessions Courts, Ireland *Feb* 25, 1129
Riot, Fermanagh *Feb* 18, 716
Sanitary Arrangements, Clones, Monaghan *Feb* 12, 275
Sickness among School Children, Donegal *Mar* 4, 1598
Town Courts *Mar* 2, 1442
Water Trustees *Feb* 12, 274; *Feb* 26, 1251

MACARTNEY, Mr. W. G. ELLISON (Secretary to the Admiralty), *Antrim, S.*
Admiralty Contracts *Mar* 1, 1324
Explosion, *H.M.S. Howe* *Mar* 2, 1444, 1445
Naval
Establishment, Pay *Mar* 2, 1430
Pensions: Devine (John) *Feb* 22, 874
Shipwrights *Mar* 2, 1437
Navy Estimates
£507,000 Additional Expenditure (1896–97) *Feb* 26, 1268, 1269, 1270, 1271, 1272
£5,775 13s. for Naval Defence Act (1889) (Excess Expenditure) *Feb* 26, 1273, 1274
Supply: Navy Estimates *Feb* 22, 880, 881

McCalmont, General Hugh, *Antrim, N.*
Army Estimates: 158,774 Land Forces (Number of) *Feb* 12, 361
Employment of Deaf Mutes, Belfast *Feb* 22, 858
Horse Breeding
Commission, Dublin *Feb* 22, 859, 860
Ireland *Feb* 25, 1128; *Mar* 1, 1336

M'Hugh, Mr. P. A., *Leitrim, N.*
Cavan Leitrim and Roscommon Light Railway *Feb* 9, 18
Essex Assizes, Trial of William Walden *Feb* 11, 180
Jameson Raid, Prisoners at Holloway *Feb* 9, 21
Licensing Exemption (Houses of Parliament) Bill, 2R. *Feb* 19, 848
Postal Accommodation, Leitrim *Feb* 23, 970

McIver, Sir Lewis, Bart., *Edinburgh, W.*
Metropolitan Police Clothing *Feb* 25, 1134

McKenna, Mr. R., *Monmouth, N.*
Korea *Mar* 1, 1327
Military Works Bill, 2R. *Feb* 18, 749; In Com. *Feb* 22, 936, 946, 947, 951
Voluntary Schools Bill, 2R. *Feb* 11, 203,; In Com. *Mar* 1, 1353, 1366, 1370, 1382, 1390, 1406, 1409; *Mar* 3, 1547; *Mar* 4, 1654

McKillop, Mr. James, *Stirlingshire*
Conveyance of Troops, Scotland and London *Feb* 9, 18
Petroleum, Select Committee *Feb* 19, 789
Sale of Cattle, Stirling *Feb* 12, 272

McLaren, Mr. C. B. B., *Leicestershire, Bosworth*
Hyde Park, Cyclists *Feb* 22, 863
Westminster Hall *Feb* 22, 864

Maclean, Mr. James M., *Cardiff*
Mission to King Menelik *Feb* 25, 1143
North German Lloyd Steamers *Feb* 15, 395
Reform Prisoners, Pretoria *Feb* 18, 727; *Feb* 26, 1262

McLeod, Mr. John, *Sutherland*
Army Estimates: 158,774 Land Forces (Number of) *Feb* 12, 362
Post Office Money Orders *Feb* 23, 967
Telegraph Extensions, Scotland *Feb* 15, 403

MacNeill, Mr. J. G. Swift, *Donegal S.*
Indian Famine *Mar* 4, 1592, 1593
Irish Mails *Feb* 11, 161
Loan Fund Societies, Ireland *Feb* 16, 507; *Feb* 22, 861

Maple, Sir J. Blundell, *Camberwell, Dulwich*
London County Buildings Bill, 2R. *Feb* 18, 672, 691

Mappin, Sir Frederick T., Bart., *York, W.R., Hallamshire*
Midland and Great Northern Railways Joint Committee Bill, *Feb* 25, 1119

Marine Insurance Bill
l. 2R., Lord Herschell *Feb* 18, 665
Read 2ª and com. to Com. of Whole House *Feb* 18, 665
Rep. without Amendt. and re-com. to Standing Com. *Feb* 22, 849

Marks, Mr. H. H., *Tower Hamlets, St. George's*
Sale of Intoxicating Liquor on Sunday Bill, 2R. *Feb* 10, 113

Martin, Mr. R. B., *Worcester, Droitwich*
Warehousemen's Certificates Bill, Intro. *Feb* 23, 987

Massey-Mainwaring, Hon. W. F. B., *Finsbury, Central*
Bequest to Nation by Lady Wallace *Mar* 1, 1346
Queen's Reign, South Kensington Museum *Feb* 11, 174
Regimental Territorial Titles *Feb* 15, 403

Mellor, Colonel J. J., *Lancashire, S.E., Radcliffe-cum-Farnworth*
Steam Engines and Boilers (Persons in Charge) Bill, 2R. *Feb* 17, 644

Mellor, Right Hon. J. W., *Yorkshire, W.R., Sowerby*
Midland and Great Northern Railways Joint Committee Bill *Feb* 25, 1121
Voluntary Schools Bill *Feb* 9, 21

Merchandise Marks Acts
Return Ordered (*c.*) *Mar* 4, 1676

MERCHANT SHIPPING

- *Beam and Otter Trawling, Q.* Mr. J. Caldwell; *A.* Mr. Graham Murray *Feb* 15, 390
- *Bray Harbour, Fog Bell, Q.* Mr. W. Field; *A.* Mr. Ritchie *Feb* 9, 15
- *Collisions at Sea, Fishing Boats, Qs.* Mr. J. W. Crombie, Mr. Gibson Bowles; *As.* Mr. Ritchie *Mar* 1, 1330
- *Costa Rica Packet Case, Q.* Mr. J. F. Hogan; *A.* Mr. Curzon *Mar* 4, 1598
- *Cruelty to a Seaman, s.s. Hornby Castle, Q.* Mr. J. Havelock Wilson; *A.* Mr. Ritchie *Feb* 9, 19
- *Daunt's Rock Lightship, Qs.* Mr. W. Field, Mr. J. C. Flynn; *As.* Mr. Ritchie *Feb* 9, 15. *Qs.* Captain Donelan; *As.* Mr. Ritchie *Feb* 18, 709
- *Discharge of Seamen, Foreign Ports, Q.* Sir E. T. Gourley; *A.* Mr. Ritchie *Mar* 2, 1443
- *Fishery Piers*
    - *Baltimore, Q.* Mr. J. Gilhooly; *A.* Mr. G. Balfour *Feb* 22, 870
    - *Ireland, Qs.* Major Jameson; *As.* Mr. G. Balfour *Feb* 26, 1263. *Qs.* Captain A. J. C. Donelan; *As.* Mr. G. Balfour *Mar* 4, 1574
    - *Tramore, Q.* Mr. P. J. Power; *A.* Mr. G. Balfour *Mar* 1, 1325
- *Foreign Vessels in British Ports, Qs.* Mr. W. F. Lawrence, Mr. A. F. Warr; *As.* Mr. Ritchie *Feb* 23, 970
- *Harbour*
    - *Accommodation, Devon and Cornwall, Q.* Sir Cameron Gull; *A.* Mr. Ritchie *Feb* 22, 856
    - *Bray, Fog Bell, Q.* Mr. W. Field; *A.* Mr. Ritchie *Feb* 9, 15
- *Icelandic Fisheries, Qs.* Mr. C. H. Wilson, Mr. G. Doughty, Mr. J. G. Weir; *As.* Mr. Ritchie, Mr. Curzon *Feb* 9, 8. *Q.* Mr. J. Caldwell; *A.* Mr. Curzon *Feb* 15, 391
- *Irish Lights Commissioners, Q.* Mr. J. C. Flynn; *A.* Mr. Ritchie *Feb* 11, 158
- *Lighthouses*
    - *Keepers, Qs.* Major Jameson; *As.* Mr. Ritchie *Feb* 26, 1263
    - *Red Sea, Q.* Mr. Henniker Heaton; *A.* Mr. Curzon *Feb* 26, 1261
- *Lightships*
    - *Daunt's Rock, Qs.* Mr. W. Field, Mr. J. C. Flynn; *As.* Mr. Ritchie *Feb* 9, 15. *Qs.* Captain Donelan; *As.* Mr. Ritchie *Feb* 18, 709
    - *Ireland, Qs.* Mr. J. L. Carew, Mr. P. O'Brien; *As.* Mr. Ritchie *Mar* 4, 1577
- *Marine Insurance Bill* (see that Title)
- *Marine Insurance Policies, Stamp Duty, Q.* Sir G. Baden-Powell; *A.* Sir M. Hicks Beach *Feb* 25, 1135
- *Merchant Shipping (Undermanning) Bill* (see that Title)
- *North*
    - *Atlantic Load-line, Q.* Mr. J. G. A. Baird; *A.* Mr. Ritchie *Mar* 1, 1329
    - *German Lloyd Steamers, Qs.* Mr. J. M. Maclean; *As.* Lord G. Hamilton *Feb* 15, 395
- *Pilot Service, Falkland Islands, Q.* Mr. J. W. Sidebotham; *A.* Mr. J. Chamberlain *Feb* 23, 968
- *Scottish Fishery Cruisers, Qs.* Captain Pirie, Mr. J. Bryce; *As.* Mr. Graham Murray *Mar* 1, 1335

[*cont.*

MERCHANT SHIPPING—cont.

- *South Shoal, Orkney, Q.* Mr. J. W. Crombie; *A.* Mr. Ritchie *Feb* 18, 714
- *S.S. Utopia, Claim against Owners, Q.* Mr. J. G. A. Baird; *A.* Mr. Curzon *Mar* 4, 1587
- *Trawling*
    - *Beam and Otter, Q.* Mr. J. Caldwell; *A.* Mr. Graham Murray *Feb* 15, 390
    - *Illegal*
        - *Bantry Bay, Q.* Mr. J. Gilhooly; *A.* Mr. G. Balfour *Feb* 12, 267
        - *Scotland, Qs.* Mr. J. G. Weir; *As.* Mr. Graham Murray *Feb* 9, 4

Merchant Shipping Bill

c. Intro., Mr. J. A. Willox; Read 1° *Feb* 16, 533

Merchant Shipping (Undermanning) Bill

c. Mr. Ritchie, (*Motion for leave to Intro.*) 1675, 1676; Mr. T. Lough, 1676 *Mar* 4
Intro., Mr. Ritchie; Read 1° *Mar* 4, 1676

METROPOLIS

- *Archdeaconry of London (Additional Endowments) Bill* (see that Title)
- *Casual Wards, Q.* Mr. E. H. Pickersgill; *A.* Mr. H. Chaplin *Mar* 1, 1321
- *Chelsea Hospital, Qs.* Captain A. J. C. Donelan; *As.* Mr. Brodrick *Mar* 4, 1589
- *Children's Metropolitan Asylums Board, Qs.* Mr. J. G. Talbot, Mr. B. L. Cohen; *As.* Mr. H. Chaplin *Feb* 9, 10. *Qs.* Mr. W. Hazell, Mr. J. G. Talbot; *As.* Mr. Ritchie, Mr. H. Chaplin *Feb* 18, 704. *Qs.* Mr. B. L. Cohen, Mr. T. Lough; *As.* Mr. H. Chaplin *Mar* 4, 1588
- *City of London Sewers Bill* (see that Title)
- *Cyclists*
    - *Hyde Park, Q.* Mr. C. B. B. McLaren; *A.* Mr. Akers-Douglas *Feb* 22, 863
    - *Mall (The), Q.* Mr. Wootton Isaacson; *A.* Mr. Akers-Douglas *Mar* 1, 1337
- *Dog Muzzling, Qs.* Mr. H. C. Stephens; *As.* Mr. W. Long *Mar* 2, 1442; *Mar* 4, 1603
- *East London Water Bill* (see that Title)
- *Hampton Court Green, Qs.* Sir F. Dixon-Hartland; *As.* Mr. Akers-Douglas *Mar* 1, 1336
- *Holloway Prison: Lady Scott, Q.* Mr. E. H. Pickersgill; *A.* Sir Matthew White Ridley *Feb* 25, 1143
- *Hyde Park Cyclists, Q.* Mr. C. B. B. McLaren; *A.* Mr. Akers-Douglas *Feb* 22, 863
- *Infectious Diseases, Q.* Dr. Farquharson; *A.* Mr. T. W. Russell *Feb* 22, 858
- *Jameson Raid, Prisoners at Holloway, Q.* Mr. P. A. M'Hugh; *A.* Sir Matthew White Ridley *Feb* 9, 21
- *London County Buildings Bill* (see that Title)
- *London County Council (General Powers) Bill* (see that Title)
- *Mall (The), Cyclists, Q.* Mr. Wootton Isaacson; *A.* Mr. Akers-Douglas *Mar* 1, 1337
- *Metropolitan Police Clothing, Q.* Sir L. McIver; *A.* Sir Matthew White Ridley *Feb* 25, 1134
- *Nelson's Enchantress (Stage Play), Qs.* Admiral Field, Mr. H. S. Foster; [Mr. Speaker;] *As.* Sir Matthew White Ridley *Feb* 18, 714

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Metropolitan and Other Police Courts Bill
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Midwives Registration Bill
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- Holloway Prison : Lady Scott *Feb* 25, 1143
- Jameson Raid, Prisoners at Holloway *Feb* 9, 21
- Lewes Assizes, Conviction for Fraud *Feb* 26, 1249, 1250
- Maidstone Assizes *Feb* 18, 707
- Metropolitan Police Clothing *Feb* 25, 1134
- Murder on London and South Western Railway *Feb* 22, 879
- National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children *Mar* 2, 1440
- *Nelson's Enchantress* (Stage Play) *Feb* 18, 714
- Penal Servitude *Mar* 2, 1431
- Petroleum, Select Committee *Feb* 19, 789
- Prisoners
  - Death of, Carlisle Gaol *Feb* 11, 166
  - Discharged, Re-arrest of *Mar* 2, 1435
  - Holloway, Jameson Raid *Feb* 9, 21
  - Treason-felony *Feb* 25, 1138
- Prisons
  - Clerks, Parliamentary Elections *Mar* 4, 1600
  - Holloway : Lady Scott *Feb* 25, 1143
  - Officers *Feb* 26, 1254
- Private Lunatic Asylums *Feb* 15, 412
- Re-arrest of Discharged Prisoners *Mar* 2, 1435
- Sale of Intoxicating Liquor on Sunday Bill, 2R. *Feb* 10, 114
- Servants' Homes and Agencies *Mar* 4, 1600
- Street Organ Grinders *Feb* 9, 14
- Treason-felony Prisoners *Feb* 25, 1138
- Truck Act
  - Fines *Feb* 25, 1140
  - Fines at Belfast *Feb* 9, 7
  - Metropolitan District Railway Company *Mar* 4, 1595
  - Railway Companies *Feb* 15, 401 ; *Feb* 23, 973
- Vaccination, Repeated Prosecutions *Feb* 16, 505
- Water Trustees *Feb* 12, 274 ; *Feb* 26, 1251
- Welsh Land Commission Report *Feb* 22, 856
- Winchester Assizes, Bigamy Trial *Feb* 15, 389

RITCHIE, RIGHT HON. CHARLES THOMSON (President of the Board of Trade), *Croydon*

- Bray Harbour, Fog Bell *Feb* 9, 16
- Brighton, Chain Pier *Feb* 18, 715
- Children's Metropolitan Asylums Board *Feb* 18, 705
- Collisions at Sea, Fishing Boats *Mar* 1, 1330, 1331
- Cruelty to a Seaman, *s.s. Hornby Castle Feb* 9, 19
- Daunt's Rock Lightship *Feb* 9, 15 ; *Feb* 18, 709
- Foreign
  - Patents *Feb* 26, 1262
  - Ports, Discharge of Seamen *Mar* 2, 1444
  - Prison-made Goods *Feb* 22, 855
  - Vessels in British Ports *Feb* 23, 970, 971
- Foreign Prison-made Goods Bill, Intro. *Mar* 4, 1676
- Giant's Causeway and Portrush Tramway *Feb* 9, 12, 13
- Harbour Accommodation, Devon and Cornwall *Feb* 22, 856
- Icelandic Fisheries *Feb* 9, 9
- Irish Lights Commissioners *Feb* 11, 158
- Lighthouse-keepers, Ireland *Feb* 26, 1264
- Lightships, Ireland *Mar* 4, 1577, 1578
- Merchant Shipping, Undermanning *Mar* 4, 1675, 1676
- North Atlantic Load-line *Mar* 1, 1330
- North Eastern Railway
  - Additional Powers Bill *Mar* 4, 1584
  - Dispute *Mar* 1, 1344
- Oyster Culture *Feb* 25, 1133
- Patent
  - Laws *Feb* 11, 164
  - Office *Feb* 9, 6
- Pauper Aliens *Feb* 9, 66
- Prison-made Goods *Feb* 18, 715
- Railway
  - Carriages, Construction *Feb* 15, 403
  - Clearing House Incorporation Bill *Feb* 9, 8
  - Companies and Complainant Traders *Feb* 9, 8
  - Great Northern Company, Ireland *Mar* 4, 1591
  - Level Crossing, Tottenham *Feb* 22, 877
  - Members of Parliament, Free Passes *Feb* 12, 276
  - Rates *Feb* 15, 394
  - Rates, London and Tilbury Company *Mar* 2, 1436
- Solent, Artillery Firing *Feb* 25, 1129
- South Shoal, Orkney *Feb* 18, 714
- Trade Dispute, Manchester *Feb* 12, 270, 271
- Weights and Measures *Feb* 19, 779

ROBERTS, MR. J. BRYN, *Carnarvonshire, Eifion*

- Armenian Refugees, Cyprus *Feb* 12, 264
- Bishop of Peterborough, Confirmation of Election *Feb* 26, 1255
- Crete *Mar* 2, 1447
- Dardanelles *Feb* 26, 1260, 1261
- High Sheriffs *Feb* 12, 271
- Jameson Raid, Cape Inquiry *Feb* 26, 1264
- Peasant Freeholders, Wales *Feb* 23, 1029

ROBERTS, Mr. J. HERBERT, *Denbigh, W.*
Burials Bill, 2R. *Feb* 24, 1097
Cash Balances, India *Mar* 2, 1439
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Established Church (England and Wales) *Feb* 9, 59
Peasant Freeholders, Wales *Feb* 23, 1036
Railway Rates *Feb* 9, 4
Voluntary Schools Bill, 2R. *Feb* 11, 207; In Com. *Mar* 3, 1552
Volunteer Officers, Examinations *Mar* 4, 1575
Welsh Land Commission Report *Feb* 22, 856

ROBERTSON, Mr. EDMUND, *Dundee*
Gibraltar Drainage Works *Mar* 2, 1435
Labour Law *Mar* 2, 1429
Navy Estimates
£507,000 Additional Expenditure (1896–97) *Feb* 26, 1270 1271
£5,775 13s. for Naval Defence Act (1889) (Excess Expenditure) *Feb* 26, 1273

ROBSON, Mr. W. S., *South Shields*
Voluntary Schools Bill, 2R. *Feb* 15, 442

ROCHE, Hon. JAMES B. B., *Kerry, E.*
Irish Mails *Feb* 22, 864
Jameson Raid
Indemnity *Feb* 18, 726
President Kruger's Claim *Feb* 22, 875
Kerry Bog Slide *Feb* 16, 505

ROLLIT, Sir ALBERT K., *Islington, S.*
Borough Justices' Clerks Bill, Intro. *Feb* 17, 663
Military Manœuvres, Grant to Officers *Feb* 19, 790
Post Office Sorters *Feb* 22, 881
Preferential Payments in Bankruptcy Act (1888) Amendment Bill, 2R. *Feb* 10, 78, 79
Solicitors (Magistracy) Bill, Intro. *Mar* 4, 1676
Voluntary Schools Bill *Feb* 25, 1179

ROUND, Mr. JAMES, *Essex, Harwich*
Clerical Incomes, Taxation *Feb* 23, 965
Colchester Barracks *Mar* 4, 1590

Royal Commissions
Crofters (see SCOTLAND)
Financial Relations between Great Britain and Ireland (see that Title)
Horse Breeding, Dublin (see IRELAND)
Irish Land (see IRELAND)
Rating (see LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD)
Welsh Land (see WALES)
West Indian Sugar (see COLONIES)

RUSSELL, General F. S., *Cheltenham*
Enteric Fever, India *Mar* 4, 1586
Indian Army, Health *Feb* 18, 703
Jameson Raid, President Kruger's Claim *Mar* 4, 1585
Military Works Bill, 2R. *Feb* 18, 738
Royal Barracks, Dublin *Feb* 11, 159

RUSSELL, MR. THOMAS W. (Secretary to the Local Government Board), *Tyrone, S.*
Agricultural Rates Act (1896) Amending Order *Feb* 19, 789: *Feb* 22, 883
Distress from Want of Employment Committee *Feb* 19, 779, 780
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Sale of Intoxicating Liquor on Sunday Bill
c. 2R., Mr. C. H. Wilson, 87, 99, 117; Mr. Sydney Gedge, 89; Mr. W. E. T. Sharpe, 92; Mr. H. V. Duncombe, 96, 98, 99, 120; Mr. M. Davitt, 98; Mr. T. P. Whittaker, 99; Sir J. S. B. Simeon, 103; Mr. S. Young, 105; Mr. A. Pease, 107; Mr. C. E. Tritton, 109; Mr. W. C. Quilter, 112; Mr. Alfred Thomas, 113; Mr. H. H. Marks, 113; Sir Matthew White Ridley, 114; Mr. J. W. Logan, 117; Mr. J. H. Stock, 118; Mr. Griffith-Boscawen, 119; [Mr. Speaker, 120;] (*Division*, 120) *Feb* 10
2R. negatived *Feb* 10, 123

SALISBURY, MARQUESS of (Prime Minister and Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs)
Crete *Feb* 15, 369, 370; *Feb* 25, 1105; *Mar* 2, 1422, 1423, 1427
Gambling in Options and Futures *Feb* 11, 130, 131

SAMUEL, Mr. H. H., *Tower Hamlets, Limehouse*
Army Estimates: £627,200 for Volunteer Corps, Pay and Allowances *Feb* 19, 821

SAMUEL, Mr. JONATHAN, *Stockton*
Military Lands Act (1892) Amendment Bill, 2R. *Feb* 11, 251
Steam Engines and Boilers (Persons in Charge) Bill, 2R. *Feb* 17, 625, 629, 635, 637, 661
Truck Act, Railway Companies *Feb* 23, 973, 974
Voluntary Schools Bill *Feb* 11, 192

SANDYS, Colonel T. M., *Lancashire, S.W., Bootle*
Voluntary Schools Bill *Feb* 25, 1197

SAUNDERSON, Colonel E. J., *Armagh, N.*
Crete, Declaration of Policy *Mar* 2, 1516
Educational Endowments, Ireland *Feb* 25, 1130
Evicted Farm, Westport *Feb* 25, 1131
Supply: £12,938 for Irish Land Commission, Salaries and Expenses (Supplementary) *Feb* 26, 1278, 1280, 1282

Schools
Accommodation
Southport, *Qs.* Mr. H. J. Wilson; *As.* Sir J. Gorst *Feb* 16, 507
Wimbledon, *Q.* Mr. J. C. Williams; *A.* Sir J. Gorst *Feb* 11, 167

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Schools—cont.
- *Board*
  - *Elections, Scotland, Qs.* Mr. J. Caldwell; *As.* Mr. Graham Murray *Feb* 15, 409; *Feb* 16, 512
  - *Financial Aid, Q.* Mr. E. J. C. Morton; *A.* Mr. A. J. Balfour *Feb* 15, 410
  - *Necessitous, Qs.* Mr. H. Labouchere; *As.* Mr. A. J. Balfour *Feb* 11, 186
  - *Sutton-in-Ashfield, Qs.* Mr. F. A. Channing, Mr. H. J. Wilson; *As.* Sir J. Gorst *Mar* 1, 1328
- *Bradford (Yorkshire), St. James's, Qs.* Mr. A. E. Hutton, Mr. E. Flower; *As.* Sir J. Gorst *Feb* 15, 394
- *Castleton, Wesleyan, Q.* Mr. A. E. Hutton; *A.* Sir J. Gorst *Feb* 11, 164
- *Children, Donegal, Sickness among, Q.* Mr. D. Macaleese; *A.* Mr. G. Balfour *Mar* 4, 1598
- *Christian Brothers, Qs.* Mr. Vesey Knox, Mr. W. Johnston; *As.* Mr. G. Balfour *Feb* 19, 782
- *Convent and Monastery, Ireland, Q.* Mr. Vesey Knox; *A.* Mr. G. Balfour *Feb* 26, 1259
- *Elementary, Heywood, Q.* Mr. J. C. Williams; *A.* Sir J. Gorst *Mar* 2, 1441
- *Endowment, Ireland, Q.* Mr. W. Johnston; *A.* Mr. G. Balfour *Feb* 18, 718
- *Industrial (Ireland), Contracts, Q.* Mr. P. O'Brien; *A.* Mr. G. Balfour *Feb* 25, 1127
- *Military, Duke of York's, Q.* Mr. E. Strachey; *A.* Mr. Brodrick *Feb* 12, 267
- *National Teachers, Ireland, Qs.* Mr. J. C. Flynn; *As.* Mr. G. Balfour *Feb* 12, 263
- *Premises, Q.* Mr. A. E. Hutton; *A.* Sir J. Gorst *Feb* 11, 165
- *Science and Art, Ireland, Q.* Mr. Vesey Knox; *A.* Mr. Hanbury *Feb* 22, 878
- *Southport, Accommodation, Qs.* Mr. H. J. Wilson; *As.* Sir J. Gorst *Feb* 16, 507
- *Sutton-in-Ashfield Board, Qs.* Mr. F. A. Channing, Mr. H. J. Wilson; *As.* Sir J. Gorst *Mar* 1, 1328
- *Teachers*
  - *Irish Certificated, Education Code, Q.* Mr. A. E. Hutton; *A.* Sir J. Gorst *Feb* 11, 164
  - *National, Ireland* (see IRELAND)
  - *Superannuation, Q.* Mr. R. G. Verney; *A.* Mr. A. J. Balfour *Mar* 2, 1445
- *Voluntary*
  - *Bills, Q.* Mr. J. Brigg; *A.* Sir J. Gorst *Feb* 25, 1136
  - *Rates, Public Companies, Q.* Sir J. Fergusson; *A.* Sir R. Webster *Feb* 22, 881
  - *Rating, Q.* Mr. C. Harrison; *A.* Mr. A. J. Balfour *Feb* 15, 413
  - *Scotland, Qs.* Mr. Vesey Knox; *As.* Mr. A. J. Balfour *Feb* 16, 516
- *Willesden, St. Andrew's, Q.* Mr. J. H. Yoxall; *A.* Sir J. Gorst *Feb* 11, 177

SCHWANN, Mr. C. E., *Manchester, N.*
- Foreign Patents *Feb* 26, 1262
- Half-sovereigns and Farthings *Feb* 22, 857
- London County Buildings Bill, 2R. *Feb* 18, 694, 695
- Manchester
  - Post Office *Feb* 19, 786
  - Trade Dispute *Feb* 12, 269
- Service Money Orders, Benevolent Societies *Feb* 19, 785

SCOTLAND
- Secretary for—Lord BALFOUR
- Lord Advocate—Mr. A. GRAHAM MURRAY
- Solicitor General—Mr. C. SCOTT DICKSON
- *Bandsmen Assaulted, Qs.* Mr. W. Johnston; *As.* Mr. Graham Murray *Mar* 4, 1580
- *Beam and Otter Trawling, Q.* Mr. J. Caldwell; *A.* Mr. Graham Murray *Feb* 15, 390
- *Buckie, Connection with Trunk Telephone Lines, Q.* Sir W. Wedderburn; *A.* Mr. Hanbury *Mar* 1, 1347
- *Conveyance of Troops, Scotland and London, Q.* Mr. J. McKillop; *A.* Mr. Powell-Williams *Feb* 9, 18
- *Crofters' Commission, Qs.* Mr. J. G. Weir; *As.* Mr. Graham Murray *Feb* 9, 20; *Feb* 12, 268
- *Drunkenness*
  - *Conviction for, Q.* Mr. J. Wilson (Govan); *A.* Mr. Graham Murray *Feb* 12, 267
  - *Glasgow, Q.* Mr. J. Wilson (Govan); *A.* Mr. Graham Murray *Feb* 26, 1254
- *Education Grant, Q.* Mr. T. Shaw; *A.* Sir M. Hicks Beach *Feb* 11, 183
- *Import Duty on Scotch Herrings, Q.* Mr. J. G. Weir; *A.* Mr. Graham Murray *Feb* 12, 262
- *Mail Packet Service, Q.* Mr. D. N. Nicol; *A.* Mr. Graham Murray *Feb* 22, 855
- *Monifieth Police Court, Conviction for Sleeping out, Q.* Captain Sinclair; *A.* Mr. Graham Murray *Feb* 16, 512
- *Parish Council Accounts, Q.* Sir J. Kinloch; *A.* Mr. Graham Murray *Feb* 15, 392
- *Perth and Dundee Prisons, Qs.* Mr. Orr-Ewing; *As.* Mr. Graham Murray *Feb* 23, 974
- *Post Office, Kirkcaldy, Qs.* Mr. J. H. Dalziel; *As.* Mr. Hanbury *Feb* 22, 880
- *Prisons*
  - *Perth and Dundee, Qs.* Mr. Orr-Ewing; *As.* Mr. Graham Murray *Feb* 23, 974
  - *Visiting Committees, Q.* Mr. E. H. Pickersgill; *A.* Mr. Graham Murray *Feb* 25, 1123
- *Sale of Cattle, Stirling, Q.* Mr. J. McKillop; *A.* Mr. W. Long *Feb* 12, 272
- *School Board Elections, Qs.* Mr. J. Caldwell; *As.* Mr. Graham Murray *Feb* 15, 409; *Feb* 16, 512
- *Scottish*
  - *Fishery Cruisers, Qs.* Captain Pirie, Mr. J. Bryce; *As.* Mr. Graham Murray *Mar* 1, 1335
  - *Rifles, 5th Volunteer Battalion, Qs.* Mr. J. Wilson (Falkirk); *As.* Mr. Brodrick *Mar* 4, 1595
  - *Universities Grant, Q.* Mr. J. G. Weir; *A.* Mr. Graham Murray *Feb* 11, 153
- *South Shoal, Orkney, Q.* Mr. J. W. Crombie; *A.* Mr. Ritchie *Feb* 18, 714
- *Stirling, Sale of Cattle, Q.* Mr J. McKillop; *A.* Mr. W. Long *Feb* 12, 272
- *Stornoway Mails, Q.* Mr. J. G. Weir; *A.* Mr. Hanbury *Feb* 9, 22. *Q.* Mr. J. Caldwell; *A.* Mr. Hanbury *Feb* 15, 391
- *Supply: Scotch Estimates, Q.* Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman; *A.* Mr. A. J. Balfour *Feb* 15, 413
- *Telegraph Extension, Qs.* Mr. J. G. Weir, Mr. J. McLeod; *As.* Mr. Hanbury *Feb* 15, 402
- *Telephone Trunk Lines, Q.* Mr. A. Asher: *A.* Mr. Hanbury *Feb* 12, 272. *Q.* Sir W. Wedderburn; *A.* Mr. Hanbury *Mar* 1, 1345. *Q.* Mr. J. W. Crombie; *A.* Mr. Hanbury *Mar* 4, 1590

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SCOTLAND—cont.
  Trawling
    Beam and Otter, *Q.* Mr. J. Caldwell; *A.* Mr. Graham Murray *Feb* 15, 390
    Illegal, *Qs.* Mr. J. G. Weir; *As.* Mr. Graham Murray *Feb* 9, 4
  Trustees Savings Banks, *Q.* Sir J. Leng; *A.* Sir M. Hicks Beach *Feb* 25, 1122
  Trusts (Scotland) Bill (see that Title)
  Voluntary Schools, *Qs.* Mr. Vesey Knox; *As.* Mr. A. J. Balfour *Feb* 16, 516
  Voluntary Schools Bill, *Qs.* Mr. J. A. Campbell, Mr. J. W. Mellor; *As.* Sir M. Hicks Beach, Sir R. Webster *Feb* 9, 21
  Volunteer
    Battalion (5th Scottish Rifles), *Qs.* Mr. J. Wilson (Falkirk); *As.* Mr. Brodrick *Mar* 4, 1595
    Drill Halls, Aberdeen, *Q.* Captain Pirie; *A.* Mr. Hanbury *Feb* 23, 976
  Weighing Cattle, *Q.* Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman; *A.* Mr. W. Long *Feb* 15, 389

SCOTT, Mr. CHARLES P., *Lancashire, S.W., Leigh*
  Voluntary Schools Bill *Feb* 25, 1230

SEELY, Mr. C. H., *Lincoln*
  Voluntary Schools Bill *Feb* 25, 1168, 1169; In Com. *Mar* 1, 1400

SELBORNE, EARL OF (Under Secretary of State for the Colonies)
  Chamberlain (Mr.) and President Kruger *Feb* 9, 2
  Gambling in Options and Futures *Feb* 11, 131

SETON-KARR, Mr. H., *St. Helens*
  Food Supplies, United Kingdom *Mar* 2, 1429
  Steam Engines and Boilers (Persons in Charge) Bill, 2R. *Feb* 17, 657, 658
  Voluntary Schools Bill *Feb* 11, 193

SHARPE, Mr. W. E. T., *Kensington, N.*
  Sale of Intoxicating Liquor on Sunday Bill, 2R. *Feb* 10, 92

SHAW, Mr. THOMAS, *Hawick Burghs*
  Education Grant, Scotland *Feb* 11, 183

Shipwreck
  Warren Hastings, Indian Troopship, *Qs.* Mr. P. M. Thornton; *As.* Lord G. Hamilton *Mar* 1, 1323

Shops (Hours of Labour)
  Sir J. Lubbock, (*Notice of Motion*) *Feb* 23, 965

SIDEBOTHAM, Mr. J. W., *Cheshire, Hyde*
  Burials Bill, 2R. *Feb* 24, 1071
  Pilot Service, Falkland Islands *Feb* 23, 968

SIMEON, Sir J. S. B., Bart., *Southampton*
  Naval College, Dartmouth *Feb* 22, 875
  Sale of Intoxicating Liquor on Sunday Bill, 2R. *Feb* 10, 103

SINCLAIR, Captain JOHN, *Forfarshire*
  Monifieth Police Court, Conviction for Sleeping out *Feb* 16, 512

Sinclair's Divorce Bill
l. Petition for Leave to Present considered, Counsel called in; Prayer Granted *Feb* 26, 1245
  Pres. and Read 1ª *Feb* 26, 1245

Small Freeholders (Wales)
  Mr. Rees Davies, (*Notice of Motion*) *Feb* 9, 4

SMITH-BARRY, Right Hon. A. H., *Hunts, Huntingdon*
  Supply: £12,938 for Irish Land Commission, Salaries and Expenses (Supplementary) *Feb* 26, 1282

SMITH, Hon. W. F. DANVERS, *Strand, Westminster*
  Army Estimates: £76,000 for Yeomanry Cavalry, Pay and Allowances *Feb* 19, 804
  London County Buildings Bill, 2R. *Feb* 18, 684

SMITH, Mr. SAMUEL, *Flintshire*
  Established Church (England and Wales) *Feb* 9, 27, 45
  Indian Famine *Feb* 23, 980
  Re-arrest of Discharged Prisoners *Mar* 2, 1434
  Slavery, New Hebrides *Mar* 2, 1433, 1434

Solicitors (Ireland) Bill
c. Intro.. Mr. E. H. Carson; Read 1° *Feb* 26, 1267

Solicitors (Magistracy) Bill
c. Intro., Sir A. K. Rollit; Read 1° *Mar* 4, 1676

Southwark and Vauxhall Water (Purchase) Bill
c. Read 1° *Feb* 10, 69

SOUTTAR, Mr. R., *Dumfriesshire*
  Indian Famine *Feb* 18, 703

Speaker, Mr.

THE RIGHT HON.
WILLIAM COURT GULLY, Q.C.,
Carlisle

  Questions
    I understand this to be a case in which the hon. Member states certain facts upon his own authority, and he must take the responsibility of doing so *Feb* 9, 17
    The hon. Member is going beyond the limits of a Question. He is arguing a question of procedure *Feb* 15, 408
    I do not see the hon. Member for Northamptonshire in his place, but I am sure the hon. Member is the last person to wish to encourage a breach of the privileges of this House. His question really does tend to do that, because it invites the First Commissioner of Works to deal

[*cont.*

SPEAKER, Mr.—cont.

Questions—cont.

with matters which are entirely outside his cognisance. The hon. Member asks the First Commissioner of Works to make adequate arrangements for the Press, and to provide better accommodation. That is a matter entirely in the discretion of the Chairman of the Committee, and in connection with which the First Commissioner of Works has no duties whatever. The hon. Member also proceeds to ask whether the First Commissioner of Works would consider the advisability of changing the room in which the Committee is sitting to Committee-room No. 10. That is, of course, a matter entirely in the hands of the Serjeant-at-Arms and the officers of the House, and not within the cognisance of the First Commissioner of Works. Therefore, I would suggest that the question should not be put to the First Commissioner of Works *Feb* 19, 784

That does not arise out of the Question on the Paper. It is a Question of which the hon. Member might give the Under Secretary of State private notice, but it does not arise out of the Question on the Paper *Feb* 19, 788

In the point raised by the hon. Member it is obvious there is a hardship upon Members, but I cannot say there is any question of Order for me to decide *Feb* 19, 790

The Question on the Paper is a precise one about a very small local detail. It is not a general question *Feb* 22, 865

The hon. and learned Member has the same means as myself of finding out what Department is responsible. It is a little difficult to say *Feb* 22, 883

Certainly papers which have been laid on the Table and ordered to be printed ought to be printed and circulated at the earliest possible moment. I will inquire into the matter, and if I find I have any authority I shall be ready to exercise it *Feb* 22, 883

The hon. Gentleman must put down notice of the Question, if addressed to another Minister *Feb* 23, 983

If the hon. Member continues to interrupt the Business of the House I shall be compelled to request him to leave the House for the remainder of the Sitting *Feb* 25, 1150

Rules and Order of Debate

Either the Second Reading of the Bill is objected to or it is not. If it be objected to either absolutely or conditionally it must stand over until to-morrow *Feb* 10, 70

The Bill alters the register by enabling persons to get on the register on different terms from those on which they could previously be on it. Therefore, I think that the Instruction is in order as an Instruction, although I think an Instruction is required *Feb* 11, 152

[*cont.*

SPEAKER, Mr.—cont.

Rules and Order of Debate—cont.

The hon. Gentleman is not in order in discussing the question whether the Bill should have been postponed or not *Feb* 11, 192

I have great difficulty in hearing what the hon. Gentleman is saying, but I am under the impression that he is out of order *Feb* 11, 194

I did not see the hon. Member rise, although I was looking in his direction. When I did see him I had already collected the opinions of both sides of the House *Feb* 11, 200

I understand that the hon. Member gave instructions at the Table that this Bill should be postponed to a particular date *Feb* 12, 368

The hon. Member having given instructions at the Table that the Bill was to be put down for a particular date, he is not in a position to move now, because other hon. Members may have been misled *Feb* 12, 368

The hon. Member is not in order in referring thus to a speech delivered in the other House. He will be in order in referring to the fact that a statement was made, but not in commenting upon it *Feb* 16, 519

I must say that this discussion in regard to what took place yesterday as to the Papers is remote from the urgent matter of public importance which is under discussion *Feb* 16, 531

I hope the hon. Member will see that the House is impatient. The hon. Member stood waiting until there was quiet restored. I am afraid that to get complete quiet at the present hour and in the present state of the House is quite impossible. I trust that the hon. Member will not, in the present temper of the House, prolong his remarks unduly *Feb* 16, 606

When it was last before the House I said I thought the Instruction was in order, and before doing so I had looked at the Bill and considered the point the hon. Member referred to. I think the Instruction is in order *Feb* 17, 613

The Instruction standing in the name of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for South Dublin is in order because it is mandatory, and only for that reason; but I hope, under the circumstances, the right hon. Gentleman and the House will not think I am stepping outside my province if I advise him very strongly not to move this Instruction, but to wait until the matter comes before the Committee, and then, if he object to what be done in the Committee, to raise his objection on the Report stage. There is a growing practice of putting on the Paper as the subject of an Instruction matters which do not involve simply a question of principle, but which go into matters of detail, the proper

[*cont.*

SPEAKER, Mr.—cont.

Rules and Order of Debate—cont.

subject of Amendments in Committee, and are only in order as Instructions because they are mandatory. For example, the present Bill, so far as the water question is concerned, proposes to fix the prices at which water should be sold to the different townships around Dublin. These prices are fixed at 2½d. and 3½d. per thousand gallons, and so forth, and were so fixed, I presume, after due consideration by those who prepared the Bill. What the right hon. Gentleman is proposing to do is to instruct the Committee beforehand, when the matter comes before them, not to hear evidence as to the propriety of the proposal so made after careful consideration by the promoters of the Bill, but to sanction a totally different scheme for fixing the price without giving the promoters the opportunity of bringing their evidence before the Committee. Although, as I say, the right hon. Gentleman has put himself in order by making the Instruction mandatory, it seems to me that the course he suggests is entirely contrary to all sound practice of the House in regard to private Bills, and I hope the right hon. Gentleman will see fit not to move this as an Instruction, but will bring his case forward before the Committee, and then take the opinion of the House upon it on the Report stage, if he think it necessary *Feb* 17, 623

I do not think it is out of order, because I cannot say that the principle of the Bill is to fix the price of water at 2½d., or 3½d., or at any particular figure. The principle of the Bill is to fix and settle the terms on which the water supply shall be made from Dublin to the townships around. But the actual figures are not the principle of the Bill, and it is competent for the Committee, by an Amendment, to say: " We will not fix the prices at 2½d. or 3½d., but make it a question of arbitration." That is what the right hon. Gentleman proposes to do, but I hope, for the reasons I have given, that he will not move the Instruction *Feb* 17, 624

The second Instruction is out of order, because it proposes that it should be an Instruction to the Committee to establish a water trust in Dublin. That is an entirely new subject-matter, and ought to be the subject of a new Bill *Feb* 17, 625

I must remind the hon. Member that there is no question of increasing the Army in this Bill *Feb* 18, 747

The Motion can be changed, no doubt, by using the words, " Cretan insurgents," or whatever the fact is—I do not know myself—but I do not think it is necessary to make the change, as Cretans are, in one sense, Greek. Is the hon. Gentleman supported by forty Members? *Feb* 22, 890

[*cont.*

SPEAKER, Mr.—cont.

Rules and Order of Debate—cont.

I must remind the hon. Gentleman that he is speaking of a friendly Sovereign; and it is one of the rules of the House to speak of a friendly Sovereign with the same decency of language as would be empolyed in speaking of a Member of this House or of the other House *Feb* 22, 892

I must remind the hon. Member that last week there was a discussion on the general policy of the Government in the matter of Crete, and it is a rule of the House that the same question cannot be twice debated in the same Session on a Motion for Adjournment. The present Motion refers to the firing on Greek forces by British war vessels at Canea, and to that point the hon. Member must confine himself *Feb* 22, 894

I cannot give a general direction to the hon. Member beforehand; but the question whether five people were baked in an oven is not relevant to the matter before the House. I must call the hon. Gentleman's attention to the words of the Motion, which relate to the firing on the Greek forces by Her Majesty's ships, and I trust he will confine himself to what bears upon that question *Feb* 22, 895

The hon. Gentleman is going outside the question before the House. I am quite aware there has been considerable latitude in this discussion, but I think the remarks of the hon. Gentleman are too remote from the Motion *Feb* 22, 915

The right hon. Baronet has correctly stated the Standing Order, and the course I always endeavour to pursue. But sometimes I am anticipated by the House. I always first put the question whether it be the pleasure of the House that the Adjournment should be moved, and the proper course for hon. Members is to retain their seats and say "Yes" or "No." If there be no negative the House is taken to consent generally to the discussion. Hon. Members might differ upon the subject-matter of the proposed discussion, and yet agree that it was a proper subject for discussion. So I hope hon. Members will strictly observe the Standing Order, and, on the question whether it be their pleasure that leave be given, retain their seats, only rising in case of a negative, on my putting the further question whether the hon. Member who wished to move the Adjournment has the requisite support *Feb* 23, 986

There are several Instructions to the Committee on this Bill on the Order Paper. The first is in the name of the hon. Member for South Molton (Mr. Lambert). It introduces a subject that appears to me to be foreign to to the subjects dealt with in the Bill, and on that ground it is out of order. The next Instruction stands in the name

[*cont.*

SPEAKER, Mr.—cont.

Rules and Order of Debate—cont.

of the hon. Member for Anglesey (Mr. Ellis Griffith). That proposes to provide that as a condition for receiving the grant no teacher in a Voluntary School shall be required to perform any extraneous—*i.e.* non-educational — duty. Such a proposal would be in order as an Amendment to the Bill, and therefore it is out of order as an Instruction. The next Instruction which stands upon the Paper is also in the name of the hon. Member for Anglesey, and proposes to make provision for the absence of religious tests for pupil teachers in Voluntary Schools. That appears to me to enter upon matter which is foreign to the whole scope of the Bill. The Bill is one for affording relief to Voluntary Schools. The term "Voluntary Schools" is substantially convertible with the term "Denominational Schools," and to give an Instruction to a Committee on a Bill for the relief of Voluntary Schools to undenominationalise them would be not only foreign to, but contrary to, the whole scope of the Bill. The next Instruction stands in the name of the hon. Member for Carnarvon (Mr. Lloyd-George). He proposes that the Committee should have power to insert clauses in the Bill for making provision for insuring adequate representation of local authorities or parents on the management of schools in receipt of the aid grant. That appears to me to be in order as an Instruction. The Bill proposes that certain associations representative of the managers of the schools associated together should be the machinery for distributing the grant in aid, and the Instruction proposes to alter and amend the constitution of these managing bodies. As this is a very large proposal, which only bears indirectly on one of the subjects of the Bill, and as it raises a new principle not hitherto brought under the consideration of the House, it cannot be entertained without an Instruction. The next Instruction stands in the name of the hon. Member for Walsall (Mr. Gedge). It proposes to enable the managers of Voluntary Schools to contract with School Boards for the supply of the education required by the Education Code to such children and on such terms as to payment, inspection, representation, or otherwise, as may be agreed between them. That does not relate, it appears to me, either to the relief of Voluntary Schools or to the distribution of the grant in aid. Whether it is a matter that requires legislation or not I do not know, but if it does not require legislation it will have to be done by a separate Bill. The next Instruction stands in the name of the hon. Member for Northamptonshire (Mr. Channing). That Instruction in effect proposes to destroy altogether the existing form of management of Voluntary Schools, and to set up in its place elected authorities in districts where there is no School Board. It also proposes to give powers to the School Boards, with which this Bill is not concerned, to prepare schemes for their districts. Both branches appear to me to be outside of the scope of the Bill and out of order. Therefore the only Instruction which is in order is that of the hon. Member for Carnarvon *Feb* 25, 1154

Such an Amendment would require an Instruction, and the Instruction standing in the name of the hon. Member for Carnarvon covers the case *Feb* 25, 1156

The ordinary Rule of the House is, that, when a Motion such as that of the hon. Member has been put on the Paper, it operates, so far as the question of anticipation goes, until it ceases to appear on the Paper. The hon. Gentleman's statement that he intends to withdraw has not, under the existing procedure of the House, any effect *Mar* 1, 1350

It certainly is not in the Standing Orders. It is a practice of the House which has been acted upon, and the practice of the House, as the right hon. gentleman knows, when acted upon for years, is as binding upon the House as a Standing Order *Mar* 1, 1350

Of course, it is obvious that there are occasions when the practice would operate inconveniently. It is not for me to say whether, on the whole, it operates inconveniently or not. Certainly, if the House thinks fit to alter the rule, I shall not offer any advice to the contrary *Mar* 1, 1351

I think there is more than that. The right hon. Gentleman will find that there is such a consensus of practice upon the point for many years past that it is one of the ordinary Rules of the House and part of the ordinary procedure of the House. The right hon. Gentleman well knows that many of our Rules are not to be found in print or in Standing Orders; and this is a practice which has become part of what I may call the common law of Parliament. To alter a long-continued practice at common law requires a statute; and in the same way an alteration in the common law of Parliament cannot be effected on the sole authority of the Speaker, who is not the maker, but only the administrator, of the Laws of this House *Mar* 1, 1351

Where you want to alter the practice of the House it would be more convenient to do so by Standing Order. At the same time the House has sometimes acted by a Resolution. It is a matter for consideration what course should be followed *Mar* 1, 1351

I do not think the hon. Member is exceeding the limits of Debate. I do not think the observation was in the nature of a personal insult *Mar* 2, 1479

[*cont.*

SPEAKER, Mr.—cont.

Rules and Order of Debate—cont.

I have already said that I did not think the hon. Member had exceeded the limits of Debate. If I thought he had I would have called upon him to withdraw *Mar* 2, 1479

The Instruction of the hon. Member is out of order. The Provisional Orders (No. 1) Bill merely enables the town of Kilkenny to take compulsory powers to acquire land for waterworks. An Instruction proposing to extend the municipal franchise would be out of order on that Bill, and therefore I cannot put it *Mar* 4, 1571

I am quite clear that it is out of order. As to the case of Armagh, which the hon. Gentleman mentions, the Instruction was not withdrawn until I had ruled it out of order. In the course of the Debate on the Second Reading the hon. Member who had put down the Instruction asked me whether it was in order. I said it was not, and that is the reason it was withdrawn. What happened in Committee upon that Bill was not brought under my notice. If it had been I might possibly have had something to say on the subject. As far as any statement in this House as to what took place in the Committee is concerned, I hear it now for the first time. As regards the Dublin Corporation Bill, the hon. Member who moved that Instruction gave me an assurance very similar to that which has just been given by the hon. Member for Kilkenny—namely, that it was an unopposed Instruction, and was moved by general consent; and as it was an Instruction on a matter which had been much debated in the House, and as I understood from what was stated in the House, without any contradiction, that it was in the nature of a compromise on a subject which it was desirable to settle, and as everyone was agreed upon it, I allowed the Instruction to pass. But I expressly stated that I doubted very much whether it was in order, and that nothing, except the assurance that the Instruction was unopposed, would have induced me to have allowed it to pass. Therefore it cannot in any way be taken as a precedent, and certainly the results of allowing it to go on are not such as to encourage further experiments in the same direction. I am quite clear that this Instruction is out of order *Mar* 4, 1572

Miscellaneous Rulings

Feb 9, 14, 17; *Feb* 10, 120; *Feb* 11, 152, 200; *Feb* 12, 368; *Feb* 15, 406; *Feb* 16, 518; *Feb* 17, 622, 657; *Feb* 19, 787, 788, 848; *Feb* 22, 860, 865, 883, 884, 890, 916; *Feb* 23, 974; *Feb* 25, 1184, 1228; *Mar* 1, 1325, 1347, 1350; *Mar* 2, 1438, 1450, 1501, 1533; *Mar* 4, 1593, 1605

SPENCER, Earl
Lee-Metford Rifle, Volunteer Rifle Ranges *Feb* 18, 667, 669

SPICER, Mr. ALBERT, *Monmouth Boroughs*
Voluntary Schools Bill *Feb* 25, 1170, 1171; In Com. *Mar* 3, 1561; *Mar* 4, 1644

STANHOPE, Earl
Lee-Metford Rifle, Volunteer Rifle Ranges *Feb* 18, 668

STANHOPE, Hon. P. J., *Burnley*
Army Estimates: £1,016,400 for Works, Buildings and Repairs *Feb* 19, 843
Crete, Action of British Ships *Feb* 22, 919, 920
Voluntary Schools Bill *Feb* 11, 200

STANLEY, LORD (Junior Lord of the Treasury), *Lancashire, N.E., Westhoughton*
Licensing Exemption (Houses of Parliament) Bill, Intro. *Feb* 17, 664; 2R. *Feb* 19, 848

STANLEY OF ALDERLEY, Lord
Gambling in Options and Futures *Feb* 11, 125, 131

Steam Engines and Boilers (Persons in Charge) Bill
2R., Mr. J. Samuel, 625, 629, 635, 637; Sir A. Hickman, 628, 629, 639; Mr. J. Wilson (Durham), 629, 636, 649, 650, 653; Mr. G. W. Wolff, 630; Mr. J. Burns, 631, 637, 638, 650; Mr. Jesse Collings, 635, 636, 637, 638, 642, 646, 647, 653; Mr. J. Bryce, 638, 639, 652; Mr. G. Whiteley, 640; Mr. C. Fenwick, 641, 643; Colonel Mellor, 644; Mr. W. Allan, 646, 647; Mr. C. B. Renshaw, 648, 649, 650; Mr. T. Burt, 650; Mr. C. W. Cayzer, 651, 652; Mr. L. Courtney, 654, 656; Mr. W. J. Galloway, 655, 656; Mr. H. Seton-Karr, 657, 658: Mr. J. M. Paulton, 657; [Mr. Speaker, 657;] Mr. Tomlinson, 658; (*Division*, 658) *Feb* 17
Read 2° *Feb* 17, 661
Sir W. Harcourt, 661; Mr. J. Samuel, (*Motion*) 661; Sir A. Hickman, 661; (*Adj.*) *Feb* 17

STEPHENS, Mr. H. C., *Middlesex, Hornsey*
Burial Grounds *Mar* 4, 1602
Muzzling Dogs *Mar* 2, 1442, 1443; *Mar* 4, 1603, 1604

STEVENSON, Mr. F. S., *Suffolk, Eye*
Crete *Feb* 9, 23, 24; *Feb* 12, 274; *Feb* 15, 404; *Feb* 22, 887, 888; *Feb* 23, 982, 983; *Feb* 25, 1144, 1145
Crete, Declaration of Policy *Mar* 2, 1497
Land Tax Commisioners *Feb* 15, 400
Naval Force of Powers at Constantinople *Feb* 18, 718
Turkish Reforms *Feb* 12, 276

Stock, Mr. J. H., *Liverpool, Walton*
Sale of Intoxicating Liquor on Sunday Bill, 2R. *Feb* 10, 118

Stone, Sir J. **Benjamin**, Bart, *Birmingham, E.*
Midland and Great Northern Railways Joint Committee Bill *Feb* 25, 1119

Strachey, Mr. **Edward**, *Somerset, S.*
Duke of York's Military School *Feb* 12, 267
Post Office Money Orders *Feb* 23, 966
Voluntary Schools Bill, In Com. *Mar* 3, 1557

Strauss, Mr. **Arthur**, *Cornwall, Camborne*
Cornish Mining Industry *Mar* 4, 1611

Stuart-Wortley, Right Hon. C. B. (see **Wortley**)

Sullivan, Mr. **Donal**, *Westmeath, S.*
Barrow Drainage *Mar* 1, 1327
King's Royal Rifle Corps, 8th Battalion *Mar* 1, 1328
Land Commission, Ireland *Feb* 26, 1250

SUPPLY

Army and *Navy Estimates* (see under those Titles)

CIVIL SERVICES AND REVENUE DEPARTMENTS

SUPPLEMENTARY ESTIMATES, 1896-97

£650 for British Museum
In Com., Vote Agreed to *Feb* 26, 1294. Report *Mar* 1, 1413

£36,700 for British Protectorates in Uganda and Central and East Africa
In Com., Sir C. Dilke, 1297; Mr. H. Labouchere, 1297; Mr. Curzon, 1297. Vote Agreed to, 1298 *Feb* 26. Report *Mar* 1, 1414

£1,000 for Colonial Office
In Com., Vote Agreed to *Feb* 26, 1274. Report *Mar* 1, 1411

£14,980 for Colonial Services including South Africa
In Com., Mr. J. H. Dalziel, 1298; Mr. T. Lough, 1298; Mr. J. Chamberlain, 1298; Mr. S. Buxton, 1299. Vote Agreed to, 1299 *Feb* 26. Report *Mar* 1, 1414

[*cont.*

SUPPLY—cont.

£10 for County Courts, Salaries and Expenses
In Com., Mr. D. Lloyd-George, 1275; Mr. Hanbury, 1275. Vote Agreed to, 1275 *Feb* 26. Report *Mar* 1, 1411

£23,670 for Diplomatic and Consular Services
In Com., Sir C. Dilke, 1295; Mr. Curzon, 1296, 1297; Mr. H. Labouchere, 1296. Vote Agreed to, 1297 *Feb* 26. Report *Mar* 1, 1413

£6,800 for Inland Revenue
In Com., Mr. T. P. Whittaker, 1306, 1307, [Chairman, 1306;] Mr. Gibson Bowles; 1307; Mr. Hanbury, 1307. Vote Agreed to, 1307 *Feb* 26. Report *Mar* 1, 1415

£12,938 for Irish Land Commission, Salaries and Expenses
In Com., Mr. D. Kilbride, (*Amendt.*) 1276; Mr. J. Dillon, 1276; Mr. E. H. Carson, 1277, 1280; Mr. G. Balfour, 1277, 1281, 1282; Mr. J. Lowther, 1278, 1281; Colonel Saunderson, 1278, 1280, 1282; Mr. T. P. O'Connor, 1280, 1281; Mr. J. C. Flynn, 1281; Mr. J. A. Rentoul, 1281; Major Jameson, 1282; Mr. A. H. Smith-Barry, 1282; (*Division*, 1283). Vote Agreed to *Feb* 26. Report *Mar* 1, 1411

£17,500 for Law Charges
In Com., Vote Agreed to *Feb* 26, 1275. Report *Mar* 1, 1411

£80 for Lunacy Commission, Scotland
In Com., Vote Agreed to *Feb* 26, 1275. Report *Mar* 1, 1411

£40 for the Mint, including Coinage
In Com., Mr. Gibson Bowles, 1274; Sir M. Hicks Beach, 1274; Vote Agreed to, 1274 *Feb* 26. Report *Mar* 1, 1411

£20,110 for National Education, Ireland
In Com., Mr. Vesey Knox, 1294, 1295; Mr. Hanbury, 1294, 1295. Vote Agreed to, 1295 *Feb* 26. Report *Mar* 1, 1413

£327 for National Portrait Gallery, Salaries and Expenses
In Com., Vote Agreed to *Feb* 26, 1294. Report *Mar* 1, 1413

£10 for Post Office Services
In Com., Mr. J. H. Dalziel, 1307; Mr. Hanbury, 1307. Vote Agreed to, 1308 *Feb* 26. Report *Mar* 1, 1415

[*cont.*

SUPPLY—cont.

£7,000 for Public Buildings (Great Britain)
In Com., Vote Agreed to *Feb* 26, 1274. Report *Mar* 1, 1410

£153,044 for Public Education in England and Wales
In Com., Mr. F. A. Channing, (*Amendt.*) 1283, 1292; Sir J. Gorst, 1286, 1290; Mr. J. H. Lewis, 1287; Mr. S. Buxton, 1288; Mr. J. C. Williams, 1289; Mr. D. Lloyd-George, 1289; Mr. S. T. Evans, 1290, 1293; Mr. Gibson Bowles, 1291; Mr. H. J. Wilson, 1291; Mr. T. C. T. Warner, 1291; Sir R. Webster, 1291, 1292, 1293; (*Division*, 1294). Vote Agreed to *Feb* 26
Report: Mr. A. C. Humphreys-Owen, 1412; Mr. F. A. Channing, 1412; Sir R. B. Finlay, 1413; Mr. J. H. Lewis, 1413; Sir R. Webster, 1413 *Mar* 1
Reso. Agreed to *Mar* 1, 1413

£2,030 for Register House, Edinburgh, Salaries and Expenses
In Com., Mr. J. H. Dalziel, 1275; Mr. Hanbury, 1275. Vote Agreed to, 1276 *Feb* 26. Report *Mar* 1, 1411

£10,000 for Science and Art Department for the United Kingdom
In Com., Vote Agreed to *Feb* 26, 1294. Report *Mar* 1, 1413

£1,200 for Slave Trade Services
In Com., Mr. J. H. Dalziel, 1299; Sir C. Dilke, 1299; [Chairman, 1299;] Mr. Curzon, 1299. Vote Agreed to, 1299 *Feb* 26. Report *Mar* 1, 1414

£25,000 for Stationery and Printing
In Com., Mr. Vesey Knox, 1274; Mr. Hanbury, 1274. Vote Agreed to, 1275 *Feb* 26. Report *Mar* 1, 1411

£2,000 for Supreme Court of Judicature
In Com., Vote Agreed to *Feb* 26, 1275. Report *Mar* 1, 1411

£4,500 for Temporary Commissions and Committees
In Com., Sir C. Dilke, 1304; Mr. J. Caldwell, 1304; Mr. Hanbury, 1305. Vote Agreed to, 1305 *Feb* 26. Report *Mar* 1, 1415

£30,151 for Trustee Savings Bank and Friendly Societies Deficiency
In Com., Mr. G. C. T. Bartley, 1299, 1301; Mr. W. Hazell, 1300: Mr. T. Lough, 1300, 1302; Sir M. Hicks Beach, 1300, 1301; Mr. T. P. Whittaker, 1301. Vote Agreed to, 1302 *Feb* 26. Report *Mar* 1, 1414

[*cont.*

SUPPLY—cont.

CIVIL SERVICE ESTIMATES 1897–98.

£20,500 for International Exhibitions
In Com., Vote Agreed to *Feb* 26, 1306. Report *Mar* 1, 1415

£16,617 for Local Loans Fund (Repayment to)
In Com., Mr. Hanbury, 1305; Mr. J. Caldwell, 1306. Vote Agreed to, 1306 *Feb* 26, Report *Mar* 1, 1415

£95,434 for Teachers' Pension Fund (Ireland)
In Com., Mr. J. H. Yoxall, 1302, 1304; Mr. J. C. Flynn, 1302; Mr. J. H. Dalziel, 1302; Mr. Hanbury, 1303; Mr. Gibson Bowles, 1303. Vote Agreed to, 1304 *Feb* 26. Report *Mar* 1, 1414

£16,304 for Treasury Chest Fund
In Com., Mr. T. Lough, 1299; Mr. Hanbury, 1299. Vote Agreed to, 1299 *Feb* 26. Report *Mar* 1, 1414

SUTHERLAND, Sir THOMAS, *Greenock*
Sugar Refining Industry, United Kingdom *Feb* 11, 185

TALBOT, Lord EDMUND, *Sussex, Chichester*
Voluntary Schools Bill, In Com. *Mar* 4, 1635

TALBOT, Mr. J. G., *Oxford University*
Burials Bill, 2R. *Feb* 24, 1060, 1064
Children's Metropolitan Asylums Board *Feb* 9, 10; *Feb* 18, 705
Education Bill *Feb* 9, 26
Voluntary Schools Bill, 2R. *Feb* 15, 445, 446

TANNER, Dr. C. K. D., *Cork, Mid*
Army Estimates
£553,000 for Militia, Pay and Allowances *Feb* 19, 797, 802
£54,800 for Miscellaneous Effective Services *Feb* 19, 847
£2,553,400 for Provisions, Forage, and Other Supplies *Feb* 19, 840
£639,000 for Transport and Remounts *Feb* 19, 823; Report *Feb* 22, 961
£1,016,400 for Works, Buildings, and Repairs *Feb* 19, 846
£76,000 for Yeomanry Cavalry, Pay and Allowances *Feb* 19, 805, 810
Crete *Feb* 25, 1149, 1150

Taxation (London) (Grants in Aid)
Mr. T. Lough, (*Notice of Motion*) *Feb* 23, 965

THOMAS, Mr. ABEL, *Carmarthenshire, E*
Voluntary Schools Bill, In Com. *Mar* 1, 1369; *Mar* 3, 1562

THOMAS, Mr. ALFRED, *Glamorgan, E.*
  Sale of Intoxicating Liquor on Sunday Bill, 2R. *Feb* 10, 113

Thompson's Divorce Bill
l. 2R., Counsel called in; Witnesses examined *Mar* 2, 1417
  Read 2ª and com. to Com. of Whole House *Mar* 2, 1417
  Rep. without Amendt.; Standing Com. negatived *Mar* 4, 1565

THORNTON, Mr. P. M., *Clapham*
  Wreck, Indian Troopship *Warren Hastings* *Mar* 1, 1323

THRING, Lord
  Christchurch Inclosure Allotments Bill, 2R. *Mar* 1, 1318
  Land Transfer Bill, 2R. *Mar* 4, 1567

TOMLINSON, Mr. W. E. M., *Preston*
  Army Estimates: £627,200 for Volunteer Corps, Pay and Allowances *Feb* 19, 821
  Burials Bill, 2R. *Feb* 24, 1083
  North Eastern Railway (Additional Powers) Bill *Mar* 4, 1584
  Preferential Payments in Bankruptcy Act (1888) Amendment Bill, 2R. *Feb* 10, 85
  Railway Clearing House Incorporation Bill *Feb* 9, 8
  Steam Engines and Boilers (Persons in Charge) Bill, 2R. *Feb* 17, 658

TRADE, BOARD OF

President—Mr. C. T. RITCHIE
Secretary—Earl of DUDLEY

  Bray Harbour, Fog Bell, Q. Mr. W. Field; *A.* Mr. Ritchie *Feb* 9, 15
  Brighton, Chain Pier, Q. Mr. Gerald Loder; *A.* Mr. Ritchie *Feb* 18, 715
  British Trade and Foreign Competition, *Qs.* Sir H. Vincent; *As.* Mr. A. J. Balfour *Feb* 9, 24. *Q.* Sir H. Vincent; *A.* Mr. Curzon *Feb* 15, 388
  Carbide of Calcium, Q. Mr. H. E. Kearley; *A.* Sir Matthew White Ridley *Feb* 18, 721
  Children's Metropolitan Asylums Board, *Qs.* Mr. W. Hazell, Mr. J. G. Talbot; *As.* Mr. Ritchie, Mr. H. Chaplin *Feb* 18, 704
  Collisions at Sea, Fishing Boats, *Qs.* Mr. J. W. Crombie, Mr. Gibson Bowles; *As.* Mr. Ritchie *Mar* 1, 1330
  Cruelty to a Seaman, s.s. Hornby Castle, *Q.* Mr. J. Havelock Wilson; *A.* Mr. Ritchie *Feb* 9, 19
  Daunt's Rock Lightship, *Qs.* Mr. W. Field, Mr. J. C. Flynn; *As.* Mr. Ritchie *Feb* 9, 15. *Qs.* Captain Donelan; *As.* Mr. Ritchie *Feb* 18, 709
  Foreign
    Patents, *Q.* Mr. C. E. Schwann; *A.* Mr Ritchie *Feb* 26, 1262
    Ports, Discharge of Seamen, *Q.* Sir E. T. Gourley; *A.* Mr. Ritchie *Mar* 2, 1443
    Prison-made Goods, *Qs.* Sir H. Vincent; *As.* Mr. Ritchie *Feb* 22, 855

TRADE, BOARD OF—cont.
  Foreign—cont.
    Vessels in British Ports, *Qs.* Mr. W. F. Lawrence, Mr. A. F. Warr; *As.* Mr. Ritchie *Feb* 23, 970
  German-made Tins, *Q.* Sir H. Vincent: *A.* Mr. Hanbury *Feb* 16, 502
  Giant's Causeway and Portrush Tramway, *Qs.* Mr. J. Pinkerton, Mr. T. Lough; *As.* Mr. Ritchie *Feb* 9, 12
  Great Northern Railway Company of Ireland, *Q.* Mr. J. L. Carew; *A.* Mr. Ritchie *Mar* 4, 1591
  Harbour
    Accommodation, Devon and Cornwall, *Q.* Sir Cameron Gull; *A.* Mr. Ritchie *Feb* 22, 856
    Bray, Fog Bell, *Q.* Mr. W. Field; *A.* Mr. Ritchie *Feb* 9, 15
  Icelandic Fisheries, *Qs.* Mr. C. H. Wilson, Mr. G. Doughty, Mr. J. G. Weir; *As.* Mr. Ritchie, Mr. Curzon *Feb* 9, 8
  Irish Lights Commissioners, *Q.* Mr. J. C. Flynn; *A.* Mr. Ritchie *Feb* 11, 158
  Lighthouse Keepers, Ireland, *Qs.* Major Jameson; *As.* Mr. Ritchie *Feb* 26, 1263
  Lightships, Ireland, *Qs.* Mr. J. L. Carew, Mr. P. O'Brien; *As.* Mr. Ritchie *Mar* 4, 1577
  Members of Parliament, Free Railway Passes, *Q.* Mr. W. Field; *A.* Mr. Ritchie *Feb* 12, 276
  North Atlantic Load-line, *Q.* Mr. J. G. A. Baird: *A.* Mr. Ritchie *Mar* 1, 1329
  North Eastern Railway
    Additional Powers Bill, *Q.* Mr. Tomlinson; *A.* Mr. Ritchie *Mar* 4, 1584
    Dispute, *Q.* Sir E. T. Gourley; *A.* Mr. Ritchie *Mar* 1, 1344
  Oyster Culture, *Q.* Mr. Henniker Heaton; *A.* Mr. Ritchie *Feb* 25, 1132
  Patent
    Laws, *Qs.* Captain Phillpotts; *As.* Mr. Ritchie *Feb* 11, 163
    Office, *Q.* Sir J. Leng; *A.* Mr. Ritchie *Feb* 9, 6
  Prison-made Goods, *Q.* Mr. J. H. Dalziel; *A.* Mr. Ritchie *Feb* 18, 715
  Railway
    Carriages, Construction, *Q.* Mr. J. O'Connor; *A.* Mr. Ritchie *Feb* 15, 403
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TREASURY

First Lord—Mr. A. J. Balfour
Patronage Secretary—Sir W. H. Walrond
Financial Secretary—Mr. R. W. Hanbury
Lords Commissioners—Mr. H. T. Anstruther; Mr. W. H. Fisher; Lord Stanley

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2R., Debate Resumed on Mr. McKenna's Amendt: Mr. C. A. Cripps, 534, 540; Mr. A. J. Mundella, 540, 544, 547, 560; Sir F. S. Powell, 544; Mr. Hanbury, 546, 556; Sir F. Milner, 550, 552; Sir F. Lockwood, 552; Mr. T. P. O'Connor, 554, 557, 558; Sir A. B. Forwood, 559, 560; Mr. R. W. Perks, 564, 568, 569; Sir J. Gorst, 568; Sir R. B. Finlay, 568; Lord Warkworth, 569; Mr. J. H. Yoxall, 572, 575; Mr. A. J. Balfour, 575, 592, 593, 594; Mr. R. C. Jebb, 576; Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman, 583, 593; Sir W. Harcourt, 594; Mr. J. W. Logan, 605, 606; [Mr. Speaker, 606;] (*Division*, 608) *Feb* 16
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Voluntary Schools Bill—cont.

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(For Questions see EDUCATION DEPARTMENT)

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WAR OFFICE

Secretary of State—Marquess of LANSDOWNE
Under Secretary of State—Mr. BRODRICK
Financial Secretary—Mr. J. POWELL-WILLIAMS
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WARR, Mr. AUGUSTUS F., *Liverpool, East Toxteth*
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Williams, Mr. J. Carvell, *Nottingham, Mansfield*
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Wilson, Mr. J. Havelock, *Middlesbrough.*
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